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## **Picking up Where Thoreau Left Off: John Muir and Theodore Roosevelt, an Unlikely Partnership Bringing Thoreau's Vision to Life**

Annette Maldonado

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PICKING UP WHERE THOREAU LEFT OFF: JOHN MUIR  
AND THEODORE ROOSEVELT, AN UNLIKELY  
PARTNERSHIP BRINGING THOREAU'S  
VISION TO LIFE

A Thesis

by

ANNETTE MALDONADO

Submitted to Texas A&M International University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

December 2013

Major Subject: English

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Approved as to style and content by:

Chair of Committee,  
Committee Members,

Manuel Broncano  
John Dean  
Paul Niemeyer  
Jerry Thompson  
Stephen M. Duffy

Head of Department,

December 2013

Major Subject: English

“Life consists with wildness. The most alive is the wildest.”

-Henry David Thoreau, *Walking*

“Climb the mountains and get their good tidings. Nature’s peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees. The winds will blow their own freshness into you, and the storms their energy, while cares will drop off like autumn leaves.”

-John Muir, *Our National Parks*

## ABSTRACT

Picking Up Where Thoreau Left Off: John Muir and Theodore Roosevelt, An Unlikely Partnership Bringing Thoreau's Vision to Life (December 2013)

Annette Maldonado, B.A. History, Texas A&M International University;

Chair of Committee: Dr. Manuel Broncano

In American history, views of nature have changed over time to fit the needs of the society interacting with the wilderness. The literature of each period reflects the shift in attitudes towards wilderness as it progresses from fear of evil lurking in nature to a need to dominate and exploit it for its useful resources. Over the course of time, the need to conquer and exploit nature was rivaled by an urge to protect it. Ideas of wilderness protection were scarce early in the country's history, but they were not unheard of; however, by the time of Transcendentalism a definite and more visible interest in protecting American wilderness began to take shape. This interest is best seen in the literature of the Transcendentalists. Ideas for wilderness protection existed from the mid-century, but it was not until the environmental reform movements of the turn of the century that Transcendentalist thought, particularly that of Henry David Thoreau, began to be widely appreciated and realized. This was no easy task, but through the work of many environmentalists the efforts culminated in the eventual creation of the National Park Service. John Muir and Theodore Roosevelt, two pioneers of the environmental movement, were two of these individuals, and their partnership is worth special attention for the unlikely pairing and the influence Henry David Thoreau had on both men.

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This section would be incomplete without thanking my parents. From the first time I showed an interest in books and learning, they have done nothing but encourage me to keep continuing my education and acquiring more knowledge. Their encouragement motivated me to continue past my undergraduate career and pursue a graduate degree. I thank them for instilling a love of learning in me, and always truly believing that I could achieve anything I set my mind to.

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**CHAPTER I**

**AMERICAN INTERACTION WITH NATURE FROM THE LATE COLONIAL ERA TO  
TRANSCENDENTALISM**

Wilderness as unknown danger, nature as an entity to conquer and tame, the environment as supplier to the needs of man's developing civilization, and the outdoors as temple for spiritual nourishment are all roles mankind has assigned to the wilderness surrounding them; the function of wilderness depended on the needs of man at any given point in time. Particularly in the United States, nature has played many roles as Americans have adjusted ideas about the natural world to accommodate spiritual, economic, and identity needs. Initially, the collective American relationship with wilderness was characterized by a profound fear of the unknown and the evil potentially lurking in American wilderness. Over time, particularly as wilderness areas got developed to make way for villages and towns, the fear of wilderness became replaced by the view of nature as a fountain for gaining material wealth. The original fear of wilderness had for the most part escaped American consciousness by the time of the Transcendentalists, and Americans found themselves divided roughly into two camps: those who saw nature as ripe for the taking and believed it was their right to do so as Americans, and the small but growing number of people who thought there was more to value in nature than merely potential material wealth. For the former, nature became an entity to be conquered and tamed for the benefit of American consumption. The exploitation of the wilderness as a source for gaining material wealth is evidenced by the unrestricted use of natural resources at the hands of big American businesses such as the forestry industry, the railroad industry, and the construction and housing

industry.<sup>1</sup> Part of the love and respect for nature that developed for the latter group found its footing in Transcendentalist thought. The Transcendental movement extended beyond ideas about nature, and at the time Transcendentalist thought did not have a huge influence over the general American public. The initial influence of the Transcendentalists was within their immediate intellectual circle; over time, the decades that followed showed that some of the Transcendentalists, men like Emerson and Thoreau, came to have a significant influence on American views of nature.

Transcendentalist thought and influence, particularly the ideas of Henry David Thoreau, persisted through several decades of American history, past the Civil War and Reconstruction well into the Gilded Age and into the turn of the century. Thoreau's influence reached so far that his impact on two giants of the turn-of-the-century environmental reform movement, John Muir and Theodore Roosevelt, is practically undeniable. Indeed, a modern audience can look back on literature and the events of these time periods only to realize that Muir's and Roosevelt's interpretations of nature could not have existed the way they did without Thoreau and the literature that became his legacy. Truly, the actions they took to protect nature rested upon the intellectual lens Thoreau created for an American view of wilderness. When looking at the relationship between Muir and Roosevelt in relation to the developing environmental movement at the turn of the century, what is most interesting is that two men of such distinct backgrounds and thinking shared a deep respect and admiration for Thoreau. Both men were individuals; indeed, one would be hard-pressed to find many similarities between the two that existed past a mutual passion for the wilderness and the idea that it should be protected. However, Roosevelt's hyper-macho, war-hero, expansionist attitude was a stark contrast to Muir's soft-spoken, scientific, one-with-nature demeanor. Even in their environmentalism, the one goal they could

both agree on, each man's approach and reason for wanting to save the wilderness was different. One aspect the environmental attitudes and the partnership between these two men had in common and that was essential to shifting public perception of environmentalism was that Thoreau significantly influenced both of their perspectives. Indeed, Thoreau greatly contributed to the intellectual climate both men learned, lived, and worked in. Undoubtedly, the lens Thoreau provided to view nature was inescapable to both men; Thoreau's literature and ideas about nature affected the intellectual climate of the decades following his death so much that both men actively voiced the respect they had for Thoreau and his ideas. This should not be taken lightly; indeed, it is an influence that both Muir and Roosevelt's writings and actions bear witness to. The Transcendental influence and naturalist ideas of Thoreau, then, came to fruition through the efforts of Muir and Roosevelt, among others, in the creation of the National Park System in 1916<sup>2</sup>; a more fitting monument to Thoreau's forward thinking ideas, and Roosevelt's and Muir's efforts, could not have been realized.

Before American wilderness became a source of spiritual comfort and aesthetic beauty for the Transcendentalists and other Americans, it was a dark, menacing source of fear and uncertainty to the earliest Puritan settlers. The relationship between Americans and the wilderness has been extremely complicated since the untamed wilderness of present day New England became home to the first Europeans to land on its shores. Ever since those first formative years, Americans have largely defined themselves in juxtaposition to their natural surroundings; the first years of settlements are no exception. The settlers saw themselves as pious, civilized people and feared the dangers lurking in the wild. They also saw the wild as a place potentially capable of corrupting men. The wilderness and the potential danger it held not only served to strike genuine fear in the hearts of Puritans, but it also reassured them of their own

righteousness by juxtaposing themselves against the wild things they did not identify with.

Puritan fear of the wild ran so deep they entertained the thought of possibly reverting back to a savage uncivilized state because of the proximity to the wild (Nash 29). This perception was undoubtedly influenced by Puritan views of Native Americans as wild, uncivilized savages who owed their lack of civilization to an absence of Christianity and a life of running free in the untamed wilderness of American nature.

The fear of the wilderness and the savage effects it had on Native Americans persisted for some time and was especially present in Colonial America. This is evidenced by one of the most popular accounts of the wilderness and captivity, a book that is actually considered America's first bestseller. *A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson* was written by Mary Rowlandson detailing her experience of life in the wilderness at the hands of her Native American captors for eleven weeks following her capture during King Philip's War of 1675. This book is especially interesting because Rowlandson notes that she spent a considerable amount of time among what she called savages, living in the wild, and participating in behavior she could have never imagined for a Christian woman such as herself. Despite this, according to her, with the grace of God she overcame the obstacles put in front of her and did not succumb to savagery. As a matter of fact, the blessing God bestowed on her by being able to retain her virtue and integrate back into "civilized" society is constantly emphasized throughout her account to prove to her community that she escaped the wilderness untainted. This book is but one example of the fear of wilderness and the evils lurking in it that permeated the lives of the earliest settlers in their exploration of the landscape that came to define America.

Even though a fear of the wilderness existed, some attitudes pointed to a potential shift in thought. Americans overcame their fear of the wilderness by looking to nature as a source of

prosperity and new beginnings. Americans started setting their eyes on progress not just in development and commerce, but also in morality for the nation as well; the wilderness became the perfect fountain to help fulfill these objectives. This attitude of progress is exemplified by analyzing the Puritans to start with. John Winthrop's 1630 "City Upon a Hill" sermon is an example of the origins of American Exceptionalism that encouraged Americans to strive for progress and unmatched morality by becoming a "city upon a hill," in other words, a shining example to the countries they left behind. By encouraging those who heard his speech to become "city upon a hill," he is implying that the opportunity to start over and prosper is inherent on their new journeys. The rhetoric of American Exceptionalism continued to develop in the country at a fast pace, and rivaled and eventually overtook the kind of fear of the wilderness that Mary Rowlandson described in her narrative. Some years later the signing of the Declaration of Independence brought with it the idea that Americans were responsible not only for upholding these values for themselves but for spreading them throughout the land as well. This inevitably led to the belief that expansion of territory was implied with this idea.

