# Naturalizing Nature









Untamed

Wild

Untouched

Pristine

Authentic

Intrinsic

Indispensable

2

Unavoidable

Built-in

Essential

An idea, practice, or thing that would exist independent of humans (and their culture)?

What evolution does?

Biological mechanisms?

Do forests, rivers, mountains, lakes, national parks, bears, eagles, spiders, snakes, wolves, deer

**Nature** 

?

Do forests, rivers, mountains, lakes, national parks, bears, eagles, spi NOI s, wolves,

Nature

Everything that humans have no influence over

Natural ?

Everything that humans have no influence over

NO!

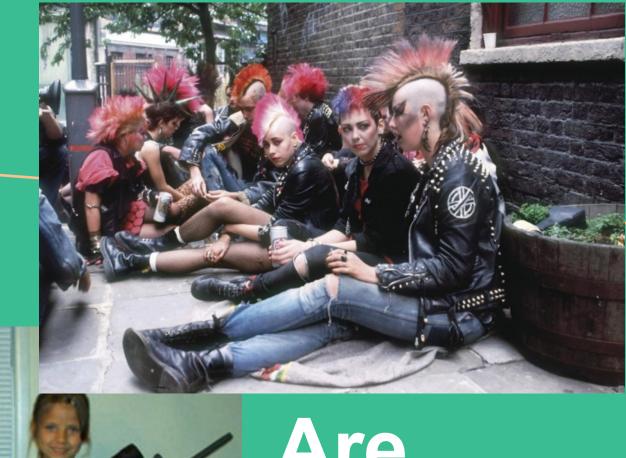
?

The idea of two separate categories called Nature & Culture is socially constructed.

Culture and Nature co-construct each other.

#### Naturalize:

(Verb) A social process in which some phenomenon is made to appear to be an inevitable, built-in part of the universe.





Are humans natural?

#### **Humans are 'Natural'!**





Why do we try to separate 'Nature' from 'Culture'?

By making Nature separate from Culture it casts Nature as something that can be dominated and exploited.

'Nature' is produced to refer to anything outside of society.

Is there anything outside of society?

How would we know?

Can 'Nature' be commodified?

Can 'Nature' be sold for a profit?

Is all space produced?

What is public space and private?





Ontology: The way the universe actually works (Metaphysics).

The 'nature' of being

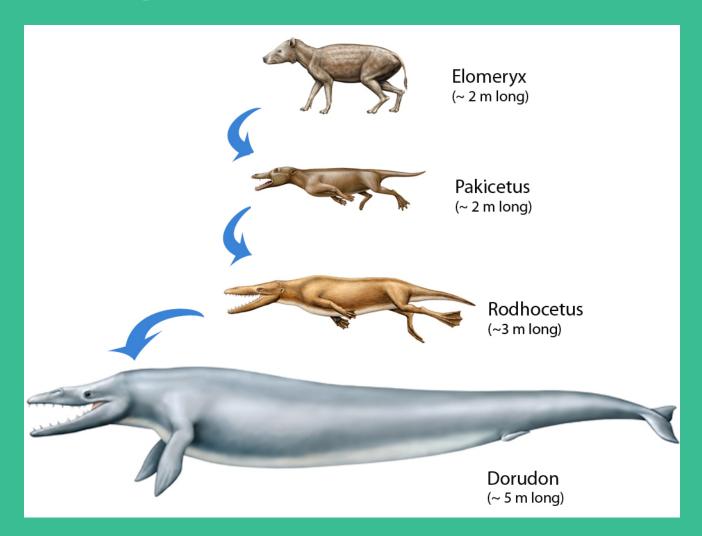
Is there an original 'state of grace' the world is supposed to look like

Is evolution natural?

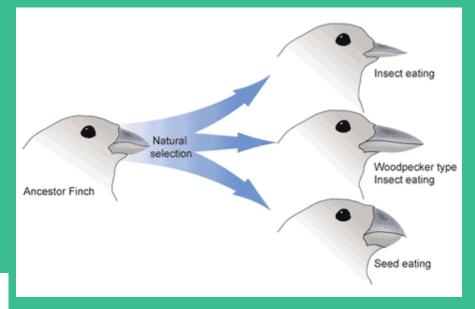
Is evolution a performance of nature?

