

IN THE UNTRAMMELED COUNTRY: CONSERVATION, DEVELOPMENT,
AND CONFLICT IN THE ADIRONDACK PARK

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AND CONFLICT IN THE ADIRONDACK PARK

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The Adirondack Park has been a locus of social conflict related to land use for the past 150 years. Over the last decade, state and non-state actors have promulgated discourses, practices, and interventions that link together conservation and development. These actors promise that such interventions will benefit everyone, especially economically, and help to improve the lives of Adirondack residents and visitors. They also assert that the debates around these interventions are taking place in an atmosphere of inclusion and cooperation. This dissertation explores a recent conservation and development project in the Adirondack Park: the purchase and protection of 69,000 acres of formerly private forestland. Advocates of the project strenuously argued that the protection of this land would lead to an increase in tourism and have a transformative effect on local economies.

Despite a promising start, the intervention failed to have the desired effect. Moreover, the process touched off an intense conflict, the roots of which can be traced to long-standing relations among people, nature, and capital in the Adirondack Park. This dissertation examines the conflict using a political ecology approach to tease out what went wrong and how similar circumstances affect conservation and development interventions all over the world.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Adam Dewbury is a nearly lifelong resident of the Adirondack Park. Adam came to the study of anthropology after a 20-year career in the hospitality industry. Initially trained as an archaeologist, he holds a BA in Anthropology from Cornell University and an MA in Anthropology from Binghamton University. Adam's research interests include political economy, political ecology, and the history of Anthropology.

Dedicated to the memory of my parents, Gordon Dewbury and Mary Blake, and dear friend and kindred spirit Kathy Mangione.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

“It’s so peaceful here,” whispered the paddler in the canoe next to mine. We had met in the channel between Third and Fourth Lakes in the Essex Chain Lakes Primitive Area, a tract of land newly acquired by the state in the center of New York’s Adirondack Park. I was heading south and she and her partner north. It was close to one o’clock in the afternoon and they were the only people I had seen since 7:30 when I spotted a lone paddler heading towards the Third Lake landing and the carry back to their car: the only one in the lot when I arrived early that morning. It was indeed peaceful: there were no vehicle sounds, no voices, no ringing phones, text message alerts, or e-mail notifications. The only sounds in the channel were rustling leaves and a low insect buzzing, with the occasional splash of a turtle leaving its basking log to return to the water. In the distance, the eerie, warbling call of a common loon (*Gavia immer*) sounded in the still air.

It was a beautiful mid-September Adirondack day, very calm with just the gentlest of breezes that barely rippled the water, the sky a brilliant clear blue and the sun warm but dry, with none of the sticky humidity of midsummer. In the confines of the channel a sweet, herbaceous scent hung heavy in the air. It was idyllic: the kind of quintessential Adirondack experience that has drawn scores of visitors to the region for nearly 200 years. For me, the sense of tranquility was underlain by a creeping feeling of irony. This peaceful tableau was only made possible because of years of

acrimonious conflict touched off by the announcement in 2007 that New York State intended to purchase these lands from The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and add them to the Forest Preserve, where they would be protected as wild lands in perpetuity. The original owner of this tract was Finch, Pruyn and Co., a paper manufacturing company based in Glens Falls, New York, and throughout this work I refer to this transaction as the Finch deal.

Conflict over control and use of Adirondack land has a long history. Indeed, these issues have been omnipresent since before Euroamerican settlers came to the region. In a general sense, Adirondack land conflicts have evaded resolution, and participants find themselves locked in what Victor Turner (1974) called a schism: a state of continuing and unresolvable discord. One of the driving tensions of this schism is the contradiction between the desire to preserve land in a so-called natural state and the need of residents to make a living. One of the ironies of the Finch deal is that it was positioned as a redress, a way to ameliorate the conflict between preservation and development. Instead, the fight intensified and grew into one of the biggest battles in the Park's history.

How, and why, did this happen? What is it about Adirondack land conflicts in general and the Finch case in particular that makes them so resistant to resolution? What caused such a promising situation to disintegrate into further acrimony instead of bringing people together? How does the situation in the Adirondacks relate to other land use conflicts around the world? I address these questions in this work, employing a political-ecological perspective that seeks to trace enduring relationships among people, nature, and capital in the Adirondack Park and beyond.

I draw on world-ecology (Moore 2015) in particular. I discuss world-ecology in detail in Chapter 4, but for now it is sufficient to say that this perspective rejects the binary separation of people, society, and culture from nature in favor of a dialectical approach that considers people and nature as mutually constitutive within the web of life. The idea that people are separate from nature has a long history in the Adirondacks: indeed, it is central to the ideal of wilderness that supports the rationale for and governance of the Park. The Adirondack Park is also conceived of as being somehow apart from the world at large. For example, the Park is frequently referred to as the “Great Experiment” (Whaley et al 2009). The very nature of the word “experiment” implies a certain separation from everyday conditions and processes, but this is not at all the case. As I show throughout this work, the Adirondacks have been globally connected for a very long time, even prior to European colonization through the fur trade- related activities of Native Americans in the region. These imagined separations are deeply problematic and major factors in the seemingly unresolvable conflicts in the Park.

Another reason that Adirondack conflicts are so persistent because they are cultural and political, yet have been rendered technical (in the sense of Li 2007) by participants: especially those who act as trustees. This has the net effect of obscuring the relations among power, capital, and culture that created the conditions of possibility for such conflicts to exist. I show how particular ideas and material practices concerned with the relation of people and nature came to prominence in the nineteenth century through the promulgation of an elite (mostly white, mostly male) urban *habitus*--“the durably installed generative principle of regulated improvisations”

(Bourdieu 2008:78) that guides the daily practice of living. I pay particular attention to how ideas about time and temporal orientations shaped the constitution of what were considered proper relations between people and nature, and the linkage of temporality and morality in this context.

The Finch deal provides a focal point for my examination of the reproduction of these relations and their imbrication in conflicts in the contemporary Adirondack Park (defined here as 1973 to the present). Of course, relations are never simply reproduced through time: they undergo shifts and transformations within their changing historical, material, and political contexts. New relations are forged and others die. This is an important point to make regarding the contemporary Adirondack Park because it exists today in a very different political-economic milieu than it did during its creation in 1973. During this span of time the United States has tightened its embrace of neoliberal economic principles, the nation's economy has undergone financialization -- a shift towards the prominence of finance capitalism -- and wealth has become more concentrated. Over the last four decades similar economic developments have happened, unevenly distributed in time and space, throughout the world.

These conditions have engendered changes in ideas and practices related to nature, time, and morality. One such manifestation of change is the current ubiquity of economic benefit narratives that accompany proposed and ongoing preservation and conservation interventions in the Park. The assertion that increased protection -- either by adding land or through stricter use classifications -- will bring economic benefits has become pervasive, especially within the last 15 or so years. The idea that protected

Adirondack land would bolster the region's economy is nothing new; indeed, as I show in Chapter 3 it has been part of the Adirondack story since the nineteenth century. What *is* new is the near-constant invocation of economic benefit that accompanies discourse on the Park among a wide variety of actors, both experts and lay-people. This is not surprising given the rebranding of New York as the "State of Opportunity" by Governor Andrew Cuomo's administration (he was elected in 2010). At every turn the governor has made economic development in the Adirondacks and the State at large his top priority. In 2011, he established ten Regional Economic Development Councils; the Adirondack Park is included in the North Country REDC. These councils compete with one another for a pool of funds to support economic development projects in their respective region. This initiative was launched with a tremendous amount of publicity and hype. I discuss the REDC process and projects in Chapter 5, but for now it suffices to say that economic development has been squarely in the public eye in the Adirondacks since 2011.

The zeal to link economic development to land protection results from a combination of factors. On a basic level, it is a symptom of the pervasiveness of a key facet of neoliberal ideology: the need to relate market value to everything, or marketization. More and more, the value of the Adirondack park is related to its worth as an asset to be leveraged. This in turn has shaped the practices of actors working in conservation and preservation in the Park. For example, when I questioned an Adirondack preservation NGO worker about the prevalence of assertions of the economic benefits of protected lands in their materials, they responded that they felt pressured by board members to emphasize such narratives. This is the case because

focusing attention on economic issues in the context of preservation and conservation is a form of redressive action not only in the Park, but wherever such interventions are undertaken.

In contexts all over the world, tensions between economic opportunity and environmental protection form the bedrock foundation of land use conflicts (Neumann 1998, Brockington 2002, Dowie 2011). These tensions led to the development of community-based conservation in the 1990s as a way to ameliorate the negative effects of conservation interventions. An analogous situation exists in the Adirondack Park, where there is a deeply held belief, especially among many residents, that the Park's environmental protections are responsible for the demise of local industries and the lack of economic opportunities in Adirondack communities. This belief is widely expressed in public and in private, and I heard it and read about it many times during my fieldwork.

One such experience happened in the fall of 2015 when my partner and I took a Rail Explorers rail bike tour from Lake Clear to Saranac Lake. Rail Explorers is the brainchild of two Australians based in New York City, Mary Joy Lu and Alex Catchpoole. According to their company origin story, Lu was inspired to start the company after seeing rail bikes on a South Korean soap opera. Rail bikes like the ones used by Rail Explorers are like a four-wheeled recumbent bicycle that travels on railroad tracks. Lu and Catchpoole came to the Adirondacks because of the unused stretch of rail line running west out of Saranac Lake through Lake Clear and finally to Tupper Lake. The first year of their operation (2015) Rail Explorers offered tours between Saranac Lake and Lake Clear Junction.

It was a sunny and mild afternoon, and when we arrived at Lake Clear Junction a crowd of about 30 people was milling around the railroad tracks, checking out the shiny, red rail bikes. About half of the crowd was made up of students from Northwood School, a private high school, in Lake Placid. We stood around for over 20 minutes before Catchpoole finally stood up on a rail bike to address the crowd. After introducing himself and covering generalities about the tour, operation of the bikes, and safety, he noted that we would be traveling down a historic railway. He then unabashedly admitted that he didn't know much about the history of it, nor know much about the Adirondacks in general. Fortunately, though, he said, some of his staff members, especially the bus driver were experts on local history. This was demonstrated after we pedaled to Saranac Lake and boarded the shuttle bus back to our cars.

Along the way, the driver talked about the history of the railway we had just pedaled down, and how it was threatened by a movement to tear up the tracks and replace them with a recreation trail. He bemoaned the economic damage this would do in a community that relied on tourism, and claimed that Rail Explorers had thousands of riders that summer, and that the Adirondack Scenic Railroad (ASR) -- the tourist train operating between Saranac Lake and Lake Placid -- had thousands more. He also positioned himself as a multigenerational "native" noting that he had been born and lived his entire life there. As I will show throughout this work, this is one way actors in the Adirondacks frequently lay claim to specialized knowledge and thus authority.

Drawing on this claim he emphasized that there were minimal opportunities for people to make a living outside of tourism in Saranac Lake. He intimated that

regulations in the Park limited opportunities. As if on cue, the bus pulled up and took a left at Donnelly's Corners, named for the now-defunct dairy farm that stands on the south side of Route 186. Donnelly's farm no longer produces milk, but it is home to an eponymous, well-loved, ice cream stand that is probably the most iconic in the Park. Part of its draw is the sweeping view of the High Peaks 20 miles to the east, unencumbered by trees thanks to the cleared hayfields that slope down across the road from the stand. The driver took this opportunity to wax eloquent about the thriving dairy industry that was once located in Saranac Lake.

He said that numerous small dairy farms used to serve the village and its environs, and noted that the high local demand for dairy products was primarily due to the large numbers of patients curing from tuberculosis in local sanatoria. Indeed, Saranac Lake was a major center for tuberculosis treatment from 1882 until just past the end of World War II, with at least 62 private sanatoria in the village in 1932. But then his narrative took a familiar turn: he asserted that environmental regulations imposed on Adirondackers by the Adirondack Park Agency (APA) -- a new kind of "zoning board" for the Park -- in 1973 were responsible for the demise of small farms in the region. This statement seemed to be unquestioned by fellow passengers, who nodded at its common-sense conclusion, but it was patently false. Local and extra-local material conditions that had nothing to do with environmental protection were what drove small dairy farms in the area out of business.

Locally, Saranac Lake's tuberculosis curing industry experienced a sharp decline after the development of effective drug treatments in the early 1940s rendered the bed rest and fresh air cure obsolete. The market for dairy contracted as sanatoria

closed. Extra-locally, the dairy industry in the United States at large went through a period of consolidation throughout the first half of the twentieth century, when many small farms were subsumed by larger operations or simply shut down. The latter half of that century saw cost-reducing technical developments in dairy transportation and packaging. With these also came shifting patterns of consumption: milk and dairy were more often purchased in stores rather than home-delivered as in the past. These conditions affected a “transition to what is now a national milk and dairy product market” (Shields 2010:3).

The reflexive blaming of environmental regulation for economic woes is a regular part of Adirondack discourse and has been so for a long time. Like the driver’s commentary above, such claims are often made despite a preponderance of contradictory evidence. On the other side of the rail debate referenced above, trail supporter Hope Frenette made such a claim in a comment on a 2018 Adirondack Almanack blog post stating “Also we’ve lost a lot of log production in the Adirondacks as the state purchases previously producing forests and keeps it forever wild” (Roth 2018) Again, as I show in Chapter 3, the decline of logging in the Adirondacks was not spurred by environmental protections but by extra-regional political, economic, and material conditions.

These are but two in a host of examples I encountered during my fieldwork. Resistance to additional environmental protections remains strong in the Adirondack Park, especially regarding the new acquisition of private land for addition to the public Forest Preserve. Objections primarily revolve around economic concerns: the use of tax dollars to fund land purchases, the expense of maintaining additional land, and the

loss of potential revenue from forestry or other uses. If the potential land purchase is to be paid for by the New York State Environmental Protection Fund (EPF), which is funded by real estate transfer taxes, the towns in which the parcels are located have veto power over the purchase. As such, adding land to the Forest Preserve is an uphill battle for the state and environmental groups that support such purchases.

This was certainly the case with the Finch deal. After it was announced in 2007 that the state would purchase the newly acquired land from TNC, the conflict began. Officials from the five towns (Long Lake, Newcomb, Minerva, Indian Lake, and North Hudson) in which the land was located vowed to use their veto powers and local municipal governments passed resolutions opposing the purchase. But by 2012, local officials had done an about-face and enthusiastically supported the purchase. The shift in sentiment was a result of the state and TNC presenting the deal as an economic development opportunity for the towns. The narrative was familiar: the protection of additional public land would serve to draw visitors and local communities would benefit economically through the development of a sustainable ecotourism industry. I discuss tourism and ecotourism in more detail in Chapter 5 but for now I offer a definition of how I use the word in this study.

Buckley (2009) notes that “ecotourism” is variously, and often vaguely, defined. This certainly characterizes the use of the term in the Adirondacks, where ecotourism is frequently used without any explanation of what it might mean. Fletcher (2014:9) offers a broad definition of ecotourism “as synonymous with nature-based tourism in general, focusing on its principal aim as a service industry: to deliver a rewarding encounter with non-human nature.” This definition is ideal for use in the

Adirondack context.

In particular, I wish to hone in on two aspects of this definition: the emphasis on tourism as a service industry, and the idea of rewarding encounters with non-human nature. The push for tourism in the Adirondacks is a push to expand service industry in the region. Tourism is positioned by local governments and NGOs as a panacea for the economic woes of Adirondack communities. The mantra of job and business creation is endlessly invoked, and the deep contradictions that underlie this scenario are obscured by a relentless, unfounded positivity, what Büscher (2013:25) has termed “jubilant” discourse.

Rails versus Trails: An Ongoing Conflict

The Rail-Trail debate is an excellent example of the drive to increase service industry jobs and the prevalence of jubilant discourses in the Park that relate to economic development through tourism. It is worth taking a closer look at this debate to draw out some themes that resurface again and again in Adirondack conflicts in general and those over the Finch deal in particular. This conflict is typically “Adirondack” in its length, intensity, and divisiveness. It is centered on the fate of the Remsen-Lake Placid Travel Corridor, a 119-mile-long railroad that traverses the Adirondack Park in southwest-to-northeast direction from its *terminus a quo* in Remsen, just outside the Park’s southwestern border, to its *terminus ad quem* in Lake Placid. The main issue is the proposed construction of a 34-mile-long multi-use recreational trail on the northern end of the rail line, the Adirondack Rail Trail.

The trail would link Saranac Lake with the villages of Tupper Lake and Lake Placid (colloquially known as the Tri-Lakes). Construction of the trail -- which would

ostensibly be used by bicyclists, pedestrians, cross-country skiers, and snowmobilers - - would necessitate the removal of an existing seasonal railroad line: the northeast spur of the former New York Central and Hudson River Railroad, established in 1892. The possibility of a recreational trail on this line was mentioned in the 1996 Remsen-Lake Placid Travel Corridor Final Management Plan (Fenton and Gray 1996). Momentum in favor of the trail greatly increased with the founding of Adirondack Recreational Trail Advocates (ARTA), a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation, in 2010.

ARTA enjoys broad support in the region: their board is comprised of influential citizen environmentalists (some of whom populate other NGO boards in the area), yet the snowmobile community is also well-represented. ARTA claims 13,000 signatures on their petition for the trail, and their active Facebook page has nearly 4,000 followers. To put this in perspective, Saranac Lake only had 5,318 residents counted in the 2014 census. The main thrust of ARTA's argument for the trail is its potential economic benefit (e.g., Nelson 2013): indeed, ARTA supporters have continually attempted to show that rail-trails in other areas function as economic drivers. Dick Beamish -- founder of ARTA and *The Adirondack Explorer*, "a non-profit news magazine devoted to the protection and enjoyment of the Adirondack Park" (www.adirondackexplorer.org) -- has been especially vocal in this regard.

Since 2013 Beamish has written numerous guest commentaries in the *Adirondack Daily Enterprise*, Saranac Lake's local newspaper and the only daily paper published within the Park's boundaries (e.g. Beamish 2013a b, 2014a b, 2015 a b, 2017, 2018). In every instance, Beamish extols the "obvious" economic virtue of rail trails, often drawing on his observations as a tourist using other rail trails in the

United States. The formula he presents is simple: the construction of the trail will draw “hundreds of thousands of trail users annually! As a result, our local economy will be strengthened, new businesses added, new jobs created” (Beamish 2013a).

Economic benefits form the vanguard of Beamish’s arguments, but they are not his only tack. He also makes appeals to the health benefits that the Rail Trail would bring (2017a) through increased opportunities for exercise such as bicycling and walking. Moreover, like his economic arguments, Beamish positions the health benefits of the Rail Trail as moving beyond the individual to encompass the common good. He cites the Vice President of marketing and community health at Northeastern Vermont Regional Hospital, who asserts “rail trails are a great way to improve public health” (Beamish 2015a).