The roots of Manifest Destiny can be seen with the exploration of the West by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark in 1804. Not only was their journey to study plants, animal life, and geography of the land out West, but it also served to establish claim over land before others, such as the British, claimed it. These are the beginnings of ideas that continued to develop. Soon, the initial fear of the wilderness that Americans originally had was replaced by the idea that land encountered as far west as possible all the way to the Pacific Ocean was explicitly for American use and development. In looking at Manifest Destiny it is important to note that more often than not, besides instances where Americans stood to gain something, little or no regard was paid to the indigenous people already inhabiting the land. Manifest Destiny

was completely taking root by 1814, after the War of 1812; and with the signing of the Treaty of Ghent, it became crystal clear that a fear of the wilderness, and the indigenous people inhabiting it, had given way and been permanently replaced in American consciousness by a feeling of entitlement over the land and the wilderness. In the Treaty of Ghent, the land that had been seized by the British was returned to American hands, and Americans had every intent and purpose of developing the land for their own use. The wording and intent of this treaty and the eagerness to have the disputed land back in American hands signals, without a doubt, that the days of fearing the wilderness as a place of evil are long gone by this time. They have been replaced by the unforgiving attitude of expansionism, particularly towards the West, under the guise of progress.

The Monroe Doctrine of 1823 helped reinforce and solidify this attitude; the doctrine was intended to keep European colonization efforts in the New World at bay. The implication was that by keeping European interests out of the unexplored areas of the continent, they were freed up exclusively for American exploration, development, and colonization efforts. Early American interests in the benefits of wilderness developed quickly from this point forward. Even as early as 1828, President John Quincy Adams set aside over 1300 acres of oak trees in Pensacola Bay to possibly be used for the future construction of American naval vessels (Brinkley 3). Even though this effort was not intended to set aside land for public use and enjoyment, it does show how land was seen as useful and can be considered an early attempt at a regulation of resources. This represents the shift in attitude from the wilderness as a place to be feared to a place to dominate, exploit, and benefit from. As American land and wilderness inevitably underwent increasingly more and more exploration, nature was truly seen less and less as a threat and more as something to be conquered and tamed with the ultimate goal being the deriving of some kind

of profit from it. This idea developed and took root in American consciousness so that by the time of the Transcendental movement, the idea of looking at American wilderness as a source for something beneficial to Americans was not an idea unique to Transcendentalists and Thoreau. What was unique was the purpose and benefit to be gained from nature. Many in Thoreau's generation saw nature as the primary source of material wealth; still others, perhaps partially spurred on by Transcendentalist thought, or by their own consciences, began seeing nature as more than a source of resources and wealth.

Even as early as the 1860s, some areas of American wilderness started to be recognized as worthy of protection. Yosemite Valley and Mariposa Grove were deemed by Abraham Lincoln in 1864 to be areas, "for public use, resort, and recreation" that "shall be inalienable for all time" (Schaffer 48). The park was placed in the hands of the state of California, the protection was not federal, and a specific agency was not assigned to regulate it. These are all points that reformers of the Progressive Era looked at as something that had to be fixed, but the significance of this act cannot go unnoticed (52). This act is worth noting because it set an important precedent in history. This was land that was set aside simply because of its value as a beautiful landscape. Instead of preserving areas for their potential value in the form of material wealth, this land was recognized as significant only on what it contributed in recreational and aesthetic value to the American people. To highlight that the importance of wilderness could go beyond natural resources, and go as far as protecting it for other purposes, was a foundational step in the environmental efforts that followed.

Besides this, one more presidential act of wilderness protection before the work of Theodore Roosevelt is worth mentioning. In 1872, President Ulysses S. Grant declared Yellowstone National Park a protected area with the *Act of Dedication*. Grant, under the advice

of F.V. Hayden and the government funded expedition credited with advocating for protection of this area, took great initiative and had remarkable foresight to follow the precedent Lincoln set and continue to pave the way for wilderness protection of great American landscapes.

Yellowstone became especially symbolic since it came on the heels of the Civil War during Reconstruction. Yellowstone signaled a new chapter in America and provided Americans from both the North and the South with a common territory to be proud of. That both the major areas set aside in the infancy of wilderness protection in America, Yosemite and Yellowstone, were in more neutral areas in the less settled West of the country, not the divided North and South, points to its symbolism as a potential source of pride. This can be seen as the very beginning of assigning patriotic elements to wilderness areas, a strategy that would come in handy during the environmental reforms of the turn of the century.

Attitudes about wilderness protection were also possibly along by a sense of nostalgia. In 1893, Frederick Jackson Turner deemed the closing of the frontier with the census of 1890. It can be no coincidence that the environmentalist reform efforts gained steam and support in the years following this declaration. With the frontier “closed,” the protection of the remaining unspoiled areas of American wilderness assured that, at the very minimum, relics of the past and of unique American traits associated with that wilderness remained. If the frontier had to disappear, at the very least a portion of it should remain as a reminder of the frontier spirit.

The preceding examples show how attitudes towards nature slowly but surely started to change in America, but it was not a change that occurred overnight. Besides ideas about conquering, taming, and exploiting nature, the presence of ideas about protecting wilderness also began to emerge. The environmental efforts and voiced opinions of environmentalist pioneers at the turn of the century are shifts that men like Thoreau and the Transcendentalist movement had

helped set the tone for; truly, by the time Muir and Roosevelt started actively focusing attention on environmental reform efforts, an escape from Thoreau's ideas about nature in America was nearly impossible.

As far as American literature and intellectual history goes, Transcendentalist writings and ideas have had far-reaching effects well past the development of Transcendental thought in the mid-nineteenth century. What started as a small intellectual group in intimate New England circles in the 1830s and 1840s has fluctuated in influence over time but never faded away completely. The greatest and most forward-thinking intellectuals in Boston started their meetings at the family home of Nathaniel Peabody and soon developed into an intellectual circle known as Transcendentalists. The Transcendentalist thinker counted on a search for truth and not being satisfied with answers that were merely given to him. Instead, he sought to explore and question his surroundings, and read and wrote prolifically on his journey of intellectual discovery. Transcendentalism was more than a simple literary, philosophical, or religious movement; it was all three of these elements plus many more combined into a cohesive whole. The over-arching, unifying theme that brought together Transcendentalists such as Margaret Fuller, Ralph Waldo Emerson, William Ellery Channing, Henry David Thoreau, George Ripley and others was an undying devotion to the pursuit of truth. Truth in society, truth in spirituality, truth amongst each other, but especially truth within themselves became the most recognizable and defining quality of Transcendentalism. Besides this, Transcendentalist thought, with the help of men such as Emerson and Thoreau, came to be synonymous with embracing a lifestyle in tune with wilderness. In particular, Transcendentalism was unique for a turning away from temples and churches as houses of spirituality in favor of seeking out the spiritual in nature.

Undoubtedly, Henry David Thoreau became the most recognized figure of the Transcendental movement associated with the idea of embracing nature and appreciating American wilderness for aesthetic, intellectual, and spiritual nourishment. Although Emerson's writings on nature are undoubtedly of significant value as well, as a call to action in the area of wilderness protection Thoreau's writings prove to have more to offer in that arena. Thoreau's writings, and consequently his intellectual influence, have proved timeless; countless notable figures in American history, and indeed world history, have cited Thoreau and his writings as an invaluable source of knowledge and influence on their own thoughts and ideas.<sup>3</sup> Thoreau's manner of writing made his works accessible to people from all walks of life. His straightforward, enjoyable prose were not weighed down by the intensity of the subjects he tackled; this made his work enjoyable to academic readers, those who read for leisure, and everyone in between. Robert D. Richardson, a Thoreau scholar, describes Thoreau's writing as, "that of a poet," with "jottings, perceptions, phrases" written on random pieces of paper and in little notes (140). Thoreau's musings, which were later compiled into essays, books, and other writings, provide valuable insights into his ideas on many issues that transcend time, and seem even more relevant every day, including nature and the environment. These writings proved to be invaluable influences especially when it came to the environmental reform movements of later generations. Without a doubt, Thoreau's literature helped define American perceptions of wilderness in the environmental reform efforts of the turn of the century.

Perhaps one of Thoreau's greatest contributions to later generations on the subject of nature and the environment came in the form of his experiment with life on the brink of modern civilization at Walden Pond and the writing that accompanied it; indeed, it was an experiment that, to varying degrees, both Muir and Roosevelt would undertake in their lifetimes. Thoreau's

friend and fellow Transcendentalist, William Ellery Channing, paved his path to Walden Pond. Channing, upon learning that Thoreau found himself having difficulties writing as prolifically as he used to, felt that Thoreau was stifled by the suffocation of village life and encouraged him to follow in his footsteps.<sup>4</sup> Channing urged Thoreau to go to a field by a pond named Briars and live within nature, as far away from civilization as realistically possible. Channing stressed his idea to Thoreau so much that it took on the characteristics of a warning: “Go out upon that, build yourself a hut, and there begin the process of devouring yourself alive. I see no other alternative, no other hope for you” (qtd. in Packer 183). Of his decision to follow Channing’s advice and go out into the woods, Thoreau writes: “I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived” (*Walden* 343). Channing acted as the catalyst that encouraged Thoreau to get closer to nature; indeed, Thoreau was so influenced by his surroundings that his time in the wilderness came to life in *Walden*, one of his more celebrated works. Thoreau made his home at Walden for two years, two months, and two days starting from March of 1845. His book was published in 1854 but did not enjoy much immediate commercial success. It took him almost five years to sell two thousand copies. The initial reception was clearly not an indication of staying power since his book went on to become a cornerstone of American literature, and became a work that undoubtedly influenced men like Muir and Roosevelt much later.

Thoreau’s ideas significantly influenced Muir and Roosevelt; as a result, the partnership between these two men set a solid foundation for the creation of the National Park Service. The National Park Service, though it was not an effort of these men alone, can be seen as the realization of Thoreau’s ideas brought to life by the partnership of Muir and Roosevelt.