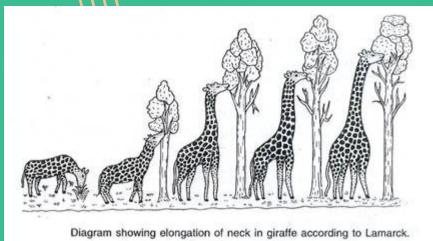
There is no way things are supposed to be.

What is a species?

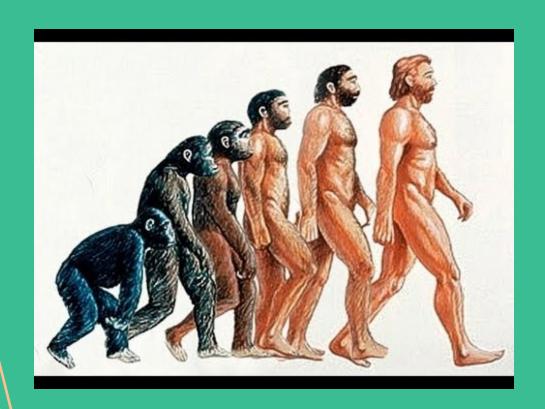


What is a species?





What is 'Human Nature'?



What is 'Human Nature'?

Aggressive?
Pugnacious?
Competitive?



What is 'Human Nature'?

Is it what evolution has made us?

Is it what are brains tell us we are?



What is 'Human Nature'?

There is no Natural. There is no way things are supposed to be.

Different environments necessitate different skills and behaviors.

Variation is the first tenet of evolution!

What is 'Human Nature'?

There is no Natural Transport things way

Compared to the Compared Compare

Variation is the first tenet of evolution!

#### Reductionism

Dictionary says: the practice of analyzing and describing a complex phenomenon in terms of phenomena that are held to represent a simpler or more fundamental level, especially when this is said to provide a sufficient explanation.

What is 'Human Nature'?

#### Reductionism

Dictionary says: the practice of analyzing and describing a complex phenomenon in terms of phenomena that are held to represent a simpler or more fundamental level, especially when this is said to provide a sufficient explanation.

This can be dangerous! For humans and their ecosystems.

What is 'Human Nature'?

Normal = Natural?

Normal > Natural?

#### **Normative**

Dictionary says: establishing, relating to, or deriving from a standard of behavior.

What does this mean?

### Categorical Boundaries

"Heterosexual" is an invented category.

Remember: groups need counter groups to exist!

The group "White Icelander" doesn't really exist, it doesn't need to, there's not a counter group from which it needs to distinguish itself.



What kind of sexuality does "nature" want or prefer?

None. Nature doesn't want or prefer anything.

What kind of sexuality does "nature" want or prefer?

None. Evolution doesn't want or prefer anything.

So what does it mean to say something is "Unnatural"?

Saying something is "unnatural" can be dangerous?

It can lead to discrimination, prejudice, marginalization

Who benefits from the creation and perpetuation of NORMAL and NATURAL?

Saying something is "unnatural" can be dangerous?

# People currently in positions of power

dice, ation

Who benefits from the creation and perpetuation of NORMAL and NATURAL?

Homosexuality is not exclusive to humans.

So, it's not the corruptive result of culture.

Evolution works on the level of species.

NOT INDIVIDUALS.

If it benefits the perpetuation of a population to have exclusively opposite-sex partners, then it's "good" for evolution.

If it inhibits the perpetuation of a population to oppress the range of sexual practices available to its members, then it is "bad" for evolution.

But there is no way we are "supposed to be."

If it benefits the perpetuation of a population to have exclusively opposite-sex partners, then it's "good" for

# Norm violations are necessary!

available to its members, then it is "bad" for evolution.

But there is no way we are "supposed to be."

People get scared when things don't fit nicely in boxes...

Some people get so scared of something not fitting into their ready-made boxes that they will violently assault things outside the box.



Our brains are lazy...

And deconstructing boxes can be hard...