Other ARTA supporters echoed the self-evidence of the economic benefits the Rail Trail would bring, some calling it a “no-brainer” and stating that any reason for opposition must be “arcane” (Nelson 2013). ARTA members aggressively present this message of self-evident economic benefit, often leaning heavily on the trope of tourism as the only viable economic option. Like Beamish’s appeal to public health, their arguments always invoke the greater good. Some members -- such as Hope Frenette who was quoted earlier in this chapter -- regularly take to the comment sections of blogs and other Internet-based digital media to espouse and defend their positions.

Defend them they must, because ARTA faces formidable challenges by rail supporters, especially those with ties to the Adirondack Scenic Railroad (ASR). Until very recently, ASR was the sole operator on the line, running under the aegis of the

Adirondack Rail Preservation Society (like ARTA, also a not-for-profit corporation). ASR has conducted tourist train rides between Saranac Lake and Lake Placid during the summer and early fall since the late 1990s. ASR also conducts rail operations at the southern end of the line, running trains from Utica to Old Forge. Facing a direct threat to their operation, ASR emerged as the figurehead of the pro-rail contingent. ASR has widespread public support -- their Facebook page boasts over 27,000 followers. Other local non-profit preservation organizations such as Historic Saranac Lake and Adirondack Architectural Heritage support ASR in the fight against the Rail Trail.

Rail supporters also rely heavily on economic narratives when making their arguments. Some arguments center on the economic benefits of the railroad in general and ASR's operation in particular (Falcsik 2014a, Roth 2017), others focus on attacking the economic arguments of ARTA (Falcsik 2014b, Dunham 2016). The thrust of these arguments is that the railroad is a much better deal economically for the region than the Rail Trail. The emergence of Rail Explorers on the scene in 2015 added another stakeholder and more ammunition for economic arguments against the trail.

In July of 2015 Rail Explorers began offering rail bike tours on the line between Saranac Lake and Lake Clear Junction. This section of rail was previously only used by ASR in the spring and fall when bringing the train to and from its winter storage in Utica, New York. ASR, who leases the entire line, gave permission for Rail Explorers to use this section for their operations. In their first season, Rail Explorers claimed 10,000 riders, and rail supporters lost no time in asserting the positive

economic impact of the business (George 2015, Curtis 2015). A Rail Explorers employee, commenting on an online article about the company (Gorgas in Brown 2015), claimed that the business generated “a million dollars” in regional spending based on a “detailed survey of a large sample” of riders.

Some of the arguments employed by railroad supporters were not purely economic: they also contained appeals to history. The railroad corridor is on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), and the historic stations at Saranac Lake and Tupper Lake had been restored (though remained largely unused) in the 1990s. Preservation groups such as Historic Saranac Lake and Adirondack Architectural Heritage jumped into the fray in support of the railroad, arguing that removal of the tracks would destroy heritage belonging to all New Yorkers. Their contention was that the legal protections afforded to the corridor by NRHP status extended to the physical railroad itself: tracks, ties, and spikes. They argued that removal of the tracks to facilitate construction of a trail would be a violation of the law.

Still, there was thread of economic benefit woven into this narrative through a linkage with heritage tourism. In a guest commentary in the *Adirondack Daily Enterprise*, Historic Saranac Lake director Amy Catania (2014) wrote that heritage tourism, defined by The National Trust as “traveling to experience the places, artifacts and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past,” was a growing industry, and that heritage tourism was already a part of Saranac Lake’s economy. She cited the ASR as one of the attractions that draws heritage tourists to the village, and asserted that such tourism is capable of “bringing economic revitalization to the entire community.”

In November 2015, amid news that the APA was considering approving an amendment to the corridor's management plan that would schedule removal of the rails between Tupper Lake and Lake Placid and construction of the trail, Historic Saranac Lake and Adirondack Architectural Heritage joined with the ARPS, Rail Explorers, and the Trails with Rails Action committee to sponsor a rally in support of preserving the rails. Catania (2015) wrote in a press release that "removing the tracks is a permanent decision that will have an immediate negative impact on local businesses. We intend to show Governor Cuomo and the state agencies that this corridor is vital to our state and local history as well as our local economy." In February 2016, the APA approved the amendment. Almost immediately the state released an ambitious plan for rail removal and trail construction that would commence in the summer of 2017.

While trail supporters rejoiced, rail advocates geared up and ARPS sued the state to forestall removal of the rails in the summer of 2016. The state pressed for dismissal of the suit, which was denied. After several delays, state Supreme Court justice Robert Main, Jr. found in favor of the railroad in late September 2017. His ruling hinged on three main issues: the state lacked a historic preservation plan, the state did not hold full title on all the land along the corridor, and removal of the rails would obviate its status as a travel corridor. The state eventually announced its decision to appeal, but failed to meet the deadline to do so.

At present the railroad has "won," but there hasn't been a tourist train since the 2016 season because the state did not offer the ASR a permit to operate as it had done in prior years. Rail Explorers also had their last season in the Adirondacks in 2016 as

their fate was also tied to the ASR's permit. Facing the uncertainty of rail removal, Rail Explorers ceased operating in Saranac Lake and have since opened locations in the Catskills, Rhode Island, and Las Vegas. Other than use by snowmobiles in the winter (given sufficient snow to cover the rails), the corridor now sits dormant.

Complicating Categories in Adirondack Conflicts

Abstracting this particular example illuminates some general aspects of Adirondack conflicts and shows numerous parallels with the Finch lands debate that I cover in detail in Chapter 6. In particular, I wish to hone in on two points. The first is the factionalization described above, which is a regular feature of such debates. In land use conflicts in the Adirondacks, factions tend to form quickly, and they are characterized by the intensity and passion of participants. Moreover, as is often assumed, factions do not neatly split among easily defined lines. The pro-rail and pro-trail positions are both defended by a wide diversity of people: locals and visitors, rich and poor, young and old.

This complicates the longstanding tendency to position Adirondack conflicts as occurring between broadly defined stakeholder groups that assume a level of homogeneity that does not exist on the ground. For example, a recent study on wilderness perception in the Adirondacks (Larkin and Beier 2014) identified three stakeholder groups -- permanent residents, seasonal residents, and visitors -- in an effort to rank their perception of wilderness on a purity scale. While these categories do exist, using them as categories of analysis is problematic as they tend to elide more than they illuminate. Take the category of "permanent resident" for example: there is a tremendous difference in the materiality of the lives of permanent residents who live

on the shores of Lake Clear and those who reside in the trailer park next to the airport a mile or so down the road. Among my informants who would be considered permanent residents there are professionals who earn six-figure incomes and service industry workers who earn the minimum wage (currently \$10.40 per hour in New York outside of NYC, Long Island, and Westchester), new homeowners and long-term renters, fourth-generation native Adirondackers and new arrivals. There is simply too much diversity to account for in a broad category such as permanent resident.

There are issues with other categories too: how does the category “seasonal resident” account for people who may have lived their entire lives in the Adirondacks but upon retirement have gone to live with family elsewhere and now just spend their summers here? What about people who grew up in the Adirondacks but live elsewhere as adults, returning here for holidays and summer vacations? This catch-all category also fails to account for the profound differences between seasonal residents such as the billionaire Sanford Weill, who owns a massive lakefront compound on Upper Saranac Lake, and the campers at Donaldson’s Campground just up the road, many of whom have been towing their fifth-wheel campers there to spend summers for generations.

Rather than identifying stakeholders by virtue of their locality, I use Victor Turner’s (1982) concept of *star groups* to delineate groups of actors based on their shared desires, passions, and meanings. The genesis of the star groups idea took place in the context of his work on social drama. Turner developed the concept of social drama as a way to understand how social conflicts develop, the roles people (especially groups of people) play in them, and their ultimate outcomes. Social drama

is an analytical tool that can be used to make sense of conflicts by breaking them down into their constituent parts and then examining the relationships among these parts. In his early work (e.g. Turner 1996[1957]), Turner was largely focused on the effects of conflict on social order and the functional aspects of social drama. By the early 1970s, his interests began to shift towards the performative aspects of social drama, especially its effect on the ways that people coalesced into groups during conflicts.

In his later work on social drama, Turner expanded on the concept of star groups. These are “groups to which we owe our deepest loyalty and whose fate is for us of the greatest personal concern” (Turner 1982:69). Star groups are associations of people drawn together by shared passions and desires rather than obligation. I employ this concept in my analysis of Adirondack conflict as a different way to think about participants, using it as a foil and compliment to the problematic term “stakeholder” that has become ubiquitous in conservation and development debates in the Adirondacks and beyond.

The defining break between stakeholders and star groups hinges on action. As laid out by Turner, people choose to associate with their star groups. In contrast, stakeholderism can be a passive state of being. For example, Adirondack environmental groups embroiled in the current debate often remind the public that all New Yorkers are stakeholders in the Adirondack Park. Presumably “all” includes those New Yorkers who don’t even know where the Park is (Rauch 2009). Stakeholders don’t necessarily even have to know that they have a stake, much less care about it. Members of star groups, on the other hand, are passionate and involved,

and I think this is a much better description of the people involved in social conflicts over Adirondack land use.

Members act in concert as factions during conflicts to achieve outcomes that align with their shared desires. This approach is especially relevant in the context of the Finch lands conflict. At its very heart, this conflict is between different ideas about the relations of humans and nature. On the one hand is a group that strongly desires to manage the Finch lands as wilderness, which in the Adirondacks means not allowing motorized vehicles or human-made structures such as bridges and buildings on the tract. On the other hand, is a faction that wants to maximize access to the land, including the construction of new snowmobile trails and bridges, and allow motor vehicles to drive far into the tract rather than parking at a trailhead on the periphery.

Clashes like this are often represented as being between preservation and development. In the Adirondacks, “development” most often refers to physical development such as infrastructure (roads, bridges) and buildings. As I show in Chapters 2 and 6, the threat of such development is what drives protection-oriented interventions in the Park. I think this is a mischaracterization, especially in the Finch case. I argue that the real conflict lies between preservation and conservation, a long-standing antimony in the Park.

Nadasdy (2005:295) elucidates the complexities of these positions using the concept of the spectrum of environmentalism. He explains that the spectrum is bounded at one end by “brown” (300) non-environmentalist positions that “supposedly draw a sharp distinction between humans and the environment and adhere to a strictly anthropocentric view of the world” (296). In the middle of the spectrum are “light

green'...utilitarian conservationists and environmental reformists" (297). These positions are located in the intellectual tradition of Gifford Pinchot and view nature as a resource to be protected so that humans may utilize it. At the other end of the spectrum we find "'dark green'...radical environmentalists" who "decry an anthropocentric view of the world and see the value of nature as an inherent quality, utterly independent of its utility to humans" (297).

I encountered very few people whose views aligned with the brown end of the spectrum. The vast majority of the people I came to know in the Adirondacks held views in the green range of the spectrum: conservationists and preservationists. As I show in later chapters, the conflict in the Adirondacks is between light and dark green, not green and brown views of nature. No major players in Adirondack debates seriously suggest wholesale physical development in the Park. Conservationists and preservationists here are very interested in development in another sense - as improvement (Li 2007)- and this usage of the term is a regular feature in Adirondack discourse.

In this context, development can be read as "economic development." This is a central issue in the Finch lands debate as it is in the Rail Trail conflict. As I have shown above, assertions of economic benefit are often simplistic and vague, following the formula used by Beamish in his cheerleading of the Rail Trail: proposed intervention *X* equals increased tourism, which equals increased revenue, opportunity, and jobs. Support for or opposition to interventions is often tied to their assumed impact on "the economy." But such impacts -- and the economy itself -- are rarely clearly defined. This does not go unnoticed: both expert and lay-actors voiced their

dissatisfaction with the nebulous nature of economic development discourse in the Park. One development worker related their frustration at having to constantly invoke the economic benefit of their work at the behest of their supervisor who often encouraged them to “put a cherry on top” of internal reports and public communications.

I argue that in this context “the economy” acts as a signifier for something else: doing good. By invoking economic improvement -- which is assumed to benefit everyone -- actors position themselves as doing the right thing: that is, doing moral work. This brings me to my second point: a main force that binds members of star groups together is the idea that their cause is a moral one. The sense of a shared moral mission feeds the intensity and passion that is characteristic of star groups. As I will show, this sense of morality, of being and doing good, can lead to alternative positions being judged as bad or amoral. This has the effect of removing such positions from rigorous critique. In Adirondack land use conflicts a claim to morality works in two ways, elevating the position of the claimant while delegitimizing that of the opposition.

As I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, there is a strong relationship between the moral ideals of Adirondack actors and their ideas about time and temporal orientations. These in turn are powerful generative forces for ideas and practices concerning the relationships between people, nature, and capital. They are so powerful because they appear natural and self-evident. These characteristics obscure the cultural roots of such ideas and practices and helps to insulate them from critique. In the following chapters I present an argument that posits the continual reproduction of such

cultural relations over the last 125 years as a primary reason for the persistent state of schism in the Adirondacks.

Chapter 2 provides background and context. In addition to discussion of the Adirondacks in general, I define key terms, identify major players, and describe the study areas and the methods used in this research. In Chapter 3 I look back to the nineteenth century and tease out the genesis of the political-economic relations that helped to shape the Park. Chapter 4 forms the theoretical core of this work. Chapter 5 focuses on stages of the Finch lands debate. Chapter 6 considers the aftermath of the conflict.

CHAPTER 2

THE ADIRONDACKS

Location and Geography

The Adirondack Park -- comprised of six million acres of public (2.6 million acres) and private (3.4 million acres) land -- is the largest protected area in the contiguous United States. First established in 1892, the Park now contains 101 towns, villages, and hamlets in twelve counties, only two of which -- Essex and Hamilton -- lie completely within its borders. All told, the Adirondack Park takes up most of the northern part of New York state (Figure 1). Satellite imagery of New York reveals a deep green, misshapen oval that loosely conforms to the mapped borders of the Park. This is the Adirondack Dome, a roughly circular uplift of mountains formed about 10 million years ago, making the Adirondacks the youngest mountains in the eastern United States (Storey 2006:3). Though the mountains are young, the rock they are made of is some of the oldest on earth, formed during the Grenville Orogeny 1.3 billion years ago. Conflict is written into the land here: the rock and the Adirondack Dome are both the products of conflict on a geologic scale, made through the collisions of tectonic plates and their resulting subduction and uplift.

Zooming in on this image, we see that the land is dotted with lakes, ponds, and rivers, and a chain of mountains runs across it diagonally from the northeast to southwest. The northeastern mountains are the highest in New York, and are known as the High Peaks. This part of the Adirondacks is characterized by dramatic, striking scenery, and the mountains are regarded by many as the iconic Adirondack landscape.

The Park's boundary has changed throughout time, but it generally follows the shape of the Adirondack Dome and is bordered by the Mohawk Valley to the south, the Champlain Valley to the east, the Black River Valley to the west and the St Lawrence Valley to the north: these valleys were first mapped by Jesuits in 1664 (Thwaite 1899).

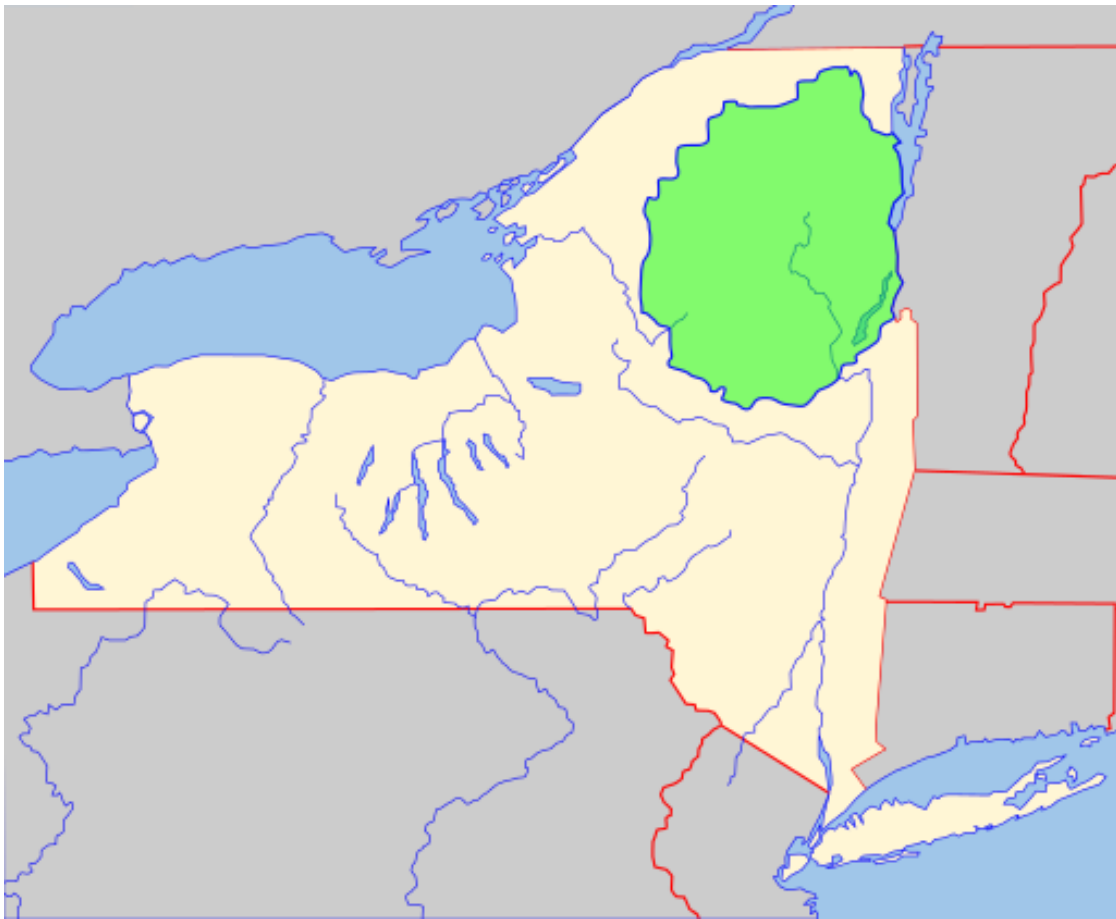


Figure 1. Location and Boundary of Adirondacks (Jackaranga, blue line added by Daniel Case CC BY-SA 4.0)

Naming the Land

The word Adirondack is also the product of tensions. Sources generally agree that the word “Adirondack” is of Mohawk origin, that its meaning is “tree eaters” or “bark eaters” and that it pejoratively refers to the Algonquin peoples. However, Heller (1989) suggests a Huron (Wendat) origin might also be possible and Sylvester (1877) notes that several other Indian groups including the Abenakis and Montagnais also called the Algonquins “Adirondacks.” A Jesuit missionary, Joseph François Lafitau (1681-1746), who first defined the meaning of one of the possible root words for Adirondack -- Rontaks -- as “eaters of trees” and associated Rontaks with the Algonquins (Sulavik 2007:17).

Joseph Bruchac (Sulavik 2007:42) turns to Abenaki oral tradition to relate such an incident where the word was used to refer to the Abenakis themselves. On the shores of what is now Middle Saranac Lake, a group of Abenaki warriors encountered a band of Kanienkehaka (Mohawk) warriors on the opposite shore of the northern part of the lake, where it narrows before opening up into what is now called Hungry Bay. According to the oral history, the Abenakis ate pine pitch and began a war dance, which caused the Kanienkehaka to retreat. The Abenakis shouted the insult “Maguak,” or coward at the Kanienkehaka, who answered with “Anentaks” the word for porcupine, a slow, shy animal that eats bark. Bruchac suggests these words were recorded by Europeans as Mohawk and Adirondack respectively.