A brief historical background on both Muir's and Roosevelt's interactions with the American natural environment is useful before making the connections to Thoreau's influence on each of them. This, along with the capacity in which each man was familiar with Thoreau will be explored in Chapter 2. To highlight the influence Thoreau had on each man, a literary analysis of Muir's and Thoreau's writing, along with an analysis of Roosevelt's and Thoreau's writing, is done in Chapter 3 to demonstrate parallels in thought between Thoreau and Muir and Thoreau and Roosevelt. After establishing a connection between Thoreau as an intellectual influence to both Muir and Roosevelt, the unlikely partnership between these two men is explored in Chapter 4. The significance of their partnership is explored along with the positive effects their different types of environmentalism had on environmental reform efforts. Finally, in Chapter 5, the concluding chapter discusses how Roosevelt and Muir served to balance each other's distinct brand of environmentalism and how this was useful in selling it to a broader range of the American public. Not only did they balance each other, but Thoreau's influence can be seen in distinct ways through each man's interpretation of wilderness and wilderness protection. The creation of the National Park Service, an effort genuinely aided by Muir and Roosevelt, is also explored as a realization of Henry David Thoreau's vision.

**CHAPTER II**  
**JOHN MUIR, THEODORE ROOSEVELT, AND THE AMERICAN NATURAL**  
**ENVIRONMENT**

John Muir is fondly remembered as founder of the Sierra Club and as a staunch defender and pioneer of the turn of the century environmental movement. At a time when America looked at gender roles as being specifically defined, and encouraged adherence to these roles, Muir ignored critics and put up with disparaging remarks about his manhood in order to further the cause of saving the wild. He also ignored comments comparing men who did work in environmental reform to women who were touting themselves as “municipal housekeepers.” With women in Progressive America seeking a voice in society by involving themselves in environmental issues, men who sought a voice in these same issues were very often deemed effeminate. Men such as Muir, who were interested in the welfare of the environment and issues such as clean air and water, had to defend the rights of the wilderness and their manhood with equal enthusiasm.<sup>5</sup>

Even on his journeys of exploration across America before he entered the political spotlight through activism in environmentalism, he found people questioning the masculinity of his passion. Muir, not one to take these comments quietly, often used wit and rhetoric to defend himself. Muir documented one of these experiences in the journal of his journey to the Gulf in 1867; this journal was eventually published under the title: *A Thousand Mile Walk to the Gulf*. Muir writes about a small North Carolina town where he came upon a house and asked for a night’s lodging and some food. The woman who answered the door called to her husband, a blacksmith, who allowed Muir to spend the night. At dinner with the man and his wife the man asked Muir, “ Young man, what are you doing down here?” (*Thousand Mile Walk* 23) Muir

answered that he was in the area looking at plants, to which the man responded, “Plants? What kind of plants?” (*Thousand Mile Walk* 23). Muir continued to tell him that he was looking at all sorts of different plants because all plants were of interest to him. The blacksmith had been under the impression that Muir was employed by the government on some sort of private business. Muir assured him that his only interest in the South were plants. Muir’s host replied: “You look like a strong-minded man and surely you are able to do something better than wander over the country and look at weeds and blossoms. These are hard times, and real work is required of every man that is able. Picking up blossoms doesn’t seem to be a man’s work at all in any kind of times” (*Thousand Mile Walk* 23-24). The obvious implication of the man’s statement is that Muir is engaging in work that he does not see as masculine, and is thus, rendered useless. Being that the Civil War had just ended two years before Muir’s journey and he traveled during Reconstruction, it is no surprise that this man questioned the usefulness of his endeavors. This man’s questioning makes sense considering that the man was a blacksmith, a trade that was no doubt useful to the South during Reconstruction. To silence the man, Muir asks the man if he is a believer of the *Bible*, to which the man admits that he is. Muir then cites a passage of the Bible where Christ said to his disciples: “Consider the lilies how they grow” (*Thousand Mile Walk* 25). Muir used this passage as an example that Christ invites all people regardless of gender to embrace the beauty of nature that surrounds them. Muir asks the man whose word he should take, his, that says not to consider them because it is not worthwhile to any strong-minded man; or Christ’s, who encourages man to “consider the lilies.” Muir used rhetoric and a bit of wit to give the man an answer that satisfied him and actually caused him to admit that Muir must be very justified in his work. It was no small feat that Muir was able to change this man’s opinion of him and his work to a favorable one. After all, even with the justification Muir gave that was

supported by a Bible passage, his work did not yield any palpable benefit to a nation recovering from the Civil War.

The comparisons and mean-spirited remarks were obviously unpleasant, but Muir shook them off as irrelevant in the face of a bigger issue: environmental destruction in America. One of the most interesting aspects to study in Muir's work is the echo of Thoreau's ideals and Transcendental influences that run throughout his writing. A concrete connection between Muir and Thoreau is defined by analyzing the parallels between the rhetoric of both men, and the link is undeniable. Add to this, Muir's knowledge and admiration of Thoreau's work and the case becomes even stronger.

Muir's first encounter with Thoreau's work came at the age of thirty-four at the suggestion of Muir's dear friend, social activist Abba Woolson. Woolson was a suffragist from Maine who was fond of the outdoors, though she felt she could not enjoy them as fully as she wanted to because of gender prejudices of the time. She was well-read and forward-thinking, and she saw striking similarities between Muir and Thoreau. Her admiration for Thoreau was so deep that she mailed her own copies of *Walden* and *Excursions* to Muir along with a strong urging that he should read them. Muir did so and embarked on a literary journey he would keep up the rest of his life, and that no doubt helped set the tone of his own relationship with the wild. Through Thoreau, Muir explored the places he read about, and Muir's correspondence is evidence to the fact that he not only read Thoreau's work but that it was notable enough to him to write about in discussions with other people. The instances that moved him to discuss Thoreau in writing with other people were not just once or twice as fleeting moments, but several times throughout his life. To his friend Jeanne Carr, in a letter dated May 29, 1870, he talks about reading Thoreau's *Maine* while on a trip to Alaska (Muir, *His Life* 117-18). Later, in a

letter to Mrs. J.D. Hooker dated September 15, 1910 written from his home in Martinez, California, Muir enclosed a poem by Thoreau that he wanted to share with Mrs. Hooker. This is significant for two reasons. First, it showed that Muir was well-read in Thoreau and delved deeper than only Thoreau's more popular literature into the lesser known works (Muir, *His Life* 353). Second, one of the first letters where he talks about Thoreau was written in 1870; in another letter the year is 1910. This alone shows that Muir's admiration for Thoreau truly did span his lifetime; at the very least he was interested for forty years, and this makes it feasible, if not certain, that the admiration for Thoreau truly persisted throughout his entire life.

The evidence of lifelong study of Thoreau's texts is supported by Muir's own bookshelf at his home in Martinez, California. Muir's bookshelf had several volumes of Thoreau's work, some heavily annotated, that add credibility to Muir's knowledge of Thoreau's writing.<sup>6</sup> This is important because it reinforces the idea that Muir found Thoreau's ideas compelling and worthy of investing time to study. The ideas he read about were not a fleeting interest but foundational to his own views of wilderness. With the links indicating familiarity, interest, and admiration solidly established, true influence is best proved by looking at the similarity of their thoughts and ideas through writing. Beyond that, the relevance of Thoreau to Muir's activism is inescapable based on Thoreau setting the tone in environmental reformers' attitudes towards nature in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Thoreau's influence knew no boundaries, and Theodore Roosevelt, the man who would later be dubbed the "Wilderness Warrior," was no exception. Roosevelt was another man who gained a great deal of influence from the writings of Thoreau, although the influence stemmed from another view of naturalism distinct from that of Muir. Despite the differences, both men grew up in a country where Thoreau's thoughts on nature helped define American perceptions of

wilderness. As a young child, Roosevelt was a rather sickly boy who suffered from asthma that was at times very severe. He described himself in a letter to a friend as an adult as being “a wretched mite suffering acutely with asthma” (Brinkley 22). To cope with his illness and compensate for his sickliness, he immersed himself in amateur ornithology and the great outdoors. His favorite childhood escapes involved being in the fresh air and exploring the wilderness around him; Roosevelt believed, even as a child, that nature helped his ailments plague him less. As he grew into a young man and an adult, he nurtured his love of the wilderness into a passion for hunting and an incredible enthusiasm for the revitalizing effects of the outdoors. The love Roosevelt had for birds, hunting, taxidermy, and the great outdoors eventually transformed itself into an interest in the conservation of wildlife (Rosen 127). Roosevelt’s rugged approach to the outdoors, his advocacy of the “strenuous life,”<sup>7</sup> and his cautioning against over-civilization helped nurture his image as a man’s man, a stark contrast to the public perception of his future fellow environmentalist, John Muir (Rome 449). Roosevelt’s actions in the Spanish American War helped back up the words he preached; this, along with his public display of hunting prowess, made it almost impossible that charges of effeminacy would be raised against Roosevelt as they were against Muir.

Roosevelt’s image as a macho man was cemented well before he assumed the Presidency in 1901. His stance on foreign policy, national defense, and patriotism made sure his masculine image stood on firm ground. Even in 1899 when Roosevelt was still Governor of New York and before a fateful act had him take over McKinley’s position as president, Roosevelt’s address to the Hamilton Club of Chicago shows how firm his stances on these issues were. In the speech that eventually came to be known primarily for its advocacy of what he called the “strenuous life,” Roosevelt championed: “Not the doctrine of ignoble ease, but the doctrine of the strenuous

life, the life of toil and effort, of labor and strife; to preach that highest form of success which comes, not to the man who desires mere easy peace, but to the man who does not shrink from danger, from hardship, or from bitter toil, and who out of these wins the ultimate triumph” (*An American Mind* 184). This excerpt from his speech is an example of the type of rhetoric that laid the foundation for Roosevelt to be perceived as a masculine leader for the people of America in the years to come in his presidency and his life in politics and the environmental reform arena. By no means could a man advocating the value of danger, hardship, labor, and strife be considered effeminate in the public eye at this time, as some reformers such as Muir were seen. Even if he as an individual could be considered effeminate, his policies could not; this translated as beneficial when he joined efforts with Muir and the environmentalist movement.