#### **Normative**

Dictionary says: establishing, relating to, or deriving from a standard of behavior.

Normality is constructed.
Nothing is "naturally" normal.
Nothing is "essentially" normal.
Normality must be established through social practices.

# Where does society begin and end?

Does Nature have borders?

Oceans, rivers, mountains, deserts?

"Nature does not pre-exist as such, but rather is the result of a conceptual boundary being defined, creating an Inside and Outside"



Are we protecting this land?

How? From who? Ourselves?

What are preservation and conservation?

What are we trying to preserve?





Landscape management

Do humans (society) know what's best for ecological systems?

Should we mark borders with walls and fences?

"Parks can never be islands"

"Multiple boundaries act as sieves attempting to blur the inside/outside paradigm."

Different zones of use.

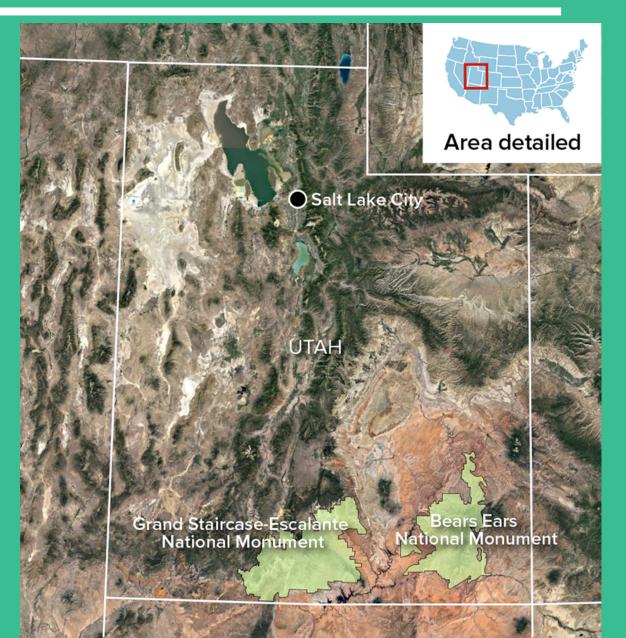
Who decides what is Inside and what is outside?

Are we keeping disturbances out of nature or confining nature?

Is there a way this forest is 'supposed to be'?

Does it have an equilibrium state

Do ecological zones have homeostasis.

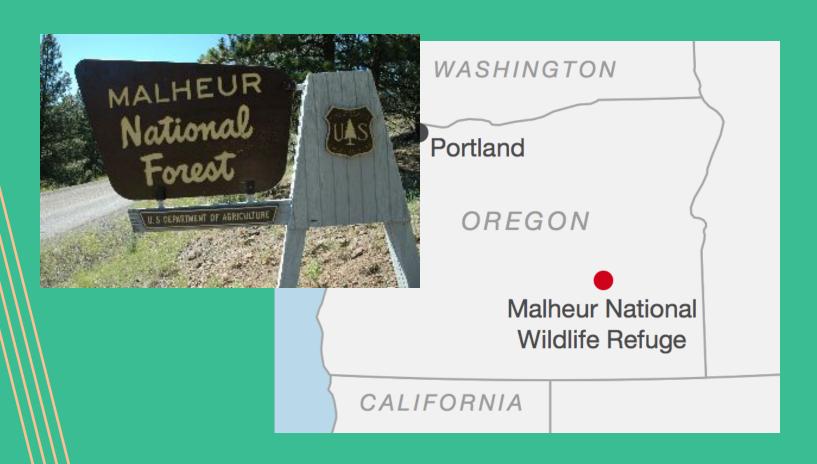




#### Malheur National Wildlife Refuge



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Malheur National Wildlife Refuge

- Federally owned and protected land
- Occupied by armed group that believes, land should be privatized, that individuals would be better off owning the land than government.

Malheur National Wildlife Refuge

 The occupiers would have the land be made private so its resources could be exploited (for profit).

Government wants to preserve the land in its 'natural condition' for future generations, science, etc.

Malheur National Wildlife Refuge

The occ be made

What are natural could be conditions

have the land s resources r profit).

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