“Adirondacks” was first suggested as a place name by State Geologist Ebenezer Emmons in 1837. He proposed the name for the region’s northeastern mountains, now known as the High Peaks, after making the first recorded ascent of the

state's highest peak (Terrie 2008). In 1892, the name was applied to the Adirondack Park as a whole. During the gazetting of the Park its boundary was drawn on a map in blue ink, and "the Blue Line" is a commonly used colloquial reference to the Park's border. Throughout this work I use "Adirondacks" to refer to the region in general; "Adirondack" as an adjective (i.e. an Adirondack winter); and "Adirondack Park" or "Park" to refer more precisely to the bureaucratic/legal entity that is the protected area.

The Contemporary Adirondack Park

All of the 2.6 million acres of state-owned land in the Adirondack Park is part of the New York Forest Preserve. I discuss the initial creation of the Forest Preserve (1885) and Adirondack Park (1892) in detail in Chapter 3. The most important point about Forest Preserve lands is that they are protected in perpetuity by Article XIV (formerly Article VII) of the New York State Constitution, which reads "The lands of the state, now owned or hereafter acquired, constituting the forest preserve as now fixed by law, shall be forever kept as wild forest lands. They shall not be leased, sold or exchanged, or be taken by any corporation, public or private, nor shall the timber thereon be sold, removed or destroyed." Article XIV is colloquially known as the "Forever Wild" amendment. Forever Wild serves as a rallying cry for Park advocates and a scapegoat for preservation opponents who blame the amendment for the economic problems faced by Park communities.

Forest Preserve lands, as well as other state-owned lands throughout New York, are managed by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). The history of the DEC is rooted in the Fisheries, Game, and Forests Commission, established in 1895 by the conglomeration of three separate

commissions -- Fisheries, Game, and Forest (Graham 1984). Terrie (1994:122) notes that “in 1900, the Fisheries, Game, and Forest Commission was reorganized into the Forest, Fish, and Game Commission, which in 1911 became the Conservation Commission.” The Conservation Commission’s edict was very much the conservation of natural resources such as timber, water, and animals, for harvesting and use by people. In 1927, the Conservation Commission was renamed the Conservation Department (Figure 2). Finally, in 1970 the Department of Environmental Conservation was created when the state merged the Conservation Department with parts of the Department of Health (McMartin 2002:17).



Figure 2. Pre-1970 snowmobile trail marker, Saranac Lakes Wild Forest. (Author photo)

The DEC divides the state into nine regions (Figure 3, Table 1). Region 5

covers the area of this study. The DEC's mission is wide-ranging: it operates public campgrounds, responds to environmental incidents such as spills, cleans up pollution sites, operates fish hatcheries and stocks water bodies, and conducts wildlife and game research and management. Via its Forest Ranger force, the DEC patrols public lands providing education and enforcement of Forest Preserve regulations. Forest Rangers also conduct search and rescue missions, a job that has recently seen a sharp uptick.

Region 1	Long Island
Region 2	New York City
Region 3	Lower Hudson Valley
Region 4	Capital Region/Northern Catskills
Region 5	Eastern Adirondacks/Lake Champlain
Region 6	Western Adirondacks/Eastern Lake Ontario
Region 7	Central New York
Region 8	Western Finger Lakes
Region 9	Western New York

Table 1. DEC Regions

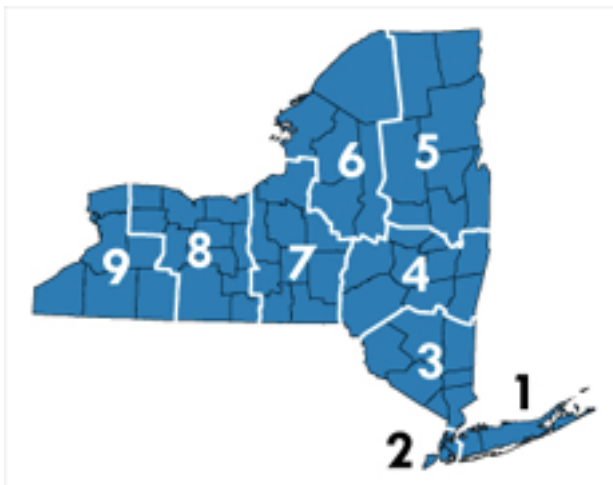


Figure 3. DEC Regions (NYSDEC)

Additionally, the DEC is one of the entities responsible for the drafting of environmental impact statements (EIS) and plans to guide public land management, known as Unit Management Plans (UMP). The DEC's website

(<https://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/4979.html>) states that UMPs are written for all public land units to “assess the natural and physical resources present within a land unit” and “identify opportunities for public use which are consistent with the classifications of these lands, and consider the ability the resources and ecosystems to accommodate such use.” Three such units, the Essex Chain Lakes Management Complex, the St. Regis Canoe Area and the Remsen-Lake Placid Travel Corridor are discussed in this study. For UMPs located within the Adirondack Park, the DEC works with Adirondack Park Agency staff to ensure the plans comply with the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan (APSLMP), the document that guides planning of the Park’s public lands.

The creation of the Adirondack Park Agency (APA) in 1973 and the subsequent adoption of the APSLMP and the Adirondack Park Land Use and Development Plan (APLUDP) were watershed moments in Adirondack history and some of the most controversial undertakings of the government of New York State. The state’s acceptance of the APLUDP -- the document that guides planning of privately-owned land in the Park -- was an especially contentious development as it gave a state agency legal authority over the planning of use and development of privately owned land. The story of the APA begins in the 1960s, and like other Adirondack developments it was the product of relations between the local, national, and global. Merchant (2002) locates the roots of the American environmental movement in the citizenry’s post- World War II rebuilding of their lives. She notes that Hays (1982) identified a postwar shift in emphasis from conservation -- the managing of resources for human use -- to environmentalism, or a concern with the environment

for its own sake. Merchant positions “growing concerns over quality-of-life issues” such as pollution, population, and aesthetics as a major force in the rise of environmentalism in the 1960’s. Hays (1982:21) argues that aesthetic and amenity values became increasingly important to Americans at this time as part of their “modern standard of living.”

These shifts in values were aided by the economic prosperity of postwar America, a time that some scholars call the “Golden Age of Capitalism” (Marglin and Schor 2007). More and more Americans found themselves with increased leisure time and disposable income. Studies show an increase in leisure activities, especially by younger people, from the 1960s through the 1980s (Dardis et al 1994:309). Jensen and Guthrie (2006:33) call the increase in numbers of outdoor recreation participants in the 1960s “astonishing,” and Cordell et al (2008:7) note that the decade saw rapid growth in visitation to state parks. It was within this milieu that the proposal to turn a large portion of the Adirondack Park into a National Park was created. While the proposal ultimately was unsuccessful, George Davis (2009:243), the first employee of the APA, points to this event as the spark that led to the APA’s creation and the Park we know today.

The National Park proposal was the idea of Laurance Rockefeller (brother of then-governor Nelson Rockefeller and chairman of the State Council of Parks) and the report was created by Conrad Wirth, Ben Thompson, and Roger Thompson. Wirth was the former director of the National Park Service, Ben Thompson was a former Park Service employee, and Roger Thompson was simply said to “have done considerable research on the subject” (Schumach 1967:27). The proposal was wildly controversial,

as it called for the purchase of 600,000 acres of private land, which would displace residents from communities in the proposed park's interior, and concentrate population in five village and resort "exclusions or enclaves" (Wirth et al 1967:4).

A common feature of conservation interventions is to identify a crisis that a proposed intervention can solve (e.g., Brandon 1998). Laurance Rockefeller's proposal positioned the Park as a failed project, calling it a "fiction" (Wirth et al 1967:2). The report states that the Park fails to live up to its promise of a vast and contiguous public wilderness due to fragmentation of public lands because of private ownership. For example, the authors note that much of the shoreline of Adirondack water bodies is privately owned and therefore inaccessible to the general public. But the clear and present danger identified in the proposal is the potential for development of private land. This potentiality threatened the aesthetic and recreational values of the land that, as Hays (1982) argued, were so important to Americans at this time. Indeed, it was aesthetics and the human experience of wildness that the proposal sought to protect.

This desire had a kind of dual temporality. On the one hand, the authors identified the purpose of an Adirondack National Park as "restoration as nearly as possible of wildlife and the natural environment to the grandeur that the area possessed when frontiersmen first saw it" (Wirth et al 1967:10). This perspective looks to the past for cues on how things should be and is characteristic of the wilderness preservation movement. On the other hand, the desire to preserve is future-oriented: the purpose of parks is to "leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations" (Wirth et al 1967:3). This goal looks deep into the future as these

protections are intended to carry on in perpetuity. This dual temporal orientation, simultaneously looking back to the past and forward to the future, is an integral part of the Adirondack preservation movement and has been so since the nineteenth century.

Davis (2009:244) notes that Governor Nelson Rockefeller was an “astute politician” and that his brother’s proposal had the potential to cause trouble for him with his constituents. Rockefeller created the Temporary Study Commission on the Future of the Adirondacks (TSCFA) in September of 1968 to study the Park and the proposal, handpicking the Commission’s members. The men appointed to the Study Commission were overwhelmingly white -- Actor’s Equity Chairman Frederick O’Neal was the only person of color -- and of means and privilege. Of the 13 appointees, 10 were educated at Ivy League universities. Yale was especially well represented: four commissioners as well as Chairman Harold K. Hochschild, philanthropist and former president of the American Metal Company, were educated there.

Three commissioners had ties to the banking and finance industry: Peter S. Paine Jr. and Howard H. Kimball Jr. both sat as chairmen on bank boards, and R. Watson Pomeroy, New York State Republican Assemblyman (1948-1964) and Senator (1965-1966) was an investment manager. In a retrospective article on the Commission, Folwell (1989) writes “many points of view were clearly represented.” At this time, and with the material available to me, I cannot adequately address the accuracy of her statement, but I will point out that while their viewpoints may have shown some diversity, the relations these men had to the Adirondacks, to nature, and to capital were strikingly similar. They were all men who earned a living doing white-collar,

professional work, and who viewed the Adirondacks through the lenses of recreational users and seasonal residents. With the exception of Robert Hall, a newspaper publisher, and Richard Lawrence, an attorney, they made their livings outside of the Park and did not reside there year-round. For the majority of Commissioners, the Park was a place to get away from the toil of everyday work and life.

One thing that is certain is that the life experiences and daily practice of TSCFA members were likely quite different than those of the majority of working and middle class Adirondack residents such as loggers, miners, merchants, nurses, school teachers, and service workers. By virtue of their education and professions, I argue that these men shared an elite habitus (Bourdieu 2008). Part of this habitus was a tendency to see nature and the relations between humans and nature in a certain way. In particular, they shared a disposition to understand nature and humanity as separate entities. Moreover, nature was viewed through this lens as a space that has been degraded by humans.

These orientations carry temporal and moral baggage. The separation of humans and nature and the recognition that humans modify their environments in destructive ways sets the stage for the validation of the pre-human past as the ideal state of nature. This in turn facilitates a moral judgement about what the right role is for people in their relations with nature: stewards and visitors. Conversely, those whose habitus enables an alternate set of relations with nature can be cast as amoral.

The sets of dispositions that form a person's habitus are not solely generative, however. They can also close off possibilities by rendering them invisible. This can be problematic in situations like the TSCFA, where groups of individuals who share

habitus can be blinded to other perspectives, perhaps especially so when the group is tasked with achieving a particular shared goal. It is difficult to imagine that such a scenario could truly represent a wide range of viewpoints.

Issues of representation as an underpinning of Adirondack conflict in the 1970s and 1980s are well-documented (Knott 1998, McMartin 2002). One of the issues that I dig into this study is how this skewed representation works to obscure some viewpoints and highlight others, constraining and enabling particular actions and outcomes. I argue that the elite habitus of actors who make the decisions about land use in the Park only makes certain possibilities open to them. A look at the TSCFA's work will provide a brief example.

In December 1970, the TSCFA produced a principal report and eight separate technical reports. All volumes were reproduced and published without alteration by The Adirondack Museum in 1971. (Note: The Museum's edition (which is the copy I worked from) entitled the principal report *The Future of the Adirondacks*, and bound the eight technical reports into one volume entitled *The Future of the Adirondacks: Volume II The Technical Reports*. When citing *The Future of the Adirondacks*, I use the following format (TSCFA 1971). Aspects of an elite habitus manifest in the TSCFA reports as a primary concern for recreational and aesthetic values and as justification for an intervention. At the root of this were Governor Nelson Rockefeller's own dispensations regarding Adirondack nature as revealed in the questions he posed to the Committee (Table 2). Questions 1, 2, 3, and 7 especially speak to the mindset that preservation of land in a wild state is the highest and best outcome.

1. What should be the long-range policy of the State toward the acquisition of additional forest preserve land?
2. What measure can be taken to assure that development on private land is appropriate and consistent with the long-range well-being of the area?
3. What should be the State policy toward recreation in the area?
4. Should there be federal participation in any of the plans, including a limited park or wilderness area?
5. Should there be greater management flexibility in some portions of the area?
6. Should there be even stronger safeguards for the wilderness portions?
7. Should procedures be developed for a more flexible policy regarding consolidation of public lands?

Table 2. Governor Rockefeller's questions for the TSCFA.

The findings of the TSCFA were remarkably similar to those presented in Laurance Rockefeller's report. The crisis the Commission identified was the imminent threat to the Park's wild character posed by development on private lands: the same issue tackled by the National Park Proposal. I will talk a great deal more about wildness in Chapter 4, but for now a brief definition will suffice. In the Adirondack context, wildness is an absence of permanent human presence. As I discuss above, it has a temporal aspect in that wildness represents what nature was like before human intervention and occupation. This perspective suffuses the TSCFA reports. For example, compare the juxtaposition of two photographs in *The Future of the Adirondacks* (Figure 4).



Tent platforms should be phased out.



A trip to the Park should lead to a greater understanding of man's relationship to nature.

Figure 4. Tent Platform Photo from *The Future of the Adirondacks* (TSCFA 1971)

The top photo is of a tent platform camp in an undisclosed location. From 1917 until 1965, individuals could obtain permits to construct and occupy a tent platform on public land inside the Park. Tent platforms were usually rustic affairs consisting of a wooden floor (the platform) and a wooden frame for a wall tent. Many such platforms were located on bodies of water, and permittees would occupy them for entire seasons. As the photo shows, the impact of the platform spread out far beyond its footprint as occupants would clear away small trees and undergrowth, construct fire pits, and haul in bulky supplies like the barrels and fuel cylinder in the photo. The TSCFA recommended a phased removal of tent platform camps from the Forest Preserve, arguing that the camps represented an “individual vested interest inconsistent with the stated purposes of the forest preserve” (TSCFA 1971:81).

The photo below, of an undisturbed wooded area with a thick ground cover of mountain maple (*Acer spicatum*, a small low growing tree), represents what the TSCFA considered to be a use consistent with the Forest Preserve, a place that “should lead to a greater understanding of man’s relationship to nature” (TSCFA 1971:81). From the photo we can surmise that, according to the TSCFA, the proper relationship of people to nature is as visitors who leave no trace of their visit and who appreciate nature as something unspoiled by people. That wildness was universally beneficial was self-evident to the Commission: “it is clear that an environment relatively undisturbed by man is spiritually refreshing in today’s complex, feverish life” (TSCFA 1971:43).

Wildness in the Adirondacks means vast stretches of unbroken forest, scenic vistas unsullied by evidence of human works. It means only certain kinds of flora and

fauna are authentic, and only specific forms of recreation are acceptable. This latter point was especially important to the TSCFA. In *The Future of the Adirondack Park*, the Commission made 46 recommendations concerning recreation, second in number only to the recommendations for public and private land (61) and 45 percent more than the third most numerous recommendations (29) which concerned wildlife. Likewise, the second longest technical report in *The Future of the Adirondacks* is on recreation at 74 pages, behind the 103-page Forest, Minerals, Water and Air inventory. These reports emphasized that the most appropriate kind of recreation for the Park was human-powered (i.e. hiking, canoeing, cross-country skiing), and the best venue for such recreation were wild lands.

This is what was threatened at the time of the TSCFA. The Commission noted that 61 percent of the land in the Adirondacks was privately owned, and more than half of private Adirondack land was owned by large land owners who held parcels over 500 acres in size. “Unguided development” of these tracts would “destroy the character of the entire Park if immediate action is not taken” (TSCFA 1971:26). Their fears were not unfounded. Indeed, in 1961 Cortland auctioneer and land speculator Charles Vosburgh purchased 3,500 acres of land near the northern end of Upper Saranac Lake, including thousands of feet of shoreline. This land was immediately subdivided into hundreds of lots and put on the market for sale. The house I lived in during my fieldwork was constructed (in 1989) on one of these lots located about a mile from the lake and sold by Vosburgh in 1963.

Interestingly, the past, current, and future owners of this land were and are bound by deed covenants put into place by Vosburgh himself which restrict

development to a single residence per lot and forbid any temporary dwellings (including campers) or commercial activity on the property. The covenants also have a clause which specifies that any materials used in construction must “be in keeping” with preexisting buildings in the area, and specifically prohibits the use of “substitute materials or tar paper roofing” for outside construction. These covenants were likely put into place because Vosburgh himself maintained a residence in the area. They foreshadow APA regulations regarding development density and building specifications.

Small landowners also posed a threat, especially in the face of a rapidly growing market for new seasonal homes. The Commission feared that small landholders motivated by the desire for profit and avoidance of inheritance taxes would begin to subdivide and sell off lots from their properties, especially those on the waterfront, which they note was already beginning to happen. Again, the Commission warned that this activity, if unchecked, would “destroy” the Park (TSCFA 1971:27), and that “This land, now generally free of restraint, poses a grave and growing threat to the entire Park” (TSCFA 1971:28). This is strong language, especially considering what was materially at stake: an aesthetic preference. The perceived threats to the Park were not Appalachian mountain-top removal mining, or high-volume horizontal hydrofracking, but second homes and cut trees. Yet to the TSCFA members, whose ideas about the proper relations between people and nature were inculcated by their elite habitus, these must have seemed like grave threats indeed.

This speaks to a point that I make throughout this work: that the tensions between preservation and conservation in the Adirondacks, especially with regards to

threat and opportunity, are very real and very present for the actors involved in such conflicts. The dispositions that guide them are not simply preferences, not products of ignorance or obstinacy -- as I often heard during my fieldwork -- but deeply cultural, and as such invisible yet powerful. The continual reproduction of specific sets of relations among people, nature, and capital is what makes Adirondack conflict so persistent and seemingly unresolvable. I argue that the reproduction of elite habitus is especially problematic in this context. I have shown above how this elite habitus manifested during the creation of the contemporary Adirondack Park, establishing the context for present-day conflict. In Chapter 3 I go back to the nineteenth century to examine the roots of this habitus and tease out the creation of particular relations between people, nature, and capital in the Adirondacks. In Chapter 5 I interrogate a recent land use conflict -- the debate over the Essex Chain Lakes -- to show how, once again, the reproduction of these relations has led to schism.