Even though Roosevelt primarily saw nature as beneficial for its ability to provide masculine vigor to future generations of American boys, he maintained a Transcendentalist viewpoint when it came to certain things concerning nature. Roosevelt scholar Douglas Brinkley touches on how Roosevelt had a “Thoreaurian ‘back to nature’ aesthetic strain coursing through his veins,” (8) and how it was evident in correspondence with several influential friends and naturalists of his time.<sup>8</sup>

Roosevelt’s own brand of wilderness awareness is interesting because it differs so greatly from both Muir’s and Thoreau’s approaches to wilderness while retaining an essential element of Thoreau’s texts: that American wilderness deserved to be protected because it offered an inherent value. Roosevelt did not just want to exploit American wilderness for natural resources, something Thoreau wholeheartedly saw as a negative effect of development in the generation he grew up in as well. However, Roosevelt also did not want to merely preserve areas of wilderness as sources of refuge from urban jungles based solely on their beauty or as fountains for spiritual

encounters. Rather, he sought to defend the wilderness because of the value it held for American manhood, the scientific aspects of natural wonders, and for the potentially regulated resources that the wilderness offered American industry. The beauty of wilderness had little value to Roosevelt merely for aesthetic or spiritual pleasure; instead, he saw the value of understanding the animals he hunted, the revitalizing effects of fresh air, and ensuring that America's forests continued to be a bountiful source of timber for generations to come. Especially because Roosevelt's interest in hunting, wildlife, and taxidermy went beyond merely hunting animals to a genuine curiosity to understand them, some scholars have taken to referring to him as an "outdoor intellectual" (Rosen 127). Roosevelt historian Douglas Brinkley best sums up Roosevelt's distinct brand of environmentalism by stating: "Biodiversity was apparent and essential in nature, Roosevelt believed, wherever open minds looked. A huge cornucopia of wild creatures and plants, diverse in purpose and structure, with beauty and utilitarianism beyond the most fertile imagination, was an omnipotent God's blessed gift to America" (15). By appealing to scientific and patriotic sensibilities, Roosevelt's brand of environmentalism compensated for the instances where Muir's sentimentalist approach fell short in the eyes of some Americans. Practicality and patriotism were great tools to sway Americans who still saw environmental reform efforts as "women's work" or a waste of valuable resources.

When Roosevelt did appear to value certain wilderness areas for their aesthetic value, he added another dimension to his admiration to avoid appearing as if he wanted to save those areas simply for their natural beauty; whether this was an intentional strategy or just a coincidence is debatable. Roosevelt's addition of patriotism helped take beautiful places in American wilderness and give them a distinct value by branding them as a legitimate source of pride for Americans. Wild areas became Americanized; in this process Roosevelt's advocacy of them

could hardly be dismissed as frivolous. Roosevelt's reasoning and persuading of the American people to stand in support of environmental efforts was eloquent and compelling, as demonstrated by this example that appeared in 1905 in *Outdoor Pastimes of an American Hunter*: "Surely our people do not understand even yet the rich heritage that is theirs. There can be nothing in the world more beautiful than the Yosemite, the groves of giant sequoias and redwoods, the Canyon of the Colorado, the Canyon in the Yellowstone, the Three Tetons; and our people should see to it that they are preserved for their children and their children's children forever with their majestic beauty unmarred" (qtd. in Brinkley 21). By appealing to the heritage of the nation and their children and by assigning a sense of pride uniquely American to these places, Roosevelt's rhetoric subtly conveyed patriotism and a potential legacy in the hands of the American people. This is most evident in his use of the word heritage and his specific naming of places distinctly American.

Despite his concern for some of America's most pristine and fantastic wilderness, he did not view all wilderness through the same lens. As an environmentalist Roosevelt found himself where the proverbial path in the woods diverged; he did not align himself solely with the beliefs of pioneering men such as John Muir, but he did not strictly view American wilderness as a source of natural wealth in need of efficient management like Gifford Pinchot. Pinchot differed from Roosevelt in his objectives for environmental protection, and he was not considered a true environmentalist by traditional standards. He was an extreme conservationist in the sense that his main focus was on regulating the resources that were of value and found in the American wilderness. His motto was: "Conservation means the greatest good to the greatest number for the longest time" (Pinchot 48). Despite this, Roosevelt trusted Pinchot's conservationist foresight and worked with him on creating a number of protected areas including the so-called

midnight forests. Even with Roosevelt's backing Muir and Pinchot clashed horribly. Even so, Roosevelt trusted Pinchot's ideas, and he became emblematic of a new kind of environmentally conscious man by finding himself halfway between Muir's idealism and Pinchot's pragmatism in his unique approach to American wilderness, an approach undoubtedly also influenced by Thoreau.

By analyzing the writings and ideas of Thoreau in conjunction with both Muir and Roosevelt, as will be done in the next chapter, it is possible to see which of Thoreau's ideas made an impact and persisted to create an environment where each man could take the ideas of Thoreau that most appealed to him. The sentiments of Thoreau that are so closely echoed by Muir and Roosevelt can be seen as defining the actions forged during the partnership between the two men. Thoreau's influence on both men is evident. However, Muir's writing so strongly reflects Thoreau's ideas about nature as a spiritual experience that certain passages can read to an unfamiliar reader as if the same man wrote them. With Roosevelt, Thoreau's influence is seen in his writing about wilderness. The connection to Thoreau's influence on Roosevelt is also made by accepting Thoreau as a strong influence on Muir and in turn viewing Muir as an influence on Roosevelt's naturalist outlook. Since it is clear that Roosevelt admired and was influenced by Muir, an indirect influence is present along with the one that has already been established.<sup>9</sup> In both men, it is evident that Thoreau influenced their ideas of wilderness protection. Thoreau's literary influence exists through a significant contribution to the intellectual climate both men were exposed to, and it is an effect that was foundational to their views on the environmental efforts that paved the way for the eventual creation of the National Park Service in 1916. To analyze Thoreau's influence on Muir and Roosevelt, it is essential to look at several aspects of Thoreau's writing: his views on the West, his advocacy of protected lands, and the inherent,

natural value he believed resided within wilderness. By taking these elements present in Thoreau's writing and juxtaposing them alongside the work of Muir and Roosevelt, the influences are transformed into much more. Truly, Thoreau's ideas became inescapable elements of views of nature during Roosevelt's and Muir's time; their particular interpretation of nature could not have existed without Thoreau's contributions.

### CHAPTER III

#### HENRY DAVID THOREAU'S INFLUENCE ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFORTS AND THE PARTNERSHIP OF JOHN MUIR AND THEODORE ROOSEVELT

A vital aspect of understanding Thoreau's eventual influence is the frame of mind that existed and accompanied him during his time at Walden Pond, the experience which can be considered the catalyst for Thoreau's views on nature. At one point, Thoreau questions the destruction of wilderness in a way that seems almost like a precursor to the environmental movement, when, in *Walden* he asks, "How can you expect the birds to sing when their groves are cut down?" (*Walden* 441) This is a subtle reference to his thoughts on the fate of nature, but his opinions in other passages that follow are more pronounced. In the chapter titled "Spring" in *Walden* Thoreau writes, "Our village life would stagnate if it were not for the unexplored forests and meadows which surround it. We need the tonic of wilderness. [...] At the same time that we are earnest to explore and learn all things, we require that all things be mysterious and unexplorable, that land and sea be infinitely wild, unsurveyed and unfathomed by us because unfathomable. We can never have enough of nature" (557). Not only does this excerpt point to Thoreau's value for life away from the dreariness and unstimulating environment of towns and cities, but it also parallels what appears to be echoed in Muir's writing: that immersion in the unconfined wilds of nature is preferable above almost anything.

The best testament to Thoreau's influence on Muir's view of nature comes in the parallels present in the writings and ideas of both men. Muir believed that God could be found in the wilderness with much more ease than he could be found in any temple or church that man made. By having a meaningful relationship with nature, people could have a meaningful relationship with God because the most spiritual experiences came when experiencing God's handiwork

firsthand. In 1867 Muir undertook the extensive walk across America that would eventually be the subject of his book *A Thousand Mile Walk to the Gulf*. In the journal that this memoir was based on, Muir writes about discovering the wilderness of the Southern United States as he moved westward. Muir wrote, as a testament to the presence of God in nature, “Every tree, every flower, every ripple and eddy of this lovely stream seemed solemnly to feel the presence of the great Creator” (*Thousand Mile Walk* 30). After this trip, Muir found himself in Cuba in 1868. He hoped to continue on to South America, but due to lack of finding an available ship, he decided to go to San Francisco and the Sierra Nevada in California instead. Three months later he found himself in the Yosemite Valley for the first time, and his love affair with the wilderness of California began (Pinchot 1).

It was these experiences that he documented in the journal that later became the book *My First Summer in the Sierras*, where Muir explicitly makes references to God when he writes about an experience in the mountains of California,

A few minutes ago every tree was excited, bowing to the roaring storm, waving, swirling, tossing their branches in glorious enthusiasm like worship. But though to the outer ear these trees are no silent, their songs never cease. Every hidden cell is throbbing with music and life, every fiber trilling like harp strings, while incense is ever flowing from the balsam bells and leaves. No wonder the hills and groves were God’s first temples, and the more they are cut down and hewn into cathedrals and churches, the farther off and dimmer seems the Lord himself. (*Nature Writings* 237)

Not only do both of the preceding excerpts showcase Muir’s awe at the power of nature, but they also provide insight to something he had in common with Thoreau. Both of these excerpts also echo Thoreau’s belief that one could find God in nature; elaborate temples made by destroying nature were not needed. The parallel between the two men and thus, Thoreau’s interpretation of nature, can be seen when Muir refers to “God’s first temples.” Further evidence of this comes when Thoreau writes about the shrines he visits in the woods. In *Walden*, Thoreau writes,

“[W]here a forest was cut down last winter another is springing up by its shore as lustily as ever; the same thought is welling up to its surface that was then; it is the same liquid joy and happiness to itself and its Maker, ay, an it *may* be to me. It is the work of a brave man surely, in whom there is no guile! He rounded this water with his hand, deepened and clarified it in his thought, and in his will bequeathed it to Concord” (442). When Muir speaks of the temples in nature and Thoreau expresses his wonder at the way he imagines God created the land they are both making reference to the presence of God being in every natural thing surrounding them. Even more compelling is Thoreau’s statement in *Walden*, “Talk of heaven! Ye disgrace earth” (448). Indeed, this statement, given the descriptions both men use in reference to nature, seems to be representative of the attitudes of both Muir and Thoreau towards wilderness areas. The similarities show Thoreau’s influence on Muir; ideas from Thoreau’s Transcendentalism shaped the rhetoric Muir used to write about his own encounters with nature.