Study Areas

I conducted fieldwork primarily in the towns of Santa Clara, Saranac Lake, and Tupper Lake in southern Franklin County and the town of Newcomb in southeastern Essex County. Much of my fieldwork time in the latter locale was spent in the Essex Chain Lakes Primitive Area (ECLPA) (Figure 5). Access to this area is difficult or impossible in the winter and early spring, so my visits here were mostly in the summer and autumn months (May-October). I only made day trips, some very long (12-16 hours), to Newcomb and my experience here was very much that of a tourist, albeit perhaps one more focused on observing other tourists and talking to them and local people.

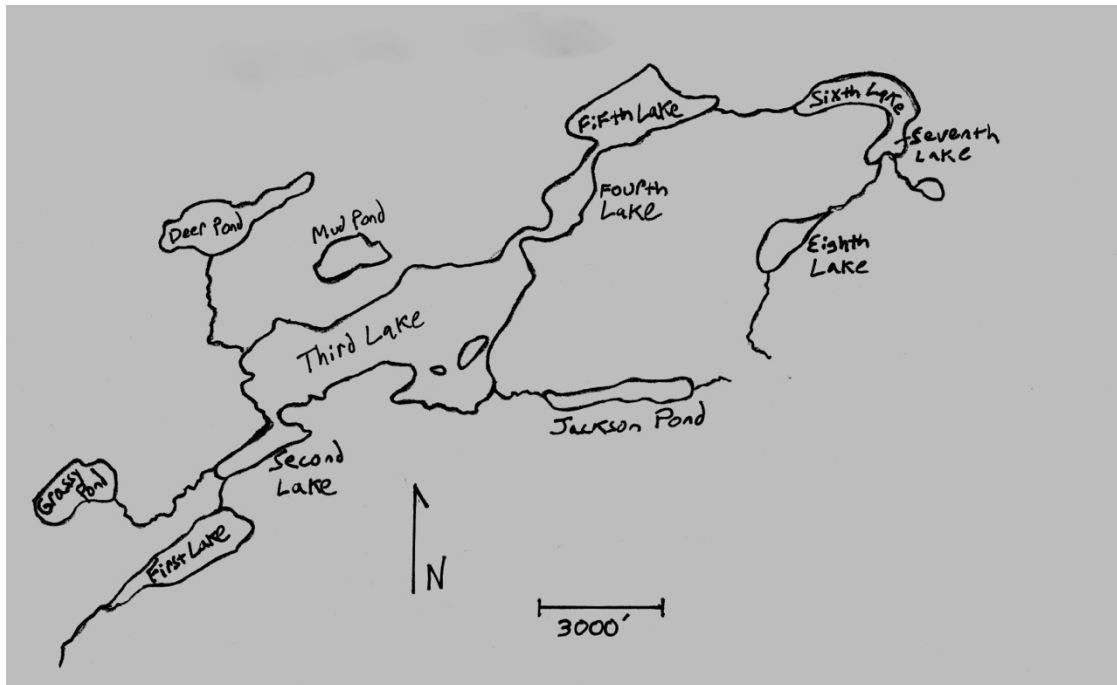


Figure 5. Essex Chain Lakes Primitive Area Map (Drawn by Author)

An adjective that appears frequently in my notes to describe Newcomb is “sleepy.” This perception could be due to the geography and layout of the town. Newcomb is laid out more or less on an east/west axis along Route 30 and roughly bifurcated by the Hudson River. To the west of the river, the densest development is along the road in a narrow corridor sandwiched between the channel connecting Belden and Harris Lakes to the north, and Woodruff Pond and its associated wetlands to the south.

To the east, development is concentrated in suburban-style clusters on side roads south of Route 28. Unlike the villages of Saranac Lake and Tupper Lake, with their central downtown areas, the diffuse nature of activity in Newcomb makes it difficult to get a sense of the town’s “busyness.” The seeming quietness of Newcomb

is also due to its small population. Over the last 60 years Newcomb's population has declined by 36 percent, from a high of 1,212 in 1950 to 436 residents in 2010, spread over a land area of 226 square miles. The drain of population here occurred as a result of the loss of extractive industry: in Newcomb's case the closing of the Tahawus titanium mine in the 1960s.

Newcomb, like many small towns in the Adirondacks (and indeed rural and Rust Belt America at large), has struggled economically with the collapse of industry. The town is at the center of the conflict over the Essex Chain Lakes area because Newcomb is the gateway for access to these lands. As I discuss throughout this work, the addition of the Finch lands to the Forest Preserve was presented to involved communities as an economic life-raft that would drive economic development through increased tourism. The conflict here hinges on the classification and management of these lands, with one side favoring a more conservation-oriented approach that maximizes access, and the other pushing for preservation of wilderness. Both factions deploy economic benefit narratives for their positions with great frequency.

Northwest of Newcomb is the town of Tupper Lake. To get here from Newcomb requires traveling west on Route 28, a road infamous for its poor condition. The road meanders through extensive stretches of unbroken forest and the sense of remoteness is heightened by the fact that shortly after leaving Newcomb there is no cellular telephone service for miles. Eventually, scattered dwellings start to appear and soon the town of Long Lake and the junction for Route 30.

Driving north out of Long Lake on Route 30 is like entering a vast sea of green. The road undulates in a series of long, rolling hills, and on both sides there are

only trees as far as the eye can see. Most of this land is privately owned, its boundaries marked by square, brightly colored yellow or orange 'Posted' signs that warn against trespass. Though the land is undeveloped in terms of houses, a good portion of it is working forest, owned by timber companies who rotate logging operations from site to site within the massive tracts. Locked steel gates interrupt the wall of trees that line the highway at irregular intervals, many marked by brown and yellow street signs that display the gate's name. These gates secure access roads used by timber companies and the hunting clubs that lease the lands from them. Finally, the margins of the town of Tupper Lake begin to appear.

Tupper (the name is often locally truncated to a single word) is smaller in area than Newcomb, only 117 square miles of land, but much more populous with 5,971 residents counted in the 2010 census. Tupper's population has also decreased since the 1950's with the loss of major logging operations, but not as precipitously as Newcomb's. Though no longer a major industry, logging is central to the town's identity: its mascot is a lumberjack, and The Lumberjacks is also the name of the school's sports teams. Tupper is, unfairly, the butt of many jokes in the Tri-Lakes (Saranac Lake, Lake Placid, and Tupper Lake) area. From the main road, the town center is somewhat run down in appearance, with many dilapidated homes and shuttered businesses, interspersed here and there with well-kept dwellings and new or renovating businesses. Like many Adirondack towns, it is a patchwork of old and new, broken and refurbished. Tupper is home to The Wild Center, an award-winning natural history museum, and Sunmount Developmental Center, a live-in facility for people with developmental disabilities that also contains a unit for patients who are

developmentally disabled, mentally ill, and convicted of crimes. Sunmount, which is operated by the New York State Office for People with Developmental Disabilities, is one of the largest employers in the region.

The community has also been embroiled in an often-bitter debate about the proposed Adirondack Club and Resort (ACR) project. Conflict over private land is not my focus in this work, but the ACR debate is an important part of the local context, and was referenced by a number of informants, so it bears brief mention here

The ACR is a proposed development of over 700 housing units, ranging from luxury Adirondack Great Camps to condominiums, on over 6,000 acres of land owned by the Oval Wood Dish Company. In operation from 1918 to 1964 in Tupper Lake, Oval Wood Dish relocated there when vacationing executives saw “the vast amounts of local hardwood” (Rice 2010). The lands that ACR proposes to develop were logged in the past to provide raw materials for Oval Wood Dish’s products.

The project has been fiercely opposed by regional, national, and international environmental groups, and lauded by local governments and many Tupper Lake residents, especially business owners. The Sierra Club, along with the regional environmental advocacy group Protect the Adirondacks and adjacent landowners, filed suit to appeal the granting of a permit for the project by the APA in 2014. This led to tremendous acrimony and also some local humor (Figure 6).

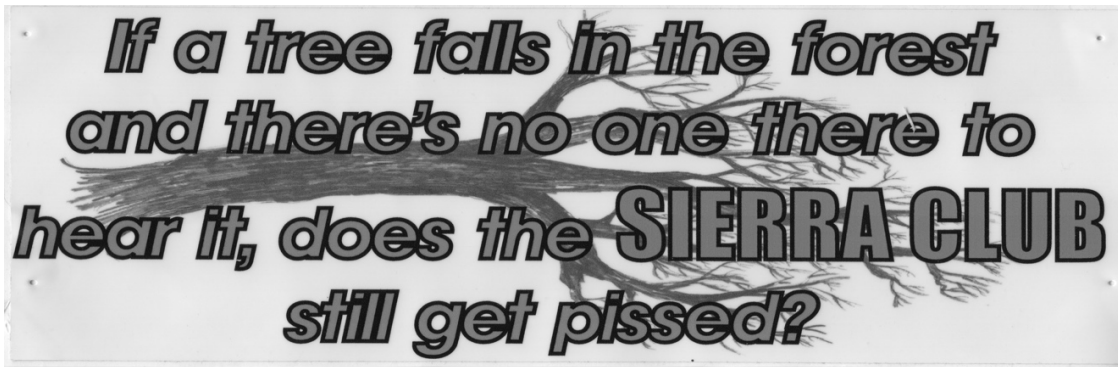


Figure 6. Bumper sticker produced by Tupper Lake artist. (Author Photo)

During my 24 months of fieldwork I lived in the town of Santa Clara about 16 road miles northwest of Tupper Lake. Santa Clara is the second largest town in area, and second-least populated town in the county at 191.7 square miles and 345 residents (2010 census). Viewed on a map, the town is a long, narrow rectangle, oriented north-south, with a short eastward protrusion at the southern end, like a severely truncated L. This end of the town is dominated by Upper Saranac Lake, the largest of the Saranac Lakes chain. It is also the municipal seat, and houses the town court, clerk, code enforcement office, and highway department. There is no town center here - that is in the northern part of the town, almost 30 highway miles away - just houses along the main road, Route 30, and on spur roads (many private) that branch off of it.

Santa Clara proved to be an ideal location to experience the ebb and flow of seasonal tourism based on outdoor recreation. Prior to fieldwork I had been in living in the village of Saranac Lake which I initially planned to use as a base for the duration of my fieldwork. Though my move was precipitated by personal circumstances unrelated to this study, it turned out to be a serendipitous development. Living here offered out-the-back-door, four-season access to the St. Regis Canoe Area (SRCA) -- a pre-existing analog to the new Essex Chain Lakes Primitive Area -- and the Saranac

Lakes Wild Forest. This part of Santa Clara is dominated in area by these Forest Preserve lands, and their numerous lakes and ponds make them popular summer destinations. It is home to the Fish Creek Ponds/Rollins Pond complex, a popular and busy state campground with 642 campsites that accommodates tens of thousands of visitors each season (April-October).

There are also a large number of second homes and vacation residences here, and seasonal residents outnumber the year-rounders two-to-one. These seasonal homes run the gamut from permanently-placed camper trailers to the gated compounds of “Great Camps” (Kaiser 2003): ornate, rustic mansions, many of which date to the early twentieth century, when Santa Clara was a fashionable summer destination. A number of them serve as family getaways *and* rental properties, the extra income helping to offset property costs. Others are simply businesses: investment properties positioned to capture lucrative short-term rents. Because there is much private waterfront land, average property values tend to be high. Sanford Weill - former Citigroup CEO and the “Shatterer of Glass-Steagall” (De La Merced 2012), and Jack Ma, founder of e-commerce site Ali Baba, both own properties in Santa Clara. There are no amenities in this part of the town, other than a camp store that is only open from Memorial (late May) to Labor Day (early September). My neighbors and I all rely on Tupper Lake or Saranac Lake, 12 road miles to the west, for basic goods and services.

The village of Saranac Lake is located in the town of Harrietstown. It is the most densely populated area in the Adirondacks with 5,406 residents within its 2.8 square miles. The village is home to the main campus of North Country Community College, and it is the closest population center to Paul Smith’s College, located in the

town of Brighton about 10 miles north. The hamlet of Ray Brook, about four miles to the east is the home of a federal correctional facility, FCI Ray Brook, and also houses DEC Region 5 headquarters, APA headquarters, and the main barracks for New York State Troopers Troop B.

Like Tupper, Saranac Lake has its share of empty storefronts and crumbling homes, but there has also been a tremendous amount of downtown revitalization activity facilitated by a number of New York State Main Street improvement grants. The Hotel Saranac, an iconic building and business in the village, reopened in February 2018 after five years of renovations, aided by a five million-dollar New York State Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) grant. Under the leadership of its energetic and polarizing mayor Clyde Rabideau, the village is aggressively positioning itself to once again be premier destination for tourism.

Presently, Saranac Lake finds itself engaged in two conflicts related to tourism and development: the debate over the rail trail that I discussed in Chapter 1, and the controversial Lake Flower Resort project. The latter is a proposal to build a 90-room upscale hotel on the shore of Lake Flower in the village of Saranac Lake. The lake, an impoundment of the Saranac River named after former New York Governor Roswell P. Flower (1835-1899), is a central part of the village and lies just a few hundred feet from downtown Saranac Lake. The proposal has been wildly controversial ever since it was unveiled in 2013. Like the ACR discussed above, this is a conflict centered on private land use, but again, I feel discussion adds further depth to the context of my study and provides additional examples of some of the relations at play in the Adirondacks.

Opposition to the project is largely on aesthetic grounds. There have been many criticisms of the size and design of the proposed hotel that assert it is not a good “fit” for Saranac Lake. Members of the environmental community such as former APA chairman Curt Stiles (2015), *Adirondack Explorer* founder Dick Beamish (2016), former APA counsel Bob Glennon (2017), Protect the Adirondacks director Peter Bauer, and former APA attorney Ellen George (Levine 2017) have spoken out against the hotel and the APA’s approval of the project, which required variances to reduce the amount of shoreline setback. Numerous seasonal and year-round residents of the village and surrounding areas have also voiced their opposition to the project, largely through letters to the local newspaper, the *Adirondack Daily Enterprise*.

On the other side, the project has received robust support from the village government and many residents. The mayor in particular has been roundly criticized as a cheerleader of this project, and indeed he has been quick to step to its defense in public and private. Proponents of the project point to its supposed economic benefits in the form of jobs created and increased tourism. The debate has turned nasty at times, with each faction accusing the other of ignorance, greed, and short-sightedness. Like many Adirondack conflicts, this one tends to break, though not at all neatly, along class lines. One informant, a retail worker strongly in favor of the hotel characterized its opponents as “rich people always getting what they want.” Another interlocutor, a medical professional, called hotel proponents “dupes” who put too much faith in the economic development narrative of the project while risking the “beauty” of their village. This conflict still simmers on a back burner as no work has progressed on the hotel site to date.

All of the towns that I conducted fieldwork in continue to be involved in active conflicts over public and private land use. These conflicts are part of the fabric of daily life in these communities, and they are impossible to escape. Not only are they well-covered by local news media, you hear people talking about them at the grocery store, the post office, in bars and restaurants. Lots of people express their fatigue with these constant battles. Ross Whaley, president emeritus of SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry (ESF) and former APA chairman is credited with the *bon mot* “Adirondackers would rather fight than win” (McClelland 2011). I don’t think this is true. I think the issue is that what is considered a “win” is buried deep in the habitus of participants and as such changing these expectations is exceedingly difficult if not impossible. It is my hope that my work here will shed some light on this aspect of 126 years of conflict in the Park.

Methods

I employed three complimentary methods in this study: historical and documentary analysis, participant-observation ethnography, and digital ethnography. The Adirondacks possess a rich -- and massive -- historical record. In Chapter 3 I draw from the numerous secondary historical sources written about the Adirondacks. I also use several kinds of primary sources, especially nineteenth-century newspapers, magazines, and travel books. In other chapters I work from the foundational documents of the contemporary Park’s creation -- the TSCFA reports -- as well as official state documents such as Unit Management Plans (UMP) and Environmental Impact Statements. Through Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) requests I obtained documents such as public comment records and trail register logs from the Adirondack

Park Agency and Department of Environmental Conservation. I also drew on contemporary published sources such as newspapers and magazines.

As discussed above, I conducted fieldwork in several different locales within the Park. Within these locales, I spent time with people in their homes, at their work, in restaurants and bars, and at meetings, festivals, and other social gatherings. My interactions with people ranged from brief, informal conversations to lengthy semi-structured interviews focused on a particular topic. In all seasons, I conducted fieldwork outdoors in the Forest Preserve. This is where I primarily interacted with tourists, observed them, and participated in activities such as paddling, fishing, hiking, cross-country skiing, and sightseeing. I visited attractions such as Ausable Chasm (located in the eponymous town) and High Falls Gorge (Wilmington), and cultural institutions like The Wild Center (Tupper Lake) and The Adirondack Museum (Blue Mountain Lake, now known as The Adirondack Experience). Again, I used these opportunities to talk with and observe tourists.

Because of the peripatetic nature of my fieldwork and of tourism itself, most of my interaction with individual tourists and some tourism workers was of short duration, ranging from a few minutes (enough to ask a couple of questions), to several hours. Additionally, the vast majority of my tourist and tourism worker encounters were singular: after speaking with them I did not see or interact with these people again. Throughout this work I use the term interlocutor to refer to such people. My only window into their lives was through our conversations during a finite amount of time.

I use the term informant to refer to people with whom I spent significant

amounts of time and interacted with repeatedly. These were mostly folks who lived in Newcomb, Saranac Lake, Lake Placid, Tupper Lake, and Santa Clara. My core group of informants was diverse with regards to their employment, though I focused on people who worked in jobs that in some measure depended on tourism. These included guides and outfitters, restaurant and hotel workers, retail employees and business owners, and real estate professionals. Other informants worked in construction, as loggers and arborists, or for government at varying levels of scale from federal to hamlet. Some were professionals in health care or law. All had lived in the Park for at least a decade, and the majority much longer. A handful were born in the Adirondacks and had family roots stretching back between one and several generations, some before the creation of the Park in 1892.

For nearly all of my informants, privacy was a concern. In small towns degrees of separation between individuals can be small, and negotiating webs of social relations requires tact and discretion. Some wanted to express critical opinions without sounding “whiny,” as one informant said. Others wanted to say mean things about their neighbors. Some expressed opinions that countered their public statements or went against the grain of professional opinion. I chose to not use pseudonyms and just refer to informants as “informant.” I am additionally cautious to be vague in some instances when describing location and occupation.

A small number of informants insisted I use their real names. I present these people in the text using first and last names. I also use full names when quoting people involved in public discussions and when citing written public comments. I make an exception to this when quoting participants in online discussions on Internet forums or

in comment sections. There I use the published username, which in some cases is the users actual full name and in others a pseudonym.

Digital ethnography proved to be a vital component of this project. I primarily locate my digital ethnographic practice along the lines of what Gabriella Coleman (2010:488) terms the “cultural politics of media.” This orientation “examines how cultural identities, representations, and imaginaries...are remade, subverted, communicated, and circulated through individual and collective engagement with digital technologies.” To this end I analyzed blogs, advocacy group websites, and Internet forums related to the Finch intervention and other Adirondack debates I discuss here.

Digital technologies have affected access to information about, representation of, and participation in Adirondack land use debates. I am particularly interested in the interplay of these technologies with the existing relations among people, nature, and capital in the Adirondacks. Rather than arguing for the widespread transformative effect of digital technologies and media, I focus instead on how these serve to reproduce existing relations of power, privilege, and visibility. For example, I explore the role of digital technologies such as form letter generators in the public comment process related to land use issues. These technologies allow a user to submit a provided form letter to an entity such as the APA for inclusion in the public comment record with just a few mouse clicks. I believe this technology was partly responsible for the massive number of public comments on the classification of the former Finch lands. I now turn to a discussion of the historical context of the Adirondacks.

CHAPTER 3

HISTORICAL CONTEXTS

Mapping the Terrain of History

This chapter presents a political-economic analysis of the processes, events and conditions that led to the creation of the New York State Forest Preserve in 1885 and the Adirondack Park in 1892. The orthodox narrative characterizes the creation of the Park as a prescient response to an environmental crisis by the citizens of a democratic state. As I show below, the intervention that created the Park is better described as the product of historical and material conditions and webs of relations operating under the particular structuring logic of capitalism. In this chapter, and in this work as a whole, I foreground a perspective on the Adirondacks as a locus for capital accumulation. It was the pursuit of capital that first spurred large rushes of settlers and visitors to the mountains, and it was in this context that the longstanding -- and often contentious -- social relations between people, nature, and capital in the region were forged.

I begin with a discussion of the political-economic situation circa 1790-1820 that laid the foundation for the events and processes that would make the Adirondack region both an industrial landscape and a haven for tourists. Following this, I discuss labor and leisure in the Adirondacks circa 1820-1890 to demonstrate how increased use of the region by capitalists and well-heeled tourists developed tensions that would lead to the first Adirondack conservation intervention. I then turn to a political-economic analysis of the interventions of 1885 and 1892. Finally, I discuss some of the key relations between people, nature, and capital that were created in this period

and highlight how they have been reproduced into the present.

Context

Before turning to the analysis of the initial Adirondack conservation intervention, I must establish the political-economic context that laid the foundations of its possibility. I begin with a brief examination of the creation and growth of the financial system of the United States in the decades following the close of the Revolutionary War. I then trace the movements of the major extractive industries of tanning, mining and logging into and out of the Adirondacks circa 1820-1870, highlighting the deep economic ties of the region with state and international interests. Along with analysis of these extractive industries, I also follow the steady growth of tourism in the region during the same period and the nascent development of the Adirondack tourism industry. These developments were also very closely tied to the political-economic changes that occurred earlier in the nineteenth century.

In the year 1776, two events whose reverberations helped to shape the Adirondack Park occurred: the Declaration of Independence and the publication of Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations*. The first created the material and political conditions that enabled New York State to possess and manage its land. The second articulated principles of a liberal free market that would be heartily embraced by American capitalists in the latter part of the eighteenth century. In 1772 Joseph Totten and Stephen Crossfield, acting as middlemen between land speculators and the British crown, initiated a deal to purchase 1,150,000 acres of "Indian land south of a line running west from Port Henry" (Jenkins 2004:80). Thereafter known as the Totten and Crossfield Patent, this deal was part of a complicated grant system that required land

speculators to first purchase lands from the Indian people who “owned” them (in this case Mohawks) before turning them over to the British Crown and paying again to have the lands granted back to them.

As late as April of 1775 (Donaldson 1977), crown officials had still not issued the patent letters that would complete the transfer of land title to the speculators. This would actually never come to pass for some of the investors, as the Revolutionary War had broken out in the interim. In 1779, the New York Act of Attainder named the majority of the Totten and Crossfield investors as Loyalists, and their lands were forfeited to New York State (McMartin 2004). In the coming decades, the majority of this land would be sold to raise revenue for the fledgling State of New York. Land speculators who hoped to lure settlers there to clear and work the land purchased most of this acreage. This established a pattern of non-resident ownership of the majority of Adirondack land that has been continually reproduced right up to the present day.

Several major political-economic processes were set into motion after 1790 that fueled economic and industrial growth in New York State and the Adirondacks: the chartering of a national bank, the rise of state banks, the growth of securities and equity markets, and the adoption of limited liability legislation. These processes worked in synergy to create conditions that proved extremely favorable for the rapid growth of a large, sophisticated, internationally-linked financial system. The creation of this system had a profound impact on the Adirondacks. Not only did it provide the capital for industrial expansion, but the growth of banking and related businesses (law firms and insurance agencies, for example) helped to create the class of people who would take to the Adirondacks by the score in the latter part of the century and

advocate for the creation of the Adirondack Park.

Before 1791, there were only three banks in the United States: one each in New York, Philadelphia and Boston. There was no national banking system as such; the three banks served local commercial interests and their notes and deposits only circulated locally (Rousseau and Sylla 2005). Nor was there a uniform currency. In 1789 first Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton ushered in what Sylla (1998) has termed the Federalist financial revolution. Hamilton persuaded Congress to charter a national bank, the First Bank of the United States (FBUS), which “helped to achieve the dual purposes of raising the nation’s credit standing and establishing a more uniform currency” (Rousseau and Sylla 2005:4).

Hamilton had drafted a tremendously controversial plan for a bank that would be capitalized by both the federal government and private investors. President Washington signed the bill creating the FBUS in 1791. The bank was large by the standards of the day, holding 10 million dollars in capital (Rockoff 2000), one-fifth of which was to be provided by the government. In actuality, the government paid its share via a loan issued by the newly formed bank. This maneuver served to raise the creditworthiness of the United States and bolster confidence in the newly-emerging U.S. financial system, especially in the eyes of foreign governments and investors (Sylla 1998). Through the 1790s there was a sharp increase in the number of new state banks, with 28 charters issued between 1791 and the turn of the century. There also was a spike of business incorporations, which included corporations formed for the purposes of chartering a bank. Along with the growth of the banking system and new corporations, securities and private equity markets sprang up. Then as now, New York

City was the major center for these markets in the United States. Foreign investors subscribed heavily in U.S. securities, showing that “capital market globalization arrived early in the nation’s history” (Rousseau and Sylla 2005:6).

In 1811, a watershed moment occurred in New York State that would transform the state, federal, and eventually world financial system: the first general limited liability law was passed. The implications of limited liability were far-reaching: indeed, it is the foundation upon which our industrialized world was built (Economist 1999). Prior to the passage of the law, shareholders were personally responsible for the debts of their company, including a stint in debtors’ prison if they were unable to pay. Limited liability made the responsibility of shareholders limited to their investment in the company. This meant that the risk of a business failure was mitigated and would not necessarily lead to individual bankruptcy. Historical analyses by Esty (1998) and Mitchener and Richardson (2013) have shown that a decrease in risk stimulates investment. Rousseau and Sylla (2005) argue that limited liability, by virtue of its attracting capital, was a major factor in the rapid growth in the number of early state banks. Limited liability also freed investors from the need to be intimately familiar with the financial habits of the managing partners of whatever enterprise they chose to invest in, since the fallout from any poor business decisions would have circumscribed negative effects and not lead to personal ruin. Limited liability thus marked a separation between individuals and their invested capital, and reduced the workload of investors.

The transformation of the financial system in the United States and New York created unprecedented opportunities and infrastructure for capital accumulation. New

financial institutions such as trust companies helped to set in place the material conditions that made this possible. In addition to banks, New York also saw significant growth of trust companies during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century: twenty were organized in New York State between 1901 and 1902 (Horne 2002:15). These financial institutions both provided capital for industrial and business expansion, and served as a safe haven for reinvestment of corporate profits. Brewer (1986:327) notes that trust company profitability did not wax and wane with the vagaries of the business cycle, and they offered “consistently high” returns on investment. The end result was that trust companies served as engines of reliable and consistent capital accumulation that helped to build wealth.

Trust companies also expanded and strengthened specific social relations. In late nineteenth and early twentieth century New York State, these companies had large boards of directors: state law mandated trust company boards to have a minimum of thirteen directors (Brewer 1986:302). These directors were drawn from other financial institutions and industry. The Adirondack Trust Company, formed in Saratoga, New York in 1901 had “six bankers, a lawyer and a State Supreme Court justice, a merchant and a druggist, two lumbermen, a Saratoga hotelkeeper, and five manufacturers (three of paper, one of paper collars, one of gloves)” (Horne 2002:22) on its board. The majority of these directors, through their businesses, had ties to the Adirondacks and its forest products industry.

Along with their connections to other industries and banks, trust companies were also bound together through shared directors. Brewer (1986:295) shows a high degree of such “interlocking” among New York trust companies in the last quarter of

the nineteenth century. These interdigitations built and reproduced networks of elites who shared business and personal ties. Indeed, these early trust companies had very strong bonds with elite society, not only through their directors, but also through their customers, as they were a favored investment vehicle for the wealthy.

These processes engendered major changes in relations between people, capital, and nature that were directly relevant to the Adirondacks and the United States at large. First, a large amount of capital was set into motion. This influx of capital supported the explosion of new businesses and expansion of industry westward and also north into the Adirondacks. In turn, growing businesses spurred demand for forest products such as lumber for building and paper manufacturing. New technologies, like making paper from softwood pulp, opened new frontiers of extractive possibilities for lumber companies. Rather than the selective cutting that had been a standard practice, forestry workers now could cut trees of all types and sizes to send to pulp mills. As I discuss below, these new practices had a significant effect on the growth of the Adirondack preservation movement.

In addition to the expansion of extractive industries, the exponential growth of the financial sector also meant an increase in the number of people at work in finance and related industries such as law and insurance. Workers in these urban, white-collar industries were well paid, and they also enjoyed ample leisure time away from work. These professionals and their families would begin to flock to the Adirondacks in the middle of the nineteenth century (Terrie 2009), drawn there in large part by embodied material conditions resulting from their particular relations with their work. Capitalism, especially in contexts of accelerated expansion and accumulation,

engenders intense competition. Late nineteenth century urban professionals lived and worked in an extremely competitive and stressful environment. Because of these conditions, many of these professionals suffered from a newly described disease: neurasthenia.

Neurasthenia, or nervous exhaustion, was a chimerical malady with a widely-varying host of possible somatic and psychological symptoms. For example, George Beard, the physician who first defined and published on the disease, identified dilated pupils, headache, noises in the ears, mental irritability, and hopelessness as some of a suite of symptoms (Beard 1905). Notably, it was disease of “brain-workers” (Beard 1869:219), an “*American disease*...that it is very much more common here than in any other part of the civilized world” (Beard 1905:31, emphasis in original), and especially prevalent among elites (Lutz 1991). Sufferers of neurasthenia were thought to have a surfeit of nervous energy that built up from taxing intellectual work and urban living.

While anyone could potentially suffer from neurasthenia, Beard emphasized its prevalence among men engaged in business. Indeed, neurasthenia was a deeply-gendered disease (Lutz 1991), with differing treatment regimens for men and women. Beard proposed using electricity to treat the disease in both genders, but also noted that abstinence from mental labor coupled with vigorous outdoor exercise was effective in relieving neurasthenic symptoms in men. This view was widely espoused and neurasthenic gentlemen took to the woods to regain their “vital force” and “primitive, masculine nature” (Brown 2014).

A cartoon in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* (Hallock 1870:334-335) illustrates the restorative effects of time in the Adirondacks on the weary urbanite. In

the panel captioned “Before going to the Adirondacks,” the subject is stooped over, slope-shouldered and hollow-chested with rail-thin legs. His lidded eyes peer from a drawn, gaunt face above a frowning mouth; frail-looking hands grasp his disassembled fishing rod and his valise. In the next panel, “After going to the Adirondacks,” the gentleman stands erect, bright eyed and smiling. His shoulders are square, he is stout in the chest and belly, his legs thick. In strong hands, he holds the same fishing rod, now whole, and also a stringer of trout. The narrative of a tired and sickly city-dweller refreshed by a trip to the Adirondack wilderness was a regular feature in travel stories published by *Harper’s*, the *New York Times*, and in books. Print media proved to be a driving force that brought visitors to the Adirondacks from urban centers.

The political, economic, and social circumstances in the late nineteenth century perfectly supported conditions of possibility for business expansion, recreational use, and conservation in the Adirondacks. The post-Revolutionary War transformation of the financial system made capital more readily available than it ever had been previously. The resulting explosion in business growth led to the expansion of existing industries and the rise of new ones. Many of these industries took root in the Adirondacks because of the region’s abundant cheap land and natural resources. During this time New York rose as the epicenter of the financial industry and its white collar professional class ballooned. These professionals worked in an intensely competitive and stressful environment that enriched them materially, but had deleterious mental and physical effects. They looked to the Adirondacks for the restorative effects of recreation in nature. The resulting conflicts between industrial and recreational use were prime factors in the growth of the Adirondack conservation

movement that led to the creation of the Adirondack Park.

Labor and Leisure in the Adirondacks

In the decades after the close of the Revolutionary War, New York State made a priority of getting rid of the vast tracts of land it had acquired in the Adirondacks. The rough topography and prevalent cultural ideals about undeveloped land at the time meant that these were considered “waste” lands (Brown 1985, McMartin 2004), and despite incentives such as tax exemptions and low prices, Adirondack land was largely unattractive to settlers. It was, however, very attractive to those who had capital they wanted to put into motion, and while the Adirondack interior remained largely unpenetrated, industry began to concentrate on the southeastern and eastern margins of the Adirondacks, in places where commodities like lumber and iron could be produced from the land and readily sent to market.

Lumber barons had purchased large tracts in the Hudson River watershed by the 1820s, where softwood logs could be conveniently floated downstream to sawmills in Glens Falls. Lumber would then be sent back north to Canada bound for England. Iron production, which had a pre-Revolutionary War history in the region, also grew rapidly, driven by a growing nation and increasing industrialization. Ironworking also required immense quantities of wood for charcoal. By 1825 “much of eastern Essex County had been cut over” (McMartin 2004:7-8) by the nascent iron industry and the charcoal makers that accompanied it. In 1825 the first blast furnace was built at Port Henry by retired army Major James Dalliba (Farrell 1996). One year later Elijah Benedict, an Abenaki Indian, set the wheels in motion for one of the Adirondack’s best known and most tragic iron enterprises when he led David Henderson and others

through the Indian Pass to the expansive ore beds that lay to the south. Here Henderson and partners would establish the ambitious and ill-fated McIntyre Iron Works (Masten 1968). By mid-century the iron industry in the Adirondack region had achieved significant growth with companies operating along Lake Champlain in Moriah, Crown Point, Westport, and Point Henry in the east and in Lyon Mountain and Au Sable in the west (Farrell 1996).

Leather tanning also was a major Adirondack industry, drawn to the region by its ample water and vast stands of hemlock that provided bark to use as a tanning agent. There were also a number of other political, economic and material factors that drove tanning's move to the Adirondacks. In a detailed study of the growth and decline of Adirondack tanning, historian Barbara McMartin (1992) argued that these extra-regional ties and the nature of business in the nineteenth century were what ultimately led to the failure of the industry in the region, rather than anything specific to the Adirondack location. I draw heavily on her work below to illustrate the global and regional ties that determined the fate of the industry in the Adirondacks.

The business of leather goods was centered in the urban cores of New York, Philadelphia and Boston (Welsh 1963) and tanning operations were initially located on the peripheries of these cities. By the beginning of the nineteenth century tanneries close to the urban core of Manhattan had exhausted their local bark supply and polluted the water. The issues of waste and smell (Bartosiewicz 2003) were omnipresent in tannery operations, and these had become concerns of Manhattan's Common Council by 1798 (Yamin 2001). The growing city also needed room to expand, and housing for the growing working class was especially important (Yamin

2001).

The New York tanneries thus moved north, first to the Catskills and then into the Adirondacks, following the water and the hemlock bark. By 1850 there were 153 tanneries in the Adirondack region, 14 of which were considered large, having 10-30 employees (McMartin 1992:60). Over the next three decades, the total numbers of tanneries declined, but the proportion of large tanneries increased almost fourfold. Adirondack tanneries primarily produced heavy sole leather and (to a lesser extent) other leather used in the manufacture of shoes. Demand for these commodities was driven by the influx of immigrants who grew American cities and formed the urban industrial working class. The needs of the Union army on the cusp of the Civil War also had a positive effect on the demand for leather. Beyond the domestic leather trade, the United States leather industry “became intensively global in scope between 1865 and 1895” (Watson and Clifford 2014).

Tanning, like the other major industries in the Adirondacks, had a high degree of absentee ownership. Outside firms owned the greatest number of Adirondack tanneries. Elite families from the “Swamp” area of New York City, the “Kings of the Tanning Trade” (McMartin 1992:28), were especially important and well-connected players. The Swamp, now Times Square, was an area where three streams converged to form the Great Kill: the abundance of running water made the Swamp the center of early tanneries in the city. The Swamp families had made the transition from tanners to merchants as the physical operations of tanning started to move out of the city, establishing “dynasties with interests in tanning throughout the east” (McMartin 1992:30). One reason these families grew so wealthy and powerful was the way they

positioned themselves in the flow of commodities. Swamp tanners controlled the flow of green hides, primarily from the Pampas region of South America, to the Adirondack tanneries and then brokered the finished leather for a percentage. In addition to controlling the flow of raw hides and finished leather, the Swamp tanners financed the construction of new tanneries in the Adirondacks and acquired numerous tanneries through receivership and buyouts.

Though the establishment of Adirondack tanneries had profound effects on the preexisting or newly-established communities in their proximity, they were of only marginal importance in the context of the vast interests of their absentee owners. Indeed, the owners of the tanneries were often completely unknown to the workers and towns that depended on them: they had had no social ties in the community. In the words of Peter Redfield (2012), they were socially “light:” not beholden to local social obligations or enmeshed in local social relations. The well-being of the towns that sprung up around the tanneries was of no concern to their owners; some operations were liquidated as soon as they were acquired, others ran until they couldn't produce a profit and were then shut down. The important point here is that these externally-owned tanneries were not local institutions with deep social ties, despite the fact that communities were often heavily dependent on them. Rather, tanneries were strictly capital to be deployed in the ongoing cycle of accumulation of money. The full involvement of Adirondack businesses in this world system brought the need to follow this logic, and the results for Adirondack communities were dire: the population of almost every Adirondack town shrank by over 50 percent after 1880 as tanning and lumbering in the region declined (McMartin 1992:92). The tanning industry's rise and

fall and the effects this process had on Adirondack towns and people is a stark example of how profoundly extra-regional political-economic conditions shaped the region.