The healing and restorative properties of direct interaction with nature is something that both men advocate; by comparing the words of Thoreau with the words of Muir a stronger case can be made. In this case, a striking similarity can be found in both men’s views on the value of walking and having a meaningful relationship with nature in the process. Not only was the relationship with nature meaningful, but both men saw walking in nature as an escape from life that helped cleanse the soul. Thoreau took walking in nature very seriously and believed it was something to be done with purpose. When writing about walking as a profession in *Walking*, Thoreau writes:

No wealth can buy the requisite leisure, freedom, and independence which are the capital in this profession. It comes only by the grace of God. It requires a direct dispensation from Heaven to become a walker [...] I think I cannot preserve my health and spirits, unless I spend four hours a day at least—and it is commonly more than that—sauntering through the woods and over the hills and fields, absolutely free from all worldly engagements. (594)

To Thoreau the value of nature was so great that he considered it essential to his health. Muir has a similar view of the restorative effects of nature; a view clearly in line with Thoreau's thinking. Though Muir's work is littered with examples of his own view of nature's healing qualities, one of his most profound expressions involving this idea comes when he was in Alaska in 1880 with Samuel Hall Young. During this trip Young and his companions were going to continue on without Muir; Muir told Young that he would often need to break away from the group for his own sanity. He said: "Keep close to Nature's heart, yourself; and break clear away, once in a while, and climb a mountain or spend a week in the woods. Wash your spirit clean from the earth-stains of this sordid, gold-seeking crowd in God's pure air. It will help you in your efforts to bring to these men something better than gold. Don't lose your freedom and your love of the Earth as God made it." (qtd. in Young) In both passages both men are emphasizing the urgency of walking, hiking, or exploring. More importantly, the journey of communing and being cleansed by nature is a common theme in the thoughts and expressions of both men; that Muir was a product of an environment shaped by Thoreau becomes clearer.

Further, it is interesting to note that both Muir and Thoreau note the uselessness of money. Thoreau does so by saying that money cannot buy the benefits of a good, deliberate walk in nature, and Muir does so by pointing out that what is found in nature is better than gold. Both men emphasize that the benefits reaped from interacting with nature are so valuable that they cannot assign a monetary value to them; the value assigned is much more significant and comes in the form of interaction with nature. The influence of Thoreau on Muir is also seen in these two passages by noting that both men stress the significance of freedom to the soul; Thoreau notes that to be in good spirits and health he needs to be free from worldly engagements by being in nature for an extended period every day. Muir, on the other hand, urges his companion not to

lose his freedom and encourages escapes to the wild to prevent this; this is a suggestion Muir makes to help Young keep his spirit clean. The parallels both men make regarding freedom and the effects it has on the soul are striking.

Perhaps the most startling similarities between the writings of Thoreau and Muir can be found where both men write about the concept of protected wilderness. Both men were familiar with the idea of setting aside areas of wilderness specifically for public or private enjoyment; however, the idea of preserving wilderness with full-scale federal action was not realized until 1916. Both men would have been familiar with President John Quincy Adams' efforts to set aside over a thousand acres of live oaks in Pensacola Bay so that the timber supply for the construction of American Navy Vessels would not be completely exhausted. In addition to this, Muir would have had knowledge of President Abraham Lincoln's designation of Yosemite Valley and Mariposa Grove as protected areas in 1864. Then in 1872 Ulysses S. Grant declared Yellowstone National Park a federally protected area. The ideas for the protection of wilderness were there, but they were in the stages of infancy. Even so, Thoreau was familiar with the idea of government sponsored wilderness protection, and it is an idea that he thought should be expanded. In *Wild Fruits* Thoreau writes: "I think that each town, should have a park, or rather a primitive forest, of five-hundred or a thousand acres, either in one body or several, where a stick should never be cut for fuel, nor for the navy, nor to make wagons, but stand and decay for higher uses--a common possession forever, for instruction and recreation" (238). Though Thoreau does not explicitly state that a National Park System should exist, the general idea behind his sentiment leaves the reader no choice but to conclude that he believed designated and protected areas of wilderness, the very nature of what parks aim to be, were necessary to every community. While Thoreau does not specifically state what the "instruction and recreation

purposes” of parks would be, by his mention of “higher uses” and the perpetual nature of parks, readers can deduce that he may have thought that parks could function for some of the things that Muir describes decades later. Thoreau’s view of wilderness stands on firm ground even without this text, and Muir would have undoubtedly been familiar with Thoreau’s ideas about the need to protect it. In this way Muir’s text can be seen as building upon the foundation Thoreau left behind as almost a continuation of the work Thoreau advocated but never really put into action. As urban lifestyles increased and replaced rural lifestyles, it is no wonder that Muir’s own thoughts on protected wilderness echoed those of Thoreau.<sup>10</sup> Muir writes:

Thousands of tired, nerve-shaken, over-civilized people are beginning to find out that going to the mountains is going home; that wildness is a necessity; and that mountain parks and reservations are not only useful as fountains of timber and irrigating rivers, but as fountains of life. Awakening from the stupefying effects of the vice of over-industry and the deadly apathy of luxury, they are trying as best as they can to mix and enrich their own little ongoings with those of Nature, and to get rid of rust and disease. (*Our National Parks* 1)

Though the wording is not identical, by knowing how well read in Thoreau Muir was, and by knowing that he held a deep admiration for him as thinker and environmentalist, the parallels between their writing and ideas becomes distinctly related. Both men believed that protecting wilderness from exploitation for natural resources in the form of parks was necessary for Americans to enjoy as sources of recreation and learning.

Of course, just because Muir showed distinct echoes of Thoreau’s own belief system does not mean that Muir agreed with Thoreau in everything. Though Muir admired Thoreau, to Muir he had made only a half-hearted attempt at truly embracing the lifestyle as one with nature that he advocated. Even though Thoreau writes, “I should be glad if all the meadows on earth were left in a wild state...” it does not seem that he ever took his experiment with nature to the extreme (*Walden* 453). At no point in his life did Thoreau immerse himself so completely in

wilderness as Muir did in California among the Sierra Mountains. Muir writes, “Even open-eyed Thoreau would perhaps have done well had he extended his walks westward to see what God had to show in the lofty sunset mountains” (qtd. in Fox 83).<sup>11</sup> Despite the criticism Muir may have harbored for Thoreau, his own thinking was greatly paralleled by that of Thoreau when it came to beliefs on spirituality in nature and designating lands as protected areas of wilderness. In most of their main thoughts and views on nature, the similarity in Thoreau’s and Muir’s beliefs is evident; that Thoreau did not carry out his immersion in the wilderness to the same extent Muir did does not take away from the intellectual influence Thoreau may have signified for Muir. On the contrary, Muir could not have escaped the intellectual legacy Thoreau left behind.

As with Muir, the influence Thoreau had on Theodore Roosevelt is evident in his speeches and writing. At first mention, the suggestion that Thoreau could have influenced Roosevelt’s environmentalism seems a little strange; at the very best, it is a stretch to consider this because of how different the two appear on the surface. However, Roosevelt himself makes the connection by mentioning his admiration for Thoreau in a contribution he made to “Literature of American Big-Game Hunting” (Brinkley 264). It is interesting that a man who found one huge aspect of nature’s value to act as a source of a manly and vigorous pastime such as hunting, outright admitted the value of Thoreau. It is indeed even more interesting that he cites Thoreau as a reference at all, considering that Thoreau rarely hunted for animals, and when he did it was for subsistence or scientific purposes of study, not for trophy or thrill or as a source of manliness. Even so, Roosevelt mentions that “while of course the volumes of Burroughs and Thoreau have of course a unique literary value for every man who cares for outdoor life in the woods and fields and among the mountains” (Brinkley 264). Roosevelt is making the connection that Thoreau and his literature is relevant and acts as an influential cornerstone to his, or any

other American's, life as an outdoorsman; his writing provides literary value and a voice to the outdoor experience.

The strongest link between Thoreau and Roosevelt that highlights what Roosevelt took from Thoreau's legacy comes in the shape of their mutual cautioning against over-civilization. According to Adam Rome, Roosevelt felt that "the rugged outings in the wilderness invigorated men in danger of becoming over-civilized" (449). This, when paired with his advocacy of the "strenuous life" combines to make Roosevelt an interesting environmentalist. Roosevelt states: "I wish to preach, not the doctrine of ignoble ease, but the doctrine of the strenuous life, the life of toil and effort, of labor and strife; to preach that highest form of success which comes, not to the man who desires mere easy peace, but to the man who does not shrink from danger, from hardship, or from bitter toil, and who out of these wins the splendid triumph" (*An American Mind* 184). Although in this speech Roosevelt is making the case for an expansionist approach to American foreign policy, by analyzing the implications of his words the support of this can also be seen as a cautioning against over-civilization. Surely, men who endure the "strenuous life," a life of toil, effort, and hardship do their part to avoid a case of over-civilization; merely by embracing these qualities they avoid becoming over-civilized and retain overt elements of ruggedness and masculinity. The spoils of war and expansionism belong to those who do not shrink away from danger; similarly, the benefits of a life exposed to the wilderness and lived avoiding over-civilization has its benefits. His advocacy of these qualities make Roosevelt interesting in the sense that to an American audience he retained his masculinity and actually used his interaction with wilderness to add to the macho image he wanted to portray while promoting environmentalist causes. Interestingly, Thoreau's writing indicates the same aversion to over-civilization and serves as a likely source of influence for Roosevelt. In *Walking*, Thoreau