While this system ultimately worked against the interests of Adirondack locals who supplied their labor, it also worked for industrial capitalists and people who worked in finance and related industries. It was these people who started traveling to the Adirondacks for leisure in the middle of the nineteenth century and who would ultimately push for the first conservation intervention that would create the Park. As with the growth of industry in the Adirondacks, the growth of leisure travel had as much to do with external conditions and processes as with the region itself.

Interest in science among the educated citizenry saw explosive growth in nineteenth century America, especially with regards to natural history (Goldstein 1994). Through the middle of the century Americans' attitudes towards wild nature also began to shift away from nature as something to be conquered and towards a view of the wild as a site for renewal and redemption (Simpson 1991, Terrie 1994). In 1837, the first natural history survey of the Adirondacks was commissioned by the New York State Legislature under the direction of Ebenezer Emmons, professor of natural history at Williams College. Emmons would suggest the name "Adirondacks" for the mountainous region, and his published survey reports helped to publicize the region among the "educated and inquisitive," including Henry David Thoreau (Terrie 2008:7). In addition to these scientific reports, a number of popular works about the Adirondacks were published that dramatized and celebrated the northern wilderness (Hoffman 1839, Headley 1849 [1982], Hammond 1857). Thus, the Adirondacks were

at the perfect intersection of public visibility and the growing interest of that public in experiencing wild nature to spur visitation to the area.

Urban elites first came to the Adirondacks for leisure in a trickle, but their numbers steadily grew throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century. A *New York Times* (Brace 1864) article, “Adirondack,” extolled the virtues of the region for “the jaded merchant, or financier, or litterateur, or politician” and noted its accessibility, “within an easy day’s ride” by train from New York City. Elites not only had the disposable income to travel, they also had the time to make the full day’s trip, and in some cases a three- to four-day trip (Thacher 2014) into the Adirondacks. Depending on the destination, just the round-trip travel time alone could be two to eight days. This meant that vacationing in the Adirondacks was not for wage laborers, but for professionals who could either be away from work entirely for periods of time or work remotely, as presumably some financiers did using a special wire to the New York Stock Exchange that was installed at Paul Smith’s hotel (Graham 1984:34) in the northern Adirondack town of Brighton.

Tourism in the Adirondacks continued to grow after the Civil War, facilitated by the expansion of the rail system in the region in the 1850s. After the publication of *Adventures in the Wilderness* by W.H.H. Murray in 1869, the number of visitors to the region exploded, prompting complaints from the wealthy “sports” who considered the Adirondacks their private preserve (Terrie 1994). Many other travel writers extolled the virtues of the Adirondacks, especially with regard to health and wellness (e.g., Stickler 1888). The audience for this literature was the educated urban elite, and such people comprised the casts of characters in these narratives. For example, Northrup

(1880) lists merchants, judges, district attorneys, lawyers, newspaper writers and editors, and a professor as his traveling companions for his Adirondack journeys. Hunt (1892:24), himself a physician, counted a lawyer, a Standard Oil executive, an “insurance superintendent,” and another doctor among his party in his 1886 trip to the Adirondacks. The next year, Hunt (1892:50) writes with pleasure of finding “people of refinement” at an Upper Saranac Lake lodge.

Adirondack travelogues served as inspiration, entertainment, and rough guides for affluent urbanites, helping to feed their tourist imaginaries (Salazar 2010). They described what travelers to the region could expect to see and experience, and also set expectations for what constituted a proper Adirondack experience. These writers cultivated a particular kind of distinction that prized the efforts and travails of wilderness travel (Cymon 1868), setting the stage for the next 125 years of Adirondack tourism. Summering in the Adirondacks became extremely fashionable among urban elites, who began to buy huge tracts of land for private estates in increasing numbers, further reproducing the pattern of ownership of the majority of Adirondack land by outside interests that was established after the Revolutionary War. This relation persists into the present.

The post-Civil War Adirondacks was really two different yet interrelated worlds. On the one hand, it was an industrial landscape, where capital was put into motion, locals labored, commodities were produced, and large amounts of natural resources were consumed. On the other hand, the region was a place of leisure, a refuge for urban elites, many of whom were industrial capitalists or involved in the finance industry. The Adirondack mountains, lakes, and forests were where these

elites came to regain their health, refresh their spirits, and for many, bolster their masculinity in the wilderness. The tension between these two worlds was a major factor in the conservation interventions that created the Forest Preserve and then the Adirondack Park.

Preserving the Forest

A major problem in the postwar Adirondacks was the widespread and continuing abandonment of cut-over land by logging companies. The large tracts owned by logging interests were taxed at the same rate as agricultural land, despite the fact that timber is not a yearly crop (Halper 1992:207). The logic of capital accumulation requires that less capital is spent producing a commodity than it can be sold for. To tip the balance in their favor, many loggers would buy tracts of land and harvest the timber without ever paying a cent in taxes. The land would eventually be acquired by the state through tax default after a lengthy interval of seven to twelve years (Halper 1992:207). The state, which was legally mandated to sell lands acquired through tax default, would auction them whereupon loggers would often repurchase them and the cycle would renew itself.

Outright theft of timber from state lands was also a growing problem. Like the tax default schemes, stealing timber from state-owned land was a cost-saving measure. Lumber companies avoided purchase and carrying costs by cutting on state-owned land, often on parcels adjacent to those they already owned. This provided companies with a convenient excuse for the illegal cutting -- ignorance of the parcel lines -- and also allowed them to stay in place and continue cutting when their legal timber was exhausted, saving on the labor costs of moving operations.

Logging in the post-Civil War United States was an intensely competitive industry, and Adirondack companies found themselves at a disadvantage due to the physical conditions of the region. The rugged terrain made felling and transporting timber difficult and especially dangerous. The lack of extensive transportation infrastructure such as railroads also hindered movement of timber from forest to market. Compared to states such as Wisconsin, Adirondack lumbering was more difficult and expensive. The drive to cut costs in a competitive market led timber companies to engage in the unscrupulous practice of land abandonment and the illegal practice of timber theft.

As a result, negative public sentiment against logging companies increased. This was not only due to the practices described above, but also to the increasing visibility of the effects logging had on the land. Much of the cutting took place right along the rail corridors used by urban elites to travel to the interior of the Adirondacks. This gave travelers the perception that widespread forest destruction was occurring, even if that may not have been the case (Mc Martin 1994). Along with the cutting, there were also numerous fires that left behind a charred, barren landscape. As McMartin (1994) shows, these fires also tended to occur along rail corridors, probably caused by the trains themselves, and thus were also highly visible to travelers. The widening perception of the industry's rapacity and destructiveness would dovetail with a number of other conditions and processes to lead to the first Adirondack conservation intervention.

The importance of George Perkins Marsh's book *Man and Nature* (1864 [2003]) on the nascent conservation movement in New York cannot be overstated. It is

noted by nearly every author on Adirondack history (Graham 1984, Parnes 1989, Knott 1998, Jacoby 2003, Terrie 2009, and many others). Based on observations made while traveling through the Levant, Central Europe, and Italy, Marsh linked anthropogenic changes in the land with aridity and watershed destruction. Parnes (1989:162) writes that Marsh's findings resonated with New York City merchants whose "business and recreational needs" were threatened by the cutting of Adirondack forests by logging, mining, and tannery operations. These merchants depended on inland waterways to move commodities from production centers in the Midwest to New York, and the waterways in turn were dependent on a healthy Adirondack watershed. Merchants feared that unchecked forest destruction would dry up rivers and canals, choking the flow of commerce and capital. They also feared the ruination of a landscape that had increasing importance to them as a place of leisure and escape.

Also around this time, scientific forestry began to become professionalized in America (Parnes 1989). Early foresters such as Dr. Franklin B. Hough (1822-1885), a physician and self-taught expert in forestry argued that resource conservation and forest preservation were vitally important to the economic health and growth of the nation and looked "at the woods in an economic context larger than their utility as an immediately expendable resource" (Halper 1992:211). The role of forests as climate regulators and water reservoirs was the central point of interest for these scientists. Their arguments in favor of forest conservation were based on the foundational assumption that maintenance of healthy forests would ensure sufficient volume and flow of water in the rivers and canals that were at the heart of the transportation infrastructure that underpinned the nation's economy. Their focus was not on the

intrinsic value of the forest itself, but rather how it could be most effectively managed to economically benefit society. Foresters and merchants thus formed two “camps” in support of conservation to ensure continued flows of capital and spurred debate over the role of the state in protection of the Adirondack forest.

A third faction with interests in halting the destruction of Adirondack forests were the “extremely wealthy” (Halper 1992:210) whose agenda is best described as preservationist (Nadasdy 2005:296). These were the sportsmen who came to the grand Adirondack resorts in the summer, or owned large private estates. Their interests lay in preserving wild nature for its aesthetic, spiritual and recreational value. Summering in the Adirondacks and living the rustic sporting life was very much in fashion among urban New York elites and served as a highly visible display of their elite status (Bourdieu 1984). Throughout the 1870s the privatization of the forest continued to increase as sporting clubs acquired large tracts of land to use as game preserves (McMartin 2004).

Under these conditions the demands of laissez-faire capitalism, the interests of the upper-middle class merchants, the emergence of scientific forestry in America, and shifting cultural ideas about wilderness among elites all came into tension with one another. Out of this tension came the push for state protection of forest lands, led by a figure who bridged the gap between aesthetic preservation and working forest conservation: Verplanck Colvin. Colvin was himself an elite: he had trained in law, and was the son of a prominent Albany attorney and state senator. He began exploring the Adirondacks in 1865 and in 1872 was hired by the state legislature as Superintendent of the State Adirondack Survey, an enterprise that he partially funded

using his own ample financial resources for nearly the next decade. Colvin was certainly a romantic where wilderness was concerned, and his views on the aesthetics of wild nature were very much in line with those of other elites of the day. However, he also strongly believed in the economic benefits that forest protection would bring. Colvin, a man “capable of moving the mountains of state government” (Schaefer 1995:3) was appointed to the Commission on State Parks in 1872, along with Franklin Hough. The next year the Commission presented the legislature with a report recommending the creation of a park, but offering little in practical input on how to realize such a project. No action was taken on their recommendations, and the purchase of land destined to be cut over and abandoned to the state continued. Despite the rejection of the recommendation for a park, Colvin continued to survey the region and publish reports on his findings.

Finally, in 1883 a “perfect storm” of conditions spurred the legislature to take action on forest protection in the Adirondacks. A severe drought coupled with numerous fires brought the concerns about the watershed of New York City to a head. The New York Chamber of Commerce put considerable pressure on the legislature to protect the watershed that fed the canals that city merchants depended on. Over the last decade, the Adirondacks were also increasingly publicized: articles on the Adirondacks had appeared regularly in the *New York Times*, *Field and Stream*, *Harper’s Weekly* and *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine*. These articles extolled the beauty and virtue of the Adirondack forest, but also “established a picture in the public mind of a landscape being utterly destroyed” (Terrie 1994:98). The audience for this writing was the urban elite, whose visitation to the region dramatically increased

(Dawson 2009). Thus, widespread public perception of an environmental crisis, the increasing desirability of the region as a place for elite leisure, recreation, and rejuvenation, and political pressure in the interests of capital led to legislation in 1883 that halted the sale of state land.

In 1884, a commission was appointed to study and report on forest preservation. The next year, the Forest Preserve was created by legislative action, proclaiming that lands designated as such would be “forever kept as wild forest lands” (Brown 1985:22). Finally, the legislature created the Adirondack Park in 1892. Despite this intervention, the business community of New York City was dissatisfied with the level of protection for the forest, eventually persuading constitutional convention delegates to give constitutional protection to the Adirondack Park (Brown 1985:22). This was achieved in 1894 with ratification of Article VII, Section 7 of the New York State constitution, colloquially known as the “Forever Wild” amendment. This was the strictest protection given to the Forest Preserve to date, and prohibited not only the lease, sale or exchange of state land, but also prohibited the removal, sale or destruction of timber, severing the relationship of public lands and the private logging industry.

Past Relations and Present Connections

Throughout the nineteenth century, specific sets of relations, often contradictory, were forged among people, nature, and capital in the Adirondacks. These relations persist in the present day, and while there certainly have been many changes in quality and detail, they remain the same at a fundamental level. One example of this is the relation between Adirondack nature and capital.

In the nineteenth century, the Adirondack region was a place where capital was largely accumulated through extraction of natural resources such as iron and timber. This process was facilitated by a transformed financial system that provided ready access to capital and a marketplace for extra-regional investors. For extractive industries, ownership of the means of production was largely in the hands of companies and people outside the region, while labor was supplied locally. Likewise, profits flowed out of the Adirondacks while capital for business trickled in. As I have shown in this chapter, this was especially the case for the timber industry, wherein many operators used unscrupulous and illegal practices to minimize their expenses and maximize profits.

In the twenty-first century Adirondacks, the quality of the relations between nature and capital have undergone a shift. Adirondack nature is still a resource for capital accumulation, but instead of the production of commodities such as iron and timber, the emphasis is on tourism and related service industry sectors. This was not a sudden change, but rather the result of long-term, regional, national, and global political-economic processes that dovetailed with environmental conditions. For example, the logging industry began to leave the Adirondacks in the late nineteenth century, moving westward where the terrain was less difficult and the transportation infrastructure better. The importance of logging in the Adirondacks continued to wane throughout the twentieth century as competition from global timber markets squeezed American lumber companies.

This process engendered a change in the relations of capital extraction and nature. In large part, these relations were temporal. As domestic timber production

declined, forestry companies liquidated their Adirondack land holdings to rapidly harvest capital. This was a marked shift from the long-term strategy of forest management wherein companies would hold unproductive land for 20 or more years to allow trees to grow to a sufficient size to make salable timber. This new strategy of dumping land to raise fast capital came into direct conflict with a particular set of relations between people and nature, namely the affinity for wild lands.

This set of relations, while not completely static, has remained remarkably unchanged since its genesis in the nineteenth century. Nature is still viewed as being wholly external to humanity, a place for recreation and rejuvenation, and an arena for physical challenge. For many of the urbanites who continue to flock to the Adirondacks, it is a place where they feel they can experience their authentic selves. Such relations are also profoundly temporal, placing high value on the pre-human past: a state of nature that precedes human occupation and intervention. The “wild character” of the Adirondack Park is of preeminent importance. The conflict between the sale of large tracts of private forest lands for rapid capital acquisition and these relations hinges on the potential destruction of this wild character through development. These tensions facilitated new ties among people, nature, and capital in the Adirondacks, especially the positive linkage between conservation and economic development. I discuss this process in detail in Chapter 5, which deals with the conservation intervention spurred by the sale of the Finch Pruyn lands.

The positioning of wild lands as a vehicle for capital accumulation through tourism has created new relations between people, nature, and capital, but it has also largely reproduced existing ones. For example, the relations between ownership of the

means of production and labor hew largely to patterns established in the nineteenth century, with capital coming in from outside the region and local people supplying the labor. What has changed are the conditions of this labor and the material effects on laborer's lives as part of the tourism-based economy. These relations are also suffused with temporality and I unpack them in Chapter 4 paying particular attention to the interplay of temporality and materiality.

Antagonistic relations between permanent Adirondack residents and visitors and seasonal residents also still exist. The emphasis on the Park as a wild place and vacation destination benefits some -- especially elites -- but has less positive impacts on others. In the nineteenth century, local residents who depended on the forest as a major or supplementary subsistence resource and did not own large tracts of land were particularly hard hit. Jacoby (2003) has shown in detail that the increased surveillance of locals and criminalization of long-practiced activities such as firewood gathering imposed severe constraints on the ability of residents to make a living. Now, locals must contend with crowding, traffic, and rising taxes as a booming second home market drives real estate prices sharply upward.

I spoke with five realtors, all of whom had at least 15 and some as many as 35 years of experience doing business in the Adirondacks and especially the Tri-Lakes area. All of them indicated that property values and prices had increased during their tenure. The rise was especially great for the realtors who had longer careers: one reminisced that the Adirondacks used to be a "cheap" place to buy homes and land. Moreover, they all agreed that the market seemed to be somewhat insulated from external forces. Prices and values did not suffer during the 2007-2009 financial crisis

as they did in other areas in the state and the market remained strong.

This was especially true for the second home market. The Adirondacks remain a favored place for the wealthy to own vacation homes. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries it was the fashion to purchase large tracts of land to make forested estates, or build compounds for Great Camps on islands. These kinds of deals are still a regular part of the Adirondack real estate market, but second home buyers have also started to purchase homes in hamlets and villages. A good many of these deals are done in cash, and these buyers often pay a premium. A recent study commissioned by the Adirondack Council argued that buyers will pay 25 percent more for property within a half-mile radius of Wilderness areas. Even with a premium, Adirondack properties can be a tremendous bargain to urbanites, who can buy a large home, often with land, for a fraction of the cost of a city apartment or condominium.

The rise in real estate prices has had a number of deleterious effects on local people. As one realtor told me, the influx of second home owners into Saranac Lake has helped to “price out” many locals. Here is where one effect from the 2007-2009 financial crisis is widely felt: mortgages are much harder to obtain now. The combination of higher real estate prices and lower mortgage availability, especially for those on the lower end of the income spectrum, puts home ownership out of reach for many locals. Inability to purchase a home keeps these people from acquiring what is for most Americans their largest financial asset.

Constraint of home ownership is not the only negative effect of rising property values. As values rise, so do property and school taxes. This can have dire consequences for people who already own homes, but find themselves unable to pay

the increased taxes. This is especially troublesome for the elderly and people on fixed incomes. Adirondackers face losing their property to tax auctions when they cannot keep up with the increase in taxes. This was the case for the Prellwitz family of Rainbow Lake, who lost their lakeside home in 2013, after 33 years of living there.

Waterfront property in the Adirondacks has skyrocketed in value since the 1980s, and there has been a concomitant rise in taxes. Some of the value increases of this property were steep and sudden. For example, the county's full market value assessment for the Prellwitz property increased by \$275,000 between 2006 and 2007, raising the county tax bill more than \$5000. The market value of the property -- and the amount of taxes owed -- increased each year until 2013. Unable to pay, the Prellwitzs' home was sold at auction. They were evicted by the new owner and eventually arrested when they refused to leave. The purchaser was an individual from New Jersey, John Matarese, who paid (in cash) the \$230,000 purchase price, which equaled approximately 40 percent of the assessed value.

Adirondackers who inherit family property can also run into trouble when their valuations balloon. This was the case for Christopher Weidenheimer of Vermontville, who inherited his property in 2003. Between 2010-2011, Weidenheimer's county tax doubled. In 2017, he lost the property at a tax auction and was evicted by the buyer: the same John Matarese who purchased the Prellwitz property in 2013. He also initially refused to leave, but eventually complied with the Franklin County Sheriff's deputies serving the eviction. When queried about the similar circumstances of two evictions, Matarese told a local paper "It's just an unfortunate coincidence. You can't live on property you don't own anymore" (Crowley 2017).

But this situation was not the result of coincidence: it was the product of a continually reproduced set of relations among people, land, capital, and power. In particular, control of land in the region by affluent outsiders who possess abundant, liquid capital. Parnes (1989:264) has called the nineteenth century establishment of the Park and the resulting land grabs by the wealthy “an enclosure.” Knott (1998) and Darling (2004) have characterized the Adirondack situation as colonialism. I argue it is more akin to accumulation by dispossession (Harvey 2004), or in-situ displacement (Feldman and Geisler 2012), as it lacks the physical violence and rapid displacement that generally accompanies colonialism. The Adirondack processes are slower and incremental, and rife with structural violence. They are characterized by unequal power relations and employ capital and the power of law to achieve their goals: the removal of vulnerable people.

Against this backdrop of long-reproduced and contradictory relations among people, capital, and nature, there have been many recent assertions by conservation and development NGOs operating in the Adirondacks that the Park is entering a new era of cooperation and consensus. There have certainly been strides forward: my own observations and reports from informants indicate that conflict in the Park has been somewhat attenuated. Exchanges between stakeholders are generally more civil, if not collegial, and there genuinely seems to be a desire for cooperation. However, conflict still remains, and in fact, the recent conservation and development intervention that is the focus of this dissertation has intensified it. Several informants expressed to me that Adirondack land use conflicts will never be resolved. Why is this so? Why are social relations in the Park surrounding land use locked in a perpetual state of schism? I

argue that the continual reproduction of the relations discussed above stoke the conflict.

The conservation interventions that created the New York State Forest Preserve and the Adirondack Park were the result of a complex web of history, materiality and relations – all fraught with tensions, inequalities and constraints. The growth of a complex financial system, the rise of merchants and the upper class that depended on such a system, the explosive growth of extractive industry, changing cultural ideas about wilderness and masculinity, increased publicity on the Adirondacks, emerging scientific knowledge, and natural physical conditions all came into tension and spurred the intervention that created the Park. This intervention benefitted some – especially elites – but negatively impacted others.

This latter point is most often cast in the shadows of official and scholarly discourse on the Adirondack Park. Its genesis is often presented by Park advocates as an uncomplicated narrative of a legislative response by the people of a democratically governed state to an environmental crisis. A recent video trailer posted on the website of the conservation NGO Adirondack Wild (www.adirondackwild.org) is an excellent example. The film's narrator talks about how "uncontrolled logging, railroad construction, mining and widespread fires in upstate New York decimated primeval forests" which led to "groundbreaking legislation that protected the devastated forest lands and watershed." The Adirondack Council, the largest and oldest Adirondack conservation NGO, touts the establishment of the Park in 1892 as being "for the benefit of all the people of New York State" (<http://www.adirondackcouncil.org/page/wilderness-11.html>). In a publication

celebrating the centennial of the Forest Preserve, Burdick (1985:12) asserts that the process of constitutional protection of the Adirondacks was (and is) “rigorously egalitarian and it ought to quell arguments that wilderness preservation ... is elitist.” Even those who have taken critical perspectives on Adirondack history are not immune from romanticizing the democratic, constitutional protection of the Park (Terrie 2009b).

I argue this is because the creation of the Adirondack Park has been “rendered technical” (Li 2007): framed in terms of a technical response (legislation) to an objective crisis (environmental degradation). The forces at work here act as a kind of “antipolitics” (Ferguson 1994), a process whereby political issues are reframed as technical problems. This process serves to elide the relations of power that underlie such problems. Experts who spin these narratives remain focused on the technical aspect of the Park’s creation: the fact that it was accomplished by a constitutional amendment requiring a public vote. In doing so they simultaneously obscure the political aspects of that process, such as who was enabled or constrained to vote (women could not) and the networks of power and influence that underpinned getting the measure on the ballot. This is problematic because the relations, many of them deeply unequal, that characterized the Park’s creation have actually been continually reproduced: for example, the long connection between Adirondack conservation advocacy and the financial industry. For example, the executive director of Protect The Adirondacks, Peter Bauer, and the former senior partner of Adirondack Wild (both Adirondack preservation NGOs), Peter Brinkley, are retired corporate bankers. Wealthy individuals and businesspeople sit on the boards of all the major preservation

and development organizations active in the Park. Some members sit on the boards of multiple organizations, echoing the interlocking of early trust companies.

The intimate relations between capital and nature in the Adirondacks that began in the nineteenth century remain strong: it can be clearly seen in the examples above. Throughout this work I employ a political-economic approach that foregrounds relations, history, and materiality to tease out such connections, shed light on the reproduction of inequality, and offer an antidote to the antipolitics that characterizes much of the discourse on the Adirondacks and continues to feed the ongoing conflict over land use in the region.

CHAPTER 4

THEORIZING THE ADIRONDACKS

Political Ecology, World-Ecology, and the Adirondack Park

In Chapter 3 I presented a political-economic analysis of the nineteenth century context in which the Adirondack Park was created. Political ecology is related to political economy in that it is a perspective that considers relations of power and access to resources, but political ecology always addresses these in relation to the natural environment in which these social relations exist. Paul Robbins (2012:84) argues that political ecology, because of its heterogeneity, cannot be thought of as a theory or method, but rather as a community of practice. Still, Robbins notes that within this community of practice, researchers tend to look at similar things. Justice and injustice are key themes and Robbins (87) writes that “political ecology narratives typically track the historical processes, legal institutional infrastructures, and socially implicated assumptions and discourses that typically make such unjust outcomes the rule.” One example of this is Justin Page’s (2007) work on salmon farming off the coast of British Columbia, Canada. Using the United States Environmental Protection Agency definition of environmental justice (616) as a metric, Page argues that salmon farming creates an environmentally unjust situation for the First Nations people in whose traditional lands and waters the farms are situated in.

Page (2007:615) notes that the salmon farming industry went through a “rapid, poorly regulated expansion” in the 1980s. The location of the fish farms in small tidal bays led to problems, as did their placement in First Nations territory. Many First

Nations people opposed Atlantic salmon farming, viewing it as a threat not only to the environment, but to their culture and way of life. Page found that coastal First Nations people were concerned that they bore greater risk from ocean pollution because of their foodways, especially their dependence on and preference for sea foods, and even their particular physiology. First Nations people also found themselves excluded procedurally, as decisions about local environments were made in distant government centers. Finally, their traditional ecological knowledge and cultural views on nature, animals, people, went unrecognized by the government and the environmental experts they employed. Page argued that the disproportionate risk borne by coastal First Nations people, as well as their exclusion from political processes and the failure of the government to recognize their unique knowledge and practices, created a case of environmental injustice.

James McCarthy's work on the Wise Use movement in the western United States explored similar issues related to disenfranchisement and representation. In addition to these, he also identified other key recurring themes in political ecology such as resource control and access, integration into markets, and "the importance of local histories, meanings, culture, and 'micropolitics' in resource use" that he applied to his analysis of the movement (McCarthy 2002:1283). I return to McCarthy's work shortly, but for now I want to locate it within what has been one of the major areas of focus in political ecology for the last two decades: conservation. The tensions between conservation and livelihood have provided fruitful ground for scholars of political ecology.

Neumann's (1995, 1998) work explored the tensions between British colonial

perceptions of and desires for African wilderness in Tanzania and the beliefs and needs of the Masai people who resided there. Neumann (1995: 153) found that the importation of British ideals of landscape and nature and attendant conservation and development projects were “at heart attempts to recast society-nature relations in Africa to fulfill the commercial and aesthetic dreams of the European colonizers.” In a similar vein, Brockington (2002) argued that the creation and management of the Mkomazi Game Reserve in Tanzania, a project driven by conservation NGOs and their wealthy donors, had deleterious effects on local people, shutting them out of lands they long held tenure to.

Paige West (2006:5) examined the fraught relationship between conservation and development in Melanesia. The focus of her study was a community based “conservation as development” project involving the Gimi people and three environmental NGOs: The Research and Conservation Foundation of Papua New Guinea, the Biodiversity Conservation Network, and the Wildlife Conservation Society. The NGO actors involved in the project based in the Crater Mountain Wildlife Management Area promised “cash benefits” and “access to economic markets for the forest products tied to local biological diversity” (West 2006:5). West noted that in such an arrangement “the market” is seen as the bridge connecting contradictory ideas of conservation and development (39).

The project however, was rife with tensions, and indeed locals who initially supported the project turned against it in a relatively short period of time. A major issue was that Gimi people felt they were not getting their due. Part of this was meant in the material sense. Locals were expected to labor for the NGOs for free, and some

felt that the NGOs were making money from things like photographs of the forest and animals and not bringing that income back into the community. Other less tangible things like prestige and opportunity were also desired by locals. They observed things like NGO workers getting titles, and West obtaining her Ph.D. as a result of working in their forests, and noted that these benefits were not enjoyed by local people. West places the difficulties faced by the project in the different conceptions of time, reciprocity, and social relations held by the Gimi and their NGO interlocutors. One of the big problems of this intervention was different and irreconcilable ways that the Gimi and conservation biologists produced space -- the Gimi throughout their practice and the biologists through their knowledge. Thus, together they produced “a space that is constantly pulling and pushing its producers by bringing them together and ripping them apart” (West 2006:229).

Ekoko's (2000) study on forest law reform in Cameroon is another example of the conflict between outside conservation forces and local economies. Cameroon's forests are important economic resource for its citizens as a source of jobs, locally-harvested forest products other than timber, and through taxes levied on logging firms. In 1994, the executive branch of Cameroon's government (EBG) sought to revamp its 1981 Forestry Law. The World Bank was the dominant partner to the EBG in the drafting of the 1994 law. Ekoko (2000:132) noted that the Bank occupied a contradictory position in the negotiations, pushing for forest conservation, environmental protections, and “green conditionality,” while simultaneously urging increased production and funding forest-destroying projects such as road building. During the drafting phase the World Bank acted as a trustee for forest dwellers and

local communities, advocating for policies supporting community forestry.

However, when it came time to pass and implement the law, other parties such as Cameroon's parliament and large French logging firms (with powerful lobbying apparatuses) got involved. Ministers of parliament resented the World Bank's top-down approach, and collusion between the French government, logging companies, and EBG officials sought to avoid taxation and regulation that would increase logging cost (Ekoko 2000:146). The proposed law and its protections were greatly weakened, and forest communities "received no guarantees that their rights will be protected" (147). The Cameroon state also lost out on increased tax revenues from timber production.

All of the above examples show how themes of resource access and use, marketization, and "local histories, meanings, culture, and 'micropolitics'" (McCarthy 2002:1283) are key aspects of a political ecology-oriented analysis. Note that another similarity among four out of the five of these (and many, many other) studies falling under the political ecology umbrella is that they are located in areas that are typically thought of as "underdeveloped" or "Third World" (Escobar 1988), often in the context of increasing local economic imbrication with capitalism. Indeed, both McCarthy (2002) and Walker (2003) have noted that the majority of the vast body of work that comprises political ecology related scholarship is situated in the rural Global South. They both argue for approaches utilizing political ecology in the study of fully capitalist societies, and draw on their work in the rural western United States. Walker advocates for a regional political economy that that works at a level of scale that allows generalizations of broad-scale processes. While I do focus on specific areas in

this study, I try to heed Walker's admonition and also consider the Park at a regional scale, as despite the diversity of Adirondack communities, the structural and material similarities of their existence are such that generalization is possible.

McCarthy's (1998, 2002) work focuses on the Wise Use movement, a social movement predominantly located in the western United States that is focused on property and use rights on private and public land. McCarthy (1998:129) defines the movement as "first and foremost a vehicle and arena of political-economic struggle with particular class orientations." What the movement's struggle is centered on depends on where it is located. In the western United States conflict is centered on land use rights, especially "defending continued commodity production on federal lands" (129) such as through livestock grazing. In the eastern U.S., the focus is on limiting government intervention and regulation of private land, a perennial Adirondack issue. The Property Rights Foundation of America (PRFA)-- located in Stony Creek, New York, in the southeastern part of the Adirondack Park -- espouses a Wise Use-type doctrine of private property wherein any sort of regulation of private land is viewed as a regulatory taking: a removal of rights via legislation. The PRFA does not explicitly identify itself with Wise Use, but President Carol Lagrasse is a regular fixture at public hearings where she fervently decries APA regulations and additions to the Forest Preserve.

McCarthy (2002:1295) argues that cultural politics were "central to environmental politics in the late-20th-century United States." He notes that attention to cultural politics is a "core aspect" of political ecology, but that this aspect is often diminished or overlooked in environmental studies in the United States. For example,

he notes that academics and environmentalists often write off the Wide Use movement as a corporate front, obscuring the complex and diverse webs of culture and power that suffuse the movement. Marginality is another key area of concern in political ecology and McCarthy writes that in contexts like the United States, power imbalances among actors are treated as “nearly irrelevant” (2002:1285).

Applying these tenets of political ecology to the Wise Use movement, McCarthy finds that appeals to culture played a large part in conflicts involving the movement. In particular, actors involved in the movement leaned heavily on their localness, arguing that their “claims were more legitimate because they are asserted by local rather than distant actors” (McCarthy 1998:137). Wise Use supporters also claimed a “truer environmentalism” (136) than environmentalists because their relations with nature were through work rather than consumption. Cultural politics play a major role in Adirondack land use conflicts and I pay careful attention to them in my analysis, especially how they play out discursively.

McCarthy (2002:1285) notes that tensions between rural commodity primary producers and environmentalists is a central part of land use conflicts in the west. He observes that “the number of households producing commodities from federal lands is dwarfed by the number of urban environmentalists who value such areas as spaces of consumption.” This has strong parallels with the situation in the Adirondacks, especially with regards to the relatively small number of people who live in the Park versus those who visit it. McCarthy reports that he often experienced environmentalists positioning rural commodity producers as “vestigial” or “backward,” and arguing that “rural communities should remake their economies

around whatever commodifications of the local environment are most lucrative; and no old-fashioned attachments to place, community, or way of life should confer any privileged claims to land or decision making arenas” (1285). Looking at this kind of marginalization is also central in my analysis Adirondack conflicts. I discuss the temporal aspects of it, which are very similar to McCarthy’s findings, in the section on development below.

In addition to the themes and orientations of political ecology that I use in my study of the Finch land conflict, I also draw upon world-ecology. This perspective is largely influenced by the work of sociologist Jason Moore, who is one of the key proponents of and thinkers in world-ecology. World-ecology is similar to political ecology in that considers questions of power and the relations among humans and nature. World-ecology approaches always take capitalism as a central object of analysis, foregrounding it as the primary force “organizing the relations between humans and the rest of nature” (Moore and Patel 2017:2). Indeed, Moore (2011:108) argues that capitalism and nature are “dialectically constituted.” World-ecology eschews thinking that capitalism acts on nature in favor of the view that it acts through nature. This is an important but subtle difference between world-ecology and political ecology approaches. Political ecology studies often focus on the damage that capitalism does to nature. World-ecology based perspectives do not ask what capitalism does *to* nature, but rather what nature does *for* capitalism (Moore 2015:27).

There are three key tenets of world-ecology that I focus on in this work. The first is the recognition that everything in the world is connected. This is why world-ecology is hyphenated: a nod to the world-system theory that preceded and inspired it

(Wallerstein 2004). Moore (2015) expresses this as the web of life. I think that this is especially pertinent in the Adirondack case. The Park has long been characterized as somehow set apart from the world at large, evidenced by the constant discourse of uniqueness espoused mostly by environmentalists. Another symptom of this thinking is the tendency of experts to refer to the Adirondack Park as an experiment, like the Wild Center's webpage that calls the Adirondacks "A Vital Experiment" (<https://www.wildcenter.org/our-work/a-vital-experiment/>), or ANCA's Adirondack Scenic Byways website which calls the Park a "Great Experiment" (<http://www.adirondackscenicbyways.org/adirondack-park.html>; see also Spada 2015 and Porter et al. 2009). Experiments by nature require isolation and control, and casting the Park as an experiment obscures its long and deep interconnection -- physical, biological, financial, philosophical -- with other places, beings, and times.

The second is a rejection of the Cartesian dualism that posits nature as separate from humanity. Separation of humans from nature has been a central aspect of capitalism. The human-nature binary also underlies much of the popular, scientific, and techno-bureaucratic (like the APSLMP) discourses on the Adirondack Park. This separation is closely related to a final point of world-ecology thinking that I draw on. Historical capitalism is and has always been "dependent on finding and co-producing Cheap Natures" (Moore 2017:595), and the separation of people and nature is one of the things that makes this possible.

Cheap Nature turns on what Moore (2015:53) calls the "Big Four" cheaps: food, labor power, energy, and raw materials. Moore and Patel (2017) expanded on this list adding cheap money, care, and lives. They also substitute work for labor

power in this later formulation. Moore (2017:600) notes that cheapening is a twofold movement. On the one hand is a “price moment: to reduce the costs of working for capital.” On the other is an “ethics-political” movement, to “treat as unworthy of dignity and respect.” For the purposes of this study I focus on cheap nature and cheap work, and how these have been co-constituted with the Adirondacks from the nineteenth-century to the present day.

Cheap nature and work are foundational components of conservation and development schemes that rely on nature, wilderness, and ecotourism. In such cases the natural world serves as the attraction that draws tourists, and it does so simply by being there. In the case of the Finch lands, all kinds of actors viewed the ability of the land as it was to attract visitors, requiring only minimal initial infrastructure (like trails, parking, and signage) costs after the purchase. A Wilderness classification would further minimize costs, as such lands are generally managed in the Forest Preserve in a largely hands-off manner with minimal human intervention. Entrepreneurs would have a largely free -- and thus cheap -- tourist attraction that multiple independent businesses could draw tourist business from. Cheap work is also part of the conservation-development-tourism nexus. Tourism is supposed to create work, predominantly the kind of service work that tourists need when on vacation: cooks, servers, hotel room cleaners, and retail workers. I discuss the promises and pitfalls of this kind of service work later in this chapter, but for now it suffices to say that these jobs are hard, low-paying, and seasonally contingent. They are cheap.

Habitus, Capital, and Field

In earlier chapters I alluded to the role that an elite habitus played in the

development of particular relations between people, nature, and capital in the Adirondack Park. In this section I expand upon those allusions and lay out a theoretical frame explaining how habitus works to create such relations. I pay special attention to the role of social class in the development of habitus to show how unequal relations in this sphere bleed into Adirondack land use conflicts in general and the debate over the Finch lands in particular. This largely happens through the deployment of cultural and social capital in a particular field, field in this sense being a context where habitus is unconsciously brought to bear through embodied practice.

Throughout his work, Pierre Bourdieu offered a number of related definitions of habitus, mostly displaying variation of form rather than kind. An early definition from 1977's *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (2008:78) reads "the durably installed generative principle of regulated improvisation." Bourdieu's general vision of social life posited a blending of agency and structure wherein actors exercised their agency -- practice in Bourdieu's terms -- within a framework guided by habitus, the "structured structuring dispositions" (Bourdieu 1990:53). Roy Nash (1999) offers a detailed history of the concept and what I think to be a particularly clear and useful description of it (emphases mine): "a generative schema in which the forms of elemental social structures come, through the process of *socialization*, to be *embodied* in individuals, with the result that people necessarily act in such a way that the underlying structures are *reproduced* and given effect" (177). He further notes that dispositions are "acquired through the formative experiences of childhood" (177). So, habitus forms as the result of long-term social interactions beginning early in life. It is not simply a system or collection of ideas, but rather manifests materially through the bodies and

actions of people. Such actions lead to the reproduction of the very structures that abetted them in the first place.