mentions that he: “Would not have every man nor every part of man cultivated, any more than I would have every corner of Earth cultivated: part will be tillage, but the great part will be meadow and forest, not only serving an immediate use, but preparing a mould against a distant future, by the annual decay of the vegetation which it supports” (622). It is not a stretch to consider how this passage could have very likely acted as an intellectual influence for Roosevelt; at the very least it shows the appeal Thoreau could have had to Roosevelt’s environmentalism. In another excerpt from Thoreau’s *Walking* one can see where it is very likely that Roosevelt would have agreed with Thoreau’s sentiments. Thoreau writes, “When sometimes I am reminded that the mechanics stay in their shops not only all the forenoon, but all the afternoon too, sitting with crossed legs, so many of them – as if the legs were made to sit upon, and not to stand or walk upon – I think that they deserve some credit for not having committed suicide long ago” (*Walking* 595). Indeed, Thoreau’s sympathy for those who cannot take the time to explore wilderness is something Roosevelt would have agreed with. Quite possibly, Thoreau’s writing reaffirmed Roosevelt’s already present valuing of the benefits of a life lived with enjoyment and exposure to the outdoors; the similarity in thought is undeniable. Roosevelt expresses the value of escaping the confines of a work life primarily taking place in an indoor setting by emphasizing the grandness of a life of work conducted in the great outdoors. Roosevelt writes, “The free, open-air life of the ranchman, the pleasantest and healthiest life in America, is from its very nature ephemeral”<sup>12</sup> (*An American Mind* 282). This statement must be broken down into two significant parts. On the one hand, Roosevelt acknowledges that the life of the ranchman is ephemeral, a disappearing remnant of the American wilderness that can be considered by its very nature to eventually disappear. Ranching supposes a taming and conquering of wilderness that can only lead to development and progress, and by that avenue a destruction of its state as true

wilderness, but for Roosevelt it is still representative of an ideal relationship between man and the wilderness he seeks to tame. Despite the state of this life in time, place and circumstance, the other part of this statement rings true and is useful for comparison with Thoreau. By stating that a “free, open-air” life is the “pleasantest and healthiest life in America,” Roosevelt has assigned this profession its value by its merit of being a life based primarily on contact with the outdoors and wilderness (*An American Mind* 282). The open air he speaks of values the absence of life spent cooped up in a building, the very thing that made Thoreau shudder. That the life Roosevelt considers “pleasantest and healthiest” is a life of an outdoor ranchman while Thoreau considered the most miserable life confined to sitting instead of exploring and interacting with nature signals that both men thought along similar lines in regard to a life with nature (*An American Mind* 282).

Further similarities between their thoughts on the value of a life exposed to the outdoors can be seen in other instances. Thoreau’s influence is present in the form of a contribution to the construction of the intellectual climate in which Roosevelt developed his appreciation of nature. In *Walking*, again another parallel can be found between Thoreau and Roosevelt. Thoreau writes “In short, all good things are wild and free” (*Walking* 618). This is a simple yet obvious cautioning against over-civilization that Roosevelt would have surely agreed with. When Thoreau makes this reference, Roosevelt’s own cautioning against over-civilization seems to recall these famous lines.

The admiration that Thoreau nurtured for nature went beyond a simple appreciation of beauty and the revitalization effect found in the wilderness; indeed, Thoreau truly harbored an appreciation of the potential of nature to act as an agent of spiritual nourishment. Many times in his writings about Walden Thoreau describes standing in near silence, with only the sounds of nature in the background, and finding himself in total awe of his surroundings. He was

mesmerized by the feelings that his solitude with nature stirred within him; he considered the experience a spiritual one, and everything that surrounded him from swamps to trees to lakes and the sky made up the shrines where he worshipped (Thoreau, *Walden* 449). Thoreau believed that in nature he would find not only a more elevated and spiritual understanding of nature, but in actuality he could find the “truth” about life and about himself. Thoreau writes, “A lake is the landscape’s most beautiful and expressive feature. It is earth’s eye; looking into which the beholder can measure the depth of his own nature” (*Walden* 435). The impact of this passage highlights how Thoreau embraced nature as a source of spiritual wonder and comfort while at the same time finding it a useful avenue by which to pursue an introspective look at his own soul. Thoreau advocated the necessity of wilderness spaces in the form of parks being essential to every village or town in the country. Although he advocated this and spent most of his life exploring and writing about wilderness, his call to action was just that, a call; seldom, if ever, was action taken on Thoreau’s part to put his ideas into effect. Both Muir and Roosevelt found a distinct connection with the work of Thoreau, even if his appeal manifested itself differently for each man. Between Thoreau, Muir, and Roosevelt, the greatest link in their thoughts about wilderness comes in their simple appreciation for wild things and their need to protect them, something that can be clearly seen in the writing of all three. Even though they all differ in specifics as to their ideas on why wilderness should be preserved, and even how and for what purpose, the common thread of wilderness appreciation and a call for protection runs through all their works. Given this, Thoreau’s influence and contributions to the intellectual climate, in regards to wilderness appreciation and protection, that Muir and Roosevelt lived and worked in is undeniable.

Together John Muir and Theodore Roosevelt were the driving force that helped Thoreau's visions become reality and commemorated his philosophy forever to the benefit of American wilderness. As individuals Muir and Roosevelt could not have been more different. Muir advocated preservation while Roosevelt had more conservationist tendencies. Interestingly, the three all had the concept of parks in common. Thoreau's similarities in his view of nature as a refuge from society is echoed by Roosevelt and Muir. Thoreau's ideas began as a Transcendentalist belief and eventually his writings took root enough to have a significant influence in a Progressive world. The climate of society at this time was beneficial to environmental reforms since so many other reform efforts were underway; efforts in the arenas of clean air and water, workers' rights and women's rights were only some of the reforms being sought. As a whole, the country was looking at ways to improve the quality of life of Americans; although environmental reforms were initially met with resistance, slowly these kinds of issues became a priority. The climate of the time Muir and Roosevelt worked in was imperative to the many successes they achieved; it is in a Progressive world, and to a significant degree through the partnership between Muir and Roosevelt, that Thoreau's ideas became reality.

## CHAPTER IV

### JOHN MUIR AND THEODORE ROOSEVELT: TWO UNLIKELY ALLIES

In the scope of their efforts, Muir and Roosevelt had the common goal of saving as much of the remaining wilderness in America as possible. However, each man had a distinct perspective of why wilderness should be saved and what it means to save it. Thoreau's influence can be primarily seen in their views on why wilderness should be saved; in matters of what the saved areas should be used for, Muir and Roosevelt each had their own distinct ideas although they did have one in common. Although both Muir and Roosevelt agreed that saving American wilderness was necessary, Roosevelt took on a more conservationist approach while Muir took a more preservationist approach. Roosevelt believed that some areas of American wilderness were so spectacular that they deserved special consideration; however, other areas were more useful because they were plentiful in resources to be conserved and regulated for the benefit of American industries such as forestry. This distinction results in Roosevelt being seen as more of a conservationist. Muir on the other hand, hardly ever championed for conservationist efforts, preferring instead to focus solely on preservation efforts. As a preservationist Muir saw the value in American landscape not for the resources it offered American industries but for the value in nature itself. The spiritual nourishment and exposure to aesthetic beauty found in nature was reason enough to protect it because it acted as a source of refuge and revitalization for people. The preservationist attitude in him was an almost complete contradiction to Roosevelt's conservationism, but somehow their partnership had a positive effect on the environmental reforms of the turn of the century. The genuine love for wilderness that both men had, despite different approaches to achieving their goals, resulted in an incredible effort to make significant changes to wilderness management in the United States; this effort resulted in the culmination of

many of Thoreau's ideas and would not have been possible without Thoreau's writing about nature before them.

One instance where Muir expressed his thoughts about the American wilderness publicly outside of a published book was in an article he wrote that was published in August of 1897 in *The Atlantic*. This article, titled "The American Forests," was an appeal to the federal government to take charge of protecting American wilderness and an attempt to convince the American public of the value of the wild in their backyard. Even though some areas were protected in name, it was not enough and the protection often was in name rather than in action. Muir begins his article by describing the vast varieties of trees found in America. He continues: "With such variety, harmony, and triumphant exuberance, even nature, it would seem, might have rested content with the forests of North America, and planted no more" (Muir, "American Forests"). Here, it seems that Muir is doing what Roosevelt will do a few years later and appealing to American patriotism by pointing out the superiority of American wilderness. American wilderness is so grand that even nature could not improve it further or make anything to surpass it, based on Muir's words. Muir goes on to talk about how these grand areas of practically untouched wilderness were rapidly transformed. He writes: "So they appeared a few centuries ago when they were rejoicing in wildness. The Indians with stone axes could do them no more harm than could gnawing beavers and browsing moose [...] but when steel axes of the white man rang out in the startled air their doom was sealed. Every tree heard the bodeful sound, and pillars of smoke gave the sign in the sky" (Muir, "American Forests"). Muir's disappointment at the fate American wilderness was suffering becomes even more apparent when he writes about the destruction that accompanied an expansion westward. Though he does not name the culprit as Manifest Destiny, the wording and the general argument behind his

description leaves little doubt that this and the ideas that accompanied it are what he is referring to as the main enemy of American wildness. Muir writes:

Accordingly, with no eye to the future, these pious destroyers waged interminable forest wars [...] After the Atlantic Coast from Maine to Georgia had been mostly cleared and scorched into melancholy ruins, the overflowing multitude of bread and money seekers poured over the Alleghanies into the fertile middle West, spreading ruthless devastation ever. [...] Thence still westward the invading horde of destroyers called settlers made its fiery way over the broad Rocky Mountains, felling and burning more fiercely than ever, until at least it has reached the wild side of the continent, and entered the last great aboriginal forests on the shores of the Pacific. (“American Forests”)

In this passage, Muir’s allusions to Manifest Destiny as the source of American wilderness’ problem with destruction are traced from the East Coast all the way westward. It is especially important to note that Muir refers to the people responsible for this destruction not as settlers, which denotes a positive and entrepreneurial tone, but as destroyers, which has a completely negative connotation. Muir’s intent in this passage is to awaken the American senses and shock people into caring about the destruction of the wilderness that they should be taking pride in as he points to in the previous excerpt. After this passage Muir makes a point showing the rightful logic of preservationists. He writes: “Surely, then, it should not be wondered at that the lovers of their country bewailing its baldness, are now crying aloud, ‘Save what is left of the forests!’” (Muir, “American Forests”).

Not only does he suggest that they are reasonable in their protests of wilderness destruction and efforts to protect it, but he makes another point. By calling those who want to protect the forests “lovers of their country” he is making the connection that those who care about wilderness are patriotic and suggests that those who do not make efforts to protect wilderness might not hold their country in the same regard as those who seek to protect it (Muir, “American Forests”).

Though the connection is subtle, it can certainly be made, and interestingly, it is a concept that Roosevelt will build upon when he makes his own efforts at convincing the American public that

wilderness protection is a good and necessary thing. The environmental movement, as a whole, particularly as it is connected to Roosevelt, ends up benefitting from attaching a patriotic, American element to wilderness.

Besides championing environmental causes as patriotic duties, Roosevelt was skilled at making them appealing to industries that had a lot at stake in terms of access to natural resources. In 1903, right before heading West to California and before he went on his famous camping trip with John Muir, Roosevelt addressed a meeting of the Society of the American Forests in Washington D.C. This address was an appeal to businesses that conservation was in their own best interest. Roosevelt said:

You can never afford to forget for one moment what is the object of the forest policy. Primarily that object is not to preserve forests because they are beautiful though that is good in itself; not to preserve them because they are refuges for the wild creatures of the wilderness though that too is good in itself; but the primary object of the forest policy [...] is the making of prosperous homes, as part of the traditional policy of home-making in our country. Every other consideration comes as secondary. (*Meeting of American Foresters*)

Roosevelt was quite skilled at adjusting his rhetoric ever so precisely to the nature of his audience. Here, one can see how he skillfully tailors his speech to address only the business-minded attitudes of the lumber industry. He completely casts aside any other conservation interest as secondary.

Though both men undoubtedly knew about each other before they first met, Muir and Roosevelt first exchanged correspondence in March of 1903. Before that, Muir probably was aware of Roosevelt even before he ended up in the presidential office through his other political ventures and perhaps from publications. Roosevelt was probably familiar with Muir as a naturalist and preservationist. When they first made contact in 1903, Roosevelt had contacted Muir before through a third party to express interest in exploring the wilderness of the Yosemite

with him as a guide. On March 14, 1903, Roosevelt personally wrote to Muir to adequately express his wishes to explore Yosemite and to make clear that his absolute preference was that Muir be his guide. He also insisted that for the four days he was in the Yosemite he wanted to escape politics and just be in the wilderness. Later that year on his multi-stop trip out West, Roosevelt once again demonstrated his rhetorical ability through a speech he gave in Gardiner, Montana, in April of 1903 at an address to officially dedicate Yellowstone Park. Here, Roosevelt takes a distinct approach to conservation efforts; this effort was not made for business needs or for regulation of resources. He makes it clear that this area is to be purely for recreational purposes, and though his references are subtler than usual, the patriotic element he adds to his speech is definitely present. He writes: “The Yellowstone Park is something absolutely unique in the world, so far as I know. Nowhere else in any civilized country is there to be found such a tract of veritable wonderland made accessible to all visitors, where at the same time not only the scenery of the wilderness, but the wild creatures of the park are scrupulously preserved” (Roosevelt, “Laying of Cornerstone”). By celebrating the park as “unique in the world” and calling it a “wonderland made accessible to all visitors” he is elevating the nature of the park to a symbol of patriotism. The element of patriotism comes when he refers to the uniqueness of the park compared to other natural areas in the world. This uniqueness is something that Americans can be proud of. A further source of pride can be taken by acknowledging that only in America is an area like this set aside for public use rather than private. This is something Muir would have definitely agreed with.

Later that year when Roosevelt went out to California and met with John Muir, the two spent time away from civilization as Roosevelt had requested and thoroughly enjoyed nature. Muir made it clear to Roosevelt that Yosemite needed to be protected in the hands of the federal

government because in the hands of the state it was mismanaged. Though not much is known about their conversations past this, some more can be gleaned about their encounter based on a speech Roosevelt gave in Sacramento on May 19, 1903, right after his time with Muir ended.

Roosevelt stated:

I have enjoyed to the full my visit to California [...] I have just come from a four days rest in the Yosemite, and I wish to say one word to you here in the capital city of California about certain of your great natural resources [...] As regards some of the trees, I want them preserved because they are the only things of their kind in the world. Lying out at night under those giant Sequoias was lying in a temple built by no hand of man, a temple grander than any human architect could by any possibility build, and I hope for the preservation of the groves of giant trees simply because it would be a shame to our civilization to let them disappear. They are monuments in themselves, I ask for the preservation of the other forests on grounds of wise and far-sighted economic policy. I do not ask that lumbering be stopped at all. On the contrary, I ask that the forests be kept for use in lumbering, only that they be so used that not only shall we here, this generation, get the benefit for the next few years, but that our children and our children's children shall get the benefit. ("Address")

This speech was significant for a number of reasons. First, it proves that Roosevelt was impacted by his time in Yosemite with Muir; also, he was impacted enough that he took seriously Muir's suggestions that some of these areas, the sequoia groves and Yosemite, are so spectacular that they should be protected solely for that reason. Roosevelt saw the same values in these areas that Muir did, and he recognized that not all areas of wilderness should be used for sustainability purposes. Instead, some areas had value in beauty or spirituality that should be protected. Roosevelt defended these areas by speaking of their value in the same way that perhaps Muir or Thoreau would have, but he took it a step further. By pointing out that these magnificent landscapes were possibly the only ones of their kind in the world, Roosevelt implied that they were uniquely American. By assigning a patriotic value to wilderness of areas and converting them into a source of American pride, Roosevelt reduced the chances of attracting dissent. In this way he was also able to erase negative charges of effeminacy attached to men

protecting wilderness by assigning these efforts patriotic qualities. What could be more masculine than being patriotic in a nation such as America? This was even more true when the man championing these actions is Theodore Roosevelt. In fact, Roosevelt's masculinity was to blame for the criticism he often received from women's groups who saw his environmentalism as misguided due to his excessive hunting. To this Roosevelt wrote: "As a matter of fact, every animal I have shot, with the exception of, say, six or eight, shot when we had to have food, has been carefully preserved for the National Museum. I can be condemned only if the existence of the National Museum, the American Museum of Natural History, and all similar zoological collections are to be condemned" ("Mr. Roosevelt"). Despite the criticism, he defends himself by making it clear that with the exception of food, all the animals were hunted for their scientific value. This is an example of Roosevelt's own brand of environmentalism, which differed from Muir's and acted as a balance to Muir's more preservationist attitude.

In reference to the other areas, the areas that should be protected for lumbering purposes, Roosevelt appealed to Americans by insisting on the urgency of conserving these bountiful resources for the benefit of future generations. Roosevelt insisted that it was an American duty to leave a legacy like this behind by saying later in the same speech that, "We are not building this country of ours for a day. It is to last through the ages" ("Address"). This is a brief yet poignant reminder that the purpose of conservation is not only for the current generation Roosevelt was speaking to, but for the generations to come and to ensure that America endures as a legacy worthy of passing on.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

As was evident in many of the speeches he gave, Roosevelt was an expert at wording his ideas in such a way that they could not be misconstrued as sentimental, and also so that they appealed to a broad range of Americans. He was especially skilled at dividing his attention and efforts equally between business-minded folks who might have been more open to conservationism and the virtues of unique American landscapes as a source of pride that could have appealed to any member of his audience without being dubbed as sentimentalism. Roosevelt's skill at adjusting his rhetoric to his audience brought him a long way in his environmentalist efforts; this is evidenced by the fact that in his presidency he was able to both establish parks solely for recreational and virtuous use as well as designate other areas protected mainly for their use as regulated, sustainable areas for natural resources to be derived from.<sup>13</sup> Roosevelt's greatest triumph proved to be the overt projection of masculinity and his rhetoric. By using speech that applied either a practical or patriotic advantage to wilderness protection he was able to overcome limitations of gender roles and possible charges of effeminacy like those that plagued Muir. He was so effective at this in fact, that many traditional women's groups actually protested Roosevelt's approach to wilderness protection.<sup>14</sup> Muir was a valuable contribution to these efforts as well, especially because he deflected some of the negative attention Roosevelt brought to the environmentalist movement. Besides this, Muir fought many wilderness fights and through his writing was influential in describing areas to appeal as places worthy of protection to people who otherwise would not have been aware of their existence or cared to protect them. He also did a lot of his work and advocacy through the founding and efforts of the Sierra Club. In efforts to truly explore the wilderness of America and appreciate it

based on its inherent value as beautiful, wild, and free, he is unmatched by any of his contemporaries. In their own spheres, Muir appealed to sentimentality and traditional preservationists while Roosevelt appealed to more modern conservationists and those interested in preserving sources of wealth and resources. The two balanced each other out and lent a sense of balance to the environmental movement as a whole; those who found it hard to identify with Muir could potentially identify with Roosevelt and vice versa.

It is important to note that although each man interpreted Thoreau's legacy distinctly, neither of their interpretations and actions could have existed the way they did independently of Thoreau's influence. Thoreau truly set an intellectual climate for the American perception of the wild that was unlike any before that point. It was inescapable in terms of its effect on the environmental reform efforts that Muir and Roosevelt and others participated in and that led to American action for wilderness protection on a grand scale. The key between Roosevelt and Muir was that their partnership existed in a time when Thoreau's perceptions of nature set the tone for America's perception of nature. In this climate, Muir and Roosevelt helped forge Thoreau's visions into reality. Through the balance the two men provided, along with the work of countless others, Thoreau's ideas were made reality in a Progressive world. In 1916, under the administration of Woodrow Wilson, the actions of countless environmentalists, including Muir's and Roosevelt's tireless efforts up to this point, came to fruition in what is widely considered America's greatest idea, the National Park System, something that Thoreau undoubtedly set the climate for and would have considered a huge step forward in wilderness protection. The formation of the National Park Service gave federal regulation to the parks that were already set aside and made the creation of new protected areas possible. This is certainly a tribute to American wilderness; however, on a deeper level it is a tribute to so much more. It is a lasting

and fitting tribute to Thoreau and Transcendentalist thought, the efforts of environmentalists like Muir and Roosevelt, and American perseverance.

Despite the claims that the National Park System is America's best idea, the question arises, in this case at least, if these efforts went far enough. Rather, if they were truly a realization of Henry David Thoreau's vision, or if these efforts were simply as far as Thoreau's vision was allowed to go. In an era of American history where so much emphasis was placed on development and progress, wilderness ran the risk of being completely obliterated. Thanks to the efforts of men like Muir and Roosevelt and countless others, this was avoided by wilderness protection efforts. Even though these efforts culminated in the National Park System, perhaps Thoreau would have thought that more could have been done. From a contemporary perspective, it seems as if the National Park Service is an embodiment of several visions. However, by no means is it a full realization of the vision any of them, Muir, Roosevelt, or Thoreau, had for the course wilderness protection in America should take. Instead, the National Park Service and its supporting branches acts as a hybridization of the ideas of all three men with Thoreau acting as the main influence. This is not to be considered a weakness but a strength; only through compromises on both the conservationist and preservationist side were so many steps able to be taken towards a federally funded and regulated system for wilderness protection. In this way, and with Thoreau acting as an influence on the intellectual climate of the time, Muir and Roosevelt were instrumental in bringing a Transcendental idea to fruition and taking it as far as it could reasonably go in the given era in which it flourished. To call these efforts and the National Park Service a hybridization of the ideas of all three men, and likely the ideas of other influential participants in environmental efforts, is not a signal of the compromise of the initial idea for wilderness protection. Instead, it is a tribute to American perseverance, resourcefulness, and

thought that combined to form a natural legacy that spans all the way from the Transcendental era to modern times; that the American public owes this legacy to the work of all three men is undeniable.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> American resources such as timber were not regulated for much of the nation's history; a popular notion of American wilderness was that it was so rich and abundant that there would always be more for the taking. Particularly during the Civil War and in post-Civil War America the nation saw a rise in the organized and professional consumption of resources for a variety of industrial purposes. Professional forestry quickly became one of the most destructive practices exploiting natural resources. Regulation in the West was met with heavy opposition, and the Department of Agriculture did not officially establish a forestry division until 1881. This came after a definitive study of American forests, conducted from 1878-1884, indicated that forests were being destroyed at an alarming rate and could disappear if the matter was not attended to. Other industries such as railroad and housing also relied primarily on the clearing of land for their use and the use of resources in their business. See Robert E. Ficken, "Gifford Pinchot Men: Pacific Northwest Lumbermen and the Conservation Movement, 1902-1910," *The Western Historical Quarterly* 13 (1982): 166.

<sup>2</sup> The National Park Service was officially created on August 25, 1916 when President Woodrow Wilson signed the official bill that authorized the National Park Service Organic Act. Though the final lobbying for this scale of federal regulation was done by conservationists Stephen Mather and J. Horace McFarland, the initial efforts of other environmentalists, including Muir and Roosevelt, undeniably paved the road for later efforts at federal regulation. To exclude the efforts of such pioneering environmentalists that led up to that point is a mistake. See United States. National Park Service. *National Park Service Organic Act*. 1916. Also see Paul Sutter, *Driven Wild: How the Fight Against Automobiles Launched the Modern Wilderness Movement*. (2002).

<sup>3</sup> Mahatma Gandhi provides only one, albeit incredible and valuable, example of a figure in world history who has cited Thoreau's works as a valuable source of influence on his own thoughts. Scholar George Hendrick explores Thoreau's influence on the life and ideas of Gandhi in his article. The evidence is so overwhelming that it includes a letter written by Gandhi to President Franklin Delano Roosevelt in 1942 in which he states: "I have profited greatly by the writings of Thoreau and Emerson." The Transcendentalist influence on Gandhi is clear, and his specific noting that Thoreau is one of his main influences is important; it proves that Thoreau's works were more far-reaching than could have been imagined. Indeed, they resonated with forward-thinking people all over the world. See George Hendrick, "The Influence of Thoreau's 'Civil Disobedience' on Gandhi's *Satyagraha*," *The New England Quarterly*, 29 (1956): 462.

<sup>4</sup> In 1839 William Ellery Channing, a popular Unitarian preacher, went into the wilderness for a few months to live in a log hut he built on an Illinois prairie. He not only speaks from first hand experience, but he was also obviously quite moved from his experience and gleaned great value from his time in nature. See Robert D. Richardson Jr., *Henry Thoreau: A Life of the Mind* (1986). 152.

<sup>5</sup> John Muir was no foreigner to this situation and was the subject of various attacks on his masculinity. One political cartoon even went as far as to depict him in a bonnet and woman's skirt sweeping up the flood created by the Hetch Hetchy controversy. The proposed Hetch Hetchy reservoir and accompanying O'Shaughnessy dam became a source of controversy in 1908 when then Secretary of the Interior James R. Garfield allowed the city of San Francisco to dam the Tuolumne River to supply more water to the growing city that after an earthquake and fire found out just how inadequate their water supply system was. What ensued was a seven-year battle against damming the river, which lies within the boundaries of Yosemite National Park, led by John Muir. He ultimately lost this battle, and it can be considered his greatest loss in the environmental arena. See Adam Rome, "Political Hermaphrodites: Gender and Environmental Reform in Progressive America," *Environmental History* 11 (2006): 440-463.

<sup>6</sup> Among the books by Thoreau that Muir owned in his personal library that are now on permanent display in the John Muir Book Collection at the University of the Pacific Library are: *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers* (two copies), *Excursions, Maine Woods* (which he took with him to Alaska), *Walden, Writings of Henry David Thoreau*, and *In American Fields and Forests*. All of the original copies are heavily annotated indicating careful study. See digital PDF file titled "John Muir Book Collection," John Muir Papers, Holt-Atherton Special Collections at the University of the Pacific.

<sup>8</sup> Brinkley refers to valuable correspondence Theodore Roosevelt had with Frank M. Chapman, William T. Hornaday, John Burroughs, William Dutcher, George Bird Grinnell, John Muir, and Fairfield Osborn. All of these men, including John Muir, most notably for the purpose of this paper, were in some way involved in environmental reform efforts or some other type of naturalist efforts. See Douglas Brinkley, *The Wilderness Warrior: Theodore Roosevelt and the Crusade for America*. (2009). 8.

<sup>9</sup> In January of 1915 in the *Outlook*, Theodore Roosevelt contributed a piece in memory of John Muir. Muir had passed away in December of 1914. The piece was titled "John Muir: An Appreciation." In this piece, Roosevelt calls Muir not only a nature lover but a great influence in contemporary thought and action on the subjects he devoted his life to—wilderness and wilderness protection. He points out the influence Muir had in California and the entire country in preserving nature, and he reminisces on his time with Muir in the Yosemite Valley and what it meant to him. He ends by saying that Muir's greatest influence came from the direct interaction with people he spoke to. He also mentions Muir's writing skills and that his writings will last long. Finally, he states that his generation owes much to Muir. See Theodore Roosevelt, "John Muir: An Appreciation," *Outlook* 109 (January 1915): 27-28, Online, *The John Muir Exhibit*, Sierra Club.

<sup>10</sup> The journals that became *Wild Fruits* were not edited and published until 2000 by Bradley P. Dean, a Thoreau scholar. This obviously means that Muir never had a chance to read them. However, the comparison of these two passages is still significant because it shows that even though Muir never read this text he had a manner of thinking about protected areas that was incredibly similar to Thoreau's. The text is rooted so much in the

same concepts and views of nature that it is impossible not to make a connection between Muir's philosophy and an influence on behalf of Thoreau. See Henry David Thoreau, *Wild Fruits: Thoreau's Rediscovered Last Manuscript*. Ed. Bradley P. Dean. (2000).

<sup>11</sup> This quote is credited with appearing as a notation in the margin of a document in the John Muir Papers at the University of the Pacific in folder 40.1 MP. The author of the book further describes the quote as an MS fragment with no date. See Stephen R. Fox, *The American Conservation Movement: John Muir and his Legacy*. (1981). 82-83.

<sup>12</sup> Theodore Roosevelt was a prolific writer when it comes to matters of the outdoors and outdoor activities. He contributed to several publications related to hunting and the outdoor life. This excerpt comes from one of his earliest publications published in 1885 by G. P. Putnam's Sons. It is from a section titled "Ranching in the Badlands" in a collection titled *Hunting Trips of a Ranchman*. As evident from the title and the text of this and other work, Roosevelt considered and esteemed himself highly as an outdoorsman in every sense of the word. See Theodore Roosevelt, "Ranching in the Badlands." *Theodore Roosevelt: An American Mind, Selected Writings*. Ed. Mario R. Dinunzio. (1994). 276-283.

<sup>13</sup> From 1901 to 1909 Roosevelt created or enlarged 150 National Forests. In the same years he created 51 Federal Bird Reservations and 5 National Game Preserves. In the same years he created 18 National Monuments. In the same years, before a creation of a National Park System, Roosevelt was responsible for setting aside 5 areas as National Parks. These parks are: Crater Lake National Park in 1902, Wind Cave National Park in 1903; Sullys Hill in 1904 which later became a National Game Preserve; Platt National Park in 1906 which later became part of Chickasaw Recreational Area; Mesa Verde National Park in 1906; and Dry Tortugas National Park in which went through a series of designations before becoming a park in 1992. He also had a park named after him in 1947 as a memorial to his conservationist efforts. See Douglas Brinkley. *The Wilderness Warrior: Theodore Roosevelt and the Crusade for America*. (New York: Harper Collins, 2009): 826-830.

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## VITA

Annette Maldonado  
3421 Queretaro Loop  
Laredo, TX 78046

## High School:

J.B. Alexander Magnet for Health and Sciences

Laredo, TX

(Fall 2000-Spring 2004)

## University:

Texas A&M International University

Laredo, TX

(Fall 2004-Summer 2010)

Bachelor of Arts in History, Minor in Political Science

## University:

Texas A&M International University

Laredo, TX

(Fall 2010-Fall 2013)

Master of Arts in English