This is what is meant by the “durability” of dispositions. Not only do they last throughout individual lives, but they move through generations. As Nash (1999:184) wrote, the habitus “develops a history and generates its practices, for some period of time, even after the original material conditions which gave rise to it have disappeared.” In Chapter 3 I discussed how the development of the financial infrastructure of the United States not only gave rise to an explosion of businesses, but also led to the expansion of urban professional classes, and how these classes seized upon wilderness recreation for curative purposes and as a marker of distinction. It was time that turned the disposition towards wilderness into a habitus, making the condition of being wild seem as if it were the ultimate expression of a natural order. To describe the situation in Bourdieu’s (2008:78) words, the place of wilderness in the professional habitus represents “history turned into nature.”

The power of habitus lies in its invisibility, its stays as taken-for-granted and unquestioned. This is *doxa*, the “universe of the undiscussed” (Bourdieu 2008:168). An important element of habitus that contributes to its becoming doxic is that it is embodied: that is, the dispositions that create habitus have material, including bodily, expressions. I discuss a particular example of this in the Adirondack context in Chapter 5. For now, it suffices to say that material expressions of habitus can be observed in the way people dress, how they speak, the food they consume, the physical activities they take part in, and even the shapes of their bodies. Habitus does not simply “live” in the realm of the mind but is part of peoples’ everyday lived

material existence.

An important way in which habitus shapes lived experience is the way it works on and through time. As I discussed above, the dispositions that structure habitus accrete over long periods. This is what I mean about habitus working through time. It takes time for preferences and ideas to become internalized -- individually and socially -- to the degree that they become doxic. Bourdieu (2008:79) put it as “yesterday’s man who inevitably predominates in us, since the present amounts to little compared with the long past in the course of which we were formed and from which we result.”

In addition to working through time, habitus also works through class. The production and reproduction of habitus occurs through lived experience. Bourdieu (2008) argued that members of a certain class tended to have many (but not all) similar experiences as others in the same class. These shared experiences are what lead to the formation of specific, durable dispositions and thus habitus. In *Distinction*, Bourdieu (1984) explored how the different social classes in France encountered different experiences such as meals, and products such as art and music, and how these experiences became inculcated as taste, which was (and is) largely regarded as something one possessed rather than acquired. Taste was thus experienced as something natural and unquestioned. Part of this naturalness is the marking of taste as difference, as distinction.

For the upper classes, Bourdieu located this distinction in their freedom from necessity. In this case necessity refers to the meeting of basic needs. Take food, for example. The middle and upper classes generally do not struggle with food insecurity. Because these classes do not need to worry about meeting their basic needs for food,

or are compelled to simply eat whatever is available to them, they are free to have experiences which Bourdieu places in the realm of the aesthetic: that which is pleasing. Thus, tastes are created which become “the practical affirmation of an inevitable difference” (Bourdieu 1984:56). Moreover, these differences are “asserted purely negatively, by the refusal of other tastes” (56). This refusal takes the form of “visceral intolerance” and such “aesthetic intolerance can be terribly violent” (56). Bourdieu’s conception of aesthetic intolerance is a useful lens through which to view Adirondack land use debates and I return to it in later chapters.

Habitus also works on time in the sense that it forms dispositions that are inextricably linked with time, especially relating to what people do at specific times at varying levels of scale. Bourdieu (2008:98) noted that the calendar, a structure of organization, is not exclusively a product of habitus, but is the “object of explicit injunctions and express recommendations.” That is, calendars operate in the realm of discourse. They are consciously created and adhered to by people for reasons that they can articulate. Likewise, people are explicitly aware of injunctions, like taboos, that are related to the organizing structure. Bourdieu gives the example of the specific kinds of foods eaten by Kaybele people at specific times of the year, such as foods that swell (boiled grains) during the autumn, the time for moistening the soil. Where habitus comes into play is that while what people do may be explicitly organized, their adherence to the structure comes without questioning as being the right thing to do and the structure of organization is thus “reinterpreted in terms of the scheme of the habitus” (Bourdieu 2008:98).

The world-ecology perspective I described above foregrounds capital in the

analysis of social relations and nature. Capital in this sense is economic and material, but as Bourdieu (1986:15) says, “it is in fact impossible to account for the structure and functioning of the social world unless one reintroduces capital in all its forms and not solely in the one form recognized by economic theory.” Bourdieu identified two additional forms of capital, cultural and social, and he further delimited cultural capital into three forms: embodied, objective, and institutional. Institutional cultural capital is conferred by social institutions such as universities in the form of credentials. Such credentials have a longevity and objectivity outside of their bearer and have the power to produce “sharp, absolute, lasting differences” (Bourdieu 1986:21), such as the distinctions made between holders of graduate versus undergraduate degrees.

For the purposes of this study I will focus on the first two forms of cultural capital. Embodied cultural capital takes the form of “long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body” (Bourdieu 1986:17), such as the way a person dresses, or speaks, or their physique. Bourdieu notes that the development of embodied cultural capital is dependent upon a personal investment in time to acquire the capital. This embodied capital in turn is part of the habitus. Embodied capital is separate from but related to economic capital in that possession of economic capital, especially the resources and time it affords, greatly influences the accumulation of embodied cultural capital. Take for example the emphasis on (some might say obsession with) fitness among affluent North Americans.

In this context, a fit body is equated with leanness, and those who possess such a physique find that it confers great advantages. The obverse is true for those whose bodies do not match the socially defined ideal of fitness (Farrell 2011). Individual

genetics play a central role in how lean a person may be, but the financial resources to buy healthy food such as vegetables (see Fischer and Benson 2006), and the time to devote to exercise are directly related to an individual's economic capital. This mostly goes unrecognized and unspoken, but the fact is that while everyone may desire health, beauty, and fitness, the ability to achieve such goals lies primarily with the middle and upper classes, especially for those who need to modify their behaviors to compensate for their genetics.

The way one speaks is also an example of embodied cultural capital. The words used, topics of discussion, pronunciation and articulation, and the presence or absence of an accent are all markers of cultural capital and class status. Perhaps the clearest example of this is found in George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion*, wherein professor Henry Higgins proposes to pass off flower girl Eliza Doolittle as English nobility by teaching her to shed her Cockney accent and speak like a member of the upper class. Speech can have a profound effect on how people are received in the world and whether they are listened to or dismissed. I heard numerous examples of this towards the end of my fieldwork when the dispute over the Boreas Ponds tract was beginning. The "proper" pronunciation of Boreas is something like "Bore-ee-us." However, a prominent local pronunciation sounds like "Boris." I heard a number of Wilderness supporters denigrate the positions of Wild Forest advocates because they used the local pronunciation of Boreas.

The possession of certain skills is also an important part of embodied cultural capital in the Adirondack context. Again, like a particular physique, the acquisition of these skills demands time and economic capital. Wilderness navigation, paddling and

portaging a canoe, backcountry camping, riding an ATV, hunting, fishing, and climbing are all examples of skills that represent embodied cultural capital. The possession of certain skills and their level of achievement helps to mark their owners as members of groups. There is not a one to one correlation between skills and group membership, but there are trends. In the Adirondack case, for example, ATV riders, hunters, and anglers, were more often found among Wild Forest supporters than Wilderness proponents.

Social capital is the third form of capital identified by Bourdieu (1986:21), who defined it as “the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition.” As the old saw goes, it’s “who you know.” Bourdieu notes that the effectiveness of an individual’s social capital is dependent upon the size of the network they have, and also the social and cultural capital of the members of that network. Like cultural capital, the accrual of social capital requires investment of time and resources to realize a return. Social capital has the power to confer legitimacy and status to its holder and I witnessed it deployed with great frequency in the Finch land conflict. An especially telling example was the way certain commenters addressed their comment letters to the APA. When the APA solicits public commentary, it provides the name of a contact person to address the comments too. In this case, it was APA Deputy Director James Connolly. Not everybody addressed their comments to Connolly by name. Of those that did, most used the honorific “Mr. Connolly.” But some, like Peter Paine (2013:4577), began their letters with the familiar “Dear Jim.” In Paine’s case, he further deployed his

symbolic capital by stating “As I am sure you are aware, I have been a Trustee of the Adirondack Chapter of The Nature Conservancy for some 20 years (and am a former Chair of that Chapter).” By using this verbiage, Paine represents himself as one of the “‘people who are known’... and who may speak on behalf of the whole group” (Bourdieu 1986:24).

Before turning to a discussion of my key domains of analysis, I wish to first touch briefly on Bourdieu’s concept of field and its relation with habitus and capital. A field is a delineated space for social action. It can have a meaning similar to discipline, like the field of literature, or anthropology, or it can mean something like a playing field, a place where actors deploy capital, and that, along with habitus, sets limits of possibilities. Bourdieu (1993:30 emphasis in original) stated that the “literary or artistic field is a *field of forces*, but it also a *field of struggles* tending to transform or conserve this field of forces.” A characteristic of such fields is “position takings” (30), wherein actors seek to distinguish their position from others. The Finch land conflict is a field of forces and struggles with parameters that set limits for action. Actors have taken positions within this field in accordance with the possibilities that their habitus allows. As I have shown in the example of Peter Paine’s comment above, these actors deploy their social capital to gain advantage and to win. The remainder of this chapter focuses on three key domains that are central parts of this field.

Neoliberal Capitalism

The political-economic milieu that the twenty-first century Adirondack Park inhabits is characterized by pervasive and expansive neoliberal capitalism, and the discourses swirling around public land issues in the Park are suffused with its

language and logics. For example, public lands are frequently referred to as “assets” to be “leveraged” by state and local government officials, tourism marketers, and even the general public. Weber (2003:17) called capitalism “the most fateful force in our modern life.” It is safe to say that neoliberal capitalism is one of, if not the most, powerful shaping forces of our contemporary global world. Many authors (e.g., Castree 2008a, Davies 2014, Ganti 2014, Brown 2015, Hursh et al. 2015) have noted the difficulties of defining neoliberalism in a universal way. Noel Castree (2006, 2008a, 2008b, 2010) has written extensively about neoliberalism and nature, and made the crucial distinction between “ideal-type” and “actually-existing” neoliberalism (2008a: 134,142).

Castree noted that neoliberalism is not a monolithic thing, but rather a multifaceted process with a diverse variety of expressions. However, he recognized the necessity for a certain level of abstraction in order to draw connections among and make coherent the body of scholarship on neoliberalism and nature. Castree (2008a:242) presented a suite of trends and practices drawn from the literature (mostly in critical geography) that comprise an ideal-type definition of neoliberalism and neoliberalization: privatization, marketization, deregulation, reregulation, “market proxies in the public sector,” and “civil society flanking mechanisms.” These last two respectively refer to the operation of public sector services with the orientations towards efficiency and competition of private sector businesses, and NGOs, charities, and other private organizations that help to fulfill formerly public functions. Such flanking mechanisms support the orientation towards privatization -- the practice of transitioning state-run services to the private, for-profit sector -- by making it

profitable through the cheapening of labor.

Marketization is the process by which things that were not previously so are brought into line with the logics of markets. This is especially salient in contexts where nature is neoliberalized. Neil Smith (2007:18) showed how this occurs with the creation of “wetland credits,” where “a developer who intends to develop an area of wetland can live up to conservation requirements by purchasing credits either from landowners who agree to sequester commensurate amounts of wetland from any future development, or from companies that make it their business to construct or expand previously degraded wetlands.” This example shows how marketization works in multiple ways. A monetary value is placed on undeveloped wetlands, and this value is tied to their non-consumption. The attribution of this value then spurs the creation of new businesses and new work to meet these new demands. Multiple markets are thus brought into being where they previously did not exist. Smith also draws on the creation of carbon credits as another example of the marketization of so-called ecosystem services.

Deregulation and reregulation aid and are aided by marketization. The goal of both processes is to remove encumbrances to profit. Often, they work in tandem as one set of regulations is discarded in favor of newer, more market-friendly rules. One such example is the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) proposed Affordable Clean Energy (ACE) rule (2018), a less-stringent replacement for the 2015 Clean Power Plan that regulated emissions by Electric Utility Generating Units (power plants). The EPA under the Trump presidential administration has pursued an aggressive agenda of repealing environmental regulations because they are seen as

hindrances to capital flow. The “Affordable” in the rule’s name refers to affordability for electricity producers, not consumers, and the goal of the rule is to reduce the cost of doing business for utility companies.

Another example of deregulation and reregulation with global repercussions was the long-term weakening and eventual repeal of the Glass-Steagall Act with the passage of the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act (GLBA) in 1999. Part of the Banking Act of 1933, Glass-Steagall forced a separation between commercial banking and the securities business (Barth et al 2000, 191). This prohibited commercial banks, whose principal business was things like taking deposits, holding savings, and issuing loans, from engaging in risky investment bank-type activities. The Bank Holding Company Act of 1956 further constrained commercial banks by prohibiting their involvement in the insurance business, and this too was repealed with the passage of the GLBA. New financial innovations (marketization) in the 1980s such as currency swaps probed weaknesses of Glass-Steagall and evaded regulation because they did not quite fit into regulatory categories specified in the act (Funk and Hirschman 2014). Concentrated resistance to Glass-Steagall finally led to its repeal, which allowed commercial banks to become involved in securities and insurance, and spawned massive corporations such as Citigroup, the result of a \$70 billion merger of Travelers and Citicorp led by Sanford Weill, champion of bank deregulation and the “Shatterer of Glass-Steagall” (De La Merced 2012). Ultimately, bank deregulation and reregulation, coupled with a financial industry culture that prized short-term profits and rapid deal-making (Ho 2009), precipitated a global financial crisis. Some firms such as Bear Stearns and Lehman Brothers folded, while others such as Citigroup became the beneficiaries of

generous government bailouts funded with taxpayer dollars. This example highlights a key outcome of de- and reregulation that I return to in later sections: the placing of risk on the public for private profits.

The ideal-type definition of neoliberalism discussed above is not something that can simply be mapped onto real world conditions. Contexts may be neoliberalized without displaying all of the above attributes. Moreover, how these traits are expressed can, and does, vary widely in space and time. The goal of my analysis of the neoliberalization of Adirondack nature is to explore the unique local expressions of neoliberalism within a framework that allows for generalization and comparison. My aim is to show the relations among such processes, nature, and lived experience in the Park.

As I outlined above, the process of neoliberalization depends on many things. Capitalism is perhaps the most important vehicle for its progression. Indeed, neoliberalism is inextricably tied to capitalism (though the reverse is not true). Harvey's (2005) history of neoliberalism treats the two concepts as intertwined and I do so here as well. I now turn to a discussion of capitalism to define it and show how it works.

I hew to a Marxian definition of capital as something that exists only in relation to its role in profit-making. Unlike Piketty's (2017:45) definition of capital as assets that are simply held by people, companies, and nations, Marx's (1990:742) asserts that movement towards accumulation is an essential ontological condition of capital: "Accumulate, accumulate! That is Moses and the prophets!" Capital is not simply owned, it is used for a specific purpose - making profit in the form of money -

and as such it needs to move. Capital therefore is “not a thing, but rather a process that exists only in *motion*” (Harvey 2010:12 italics in original). So, capital might be money, but it isn’t the money one might use to buy food, or pay the heating bill. It might also be land, but again, not land that is simply owned. Money and other assets that are owned but not in use as capital I call “wealth.”

Capitalism is thus widely understood as an economic system wherein capital is deployed by capitalists in order to make profit. Unceasing accumulation of profit is a fundamental logic of capitalism, as is constant economic growth. This is always a component of the idea of sustainability. In Marx’s analysis of capital, profit was made through the generation of a surplus by labor. At the time of his writing, Marx was primarily concerned with industrial capitalism and the production of commodities. As I showed in Chapter 3, it was through this kind of industrial capitalism -- centered on the extractive industries of mining, logging, and tanning -- that attention became focused on the Adirondacks. Capitalists owned the means of production (land, factories, machines, and tools) and provided inputs such as raw materials. Commodities were then produced by laborers who sold their labor power to the capitalist. Profit was generated by the surplus created by labor: the value left over after material and production costs and wages to laborers were paid. Cheap labor therefore is a key part of the capitalist equation.

How is labor made cheap? Moore and Patel (2017:3) argue that capitalism is not simply an economic system, but a fundamental force in “organizing the relations between humans and the rest of nature.” Note the phrasing here. Moore and Patel are explicit in recognizing that humans are part of nature, not separate from it. Indeed,

Moore's work (e.g., 2011, 2015, 2017) hinges on the assumption of unity of people and nature as part of the web of life. He argues that the fundamental separation of people and nature is what allows capitalism to function. Moore (2015:19) calls this dualism between nature and society "Cartesian," noting that his use of the term signifies "philosophical and analytical worldviews -- and modes of inquiry -- that conceptualize society and nature as ontologically discrete."

Separation of nature and humanity is a key part of colonial and capitalist processes. Jodi Melamed (2015:77) notes that capital "can only accumulate by producing and moving through relations of severe inequality among human groups" and that this process requires the "unequal differentiation of human value." A fundamental way in which this differentiation was achieved was the assertion that some groups were not part of humanity but rather part of nature. Historian Edward Baptist (2014) has argued against orthodox historical narratives that view slavery and capitalism as incompatible economic systems and has shown the central role that slavery played in making the United States a capitalist economic superpower. The denial of Africans' humanity and the assertion that they were closer to nature than civilization was a project undertaken by some of the most prominent scientific minds of the day (Dewbury 2007) and served as a powerful justification for slavery.

Likewise, the pervasive linkage of Native Americans with nature, and the failure of Europeans to recognize anthropogenic changes wrought by indigenous people (e.g., Cronon 2003) supported the doctrine of *terra nullius* that drove settler colonialism.

By positioning certain people as being closer to nature than humanity, their lives were cheapened and so was their labor, allowing the "juggernaut of capital"

(Marx 1990:799) to grind forward on their backs. The philosophical division of humans and nature is not the only way that labor is cheapened, however. The material separation of people from the land plays a major role in the production of cheap labor. Marx (1990:881) noted that “what the capitalist system demanded was...a degraded and almost servile condition of the mass of the people.” This was achieved through “primitive accumulation” (Marx 1990:873), the usually forcible dispossession of land and resources from people.

Marx’s discussion of primitive accumulation in *Capital* draws on enclosure in eighteenth century Britain for examples. During this time, the English nobility asserted control of state lands which were “given away, sold at ridiculous prices, or even annexed to private estates by direct seizure” (Marx 1990:884). Small farms were subsumed into massive estates and arable land turned into pasture and hunting preserves. The loss of land meant the loss of the means of subsistence for such farmers and compelled them to sell their labor. As Marx notes, this was not simply a convenient side effect of dispossession, but an actual goal of elites. The creation of a landless peasant class produced a mass of wage laborers who were compelled to work on the estates and large farms owned by the landed gentry. Because the number of displaced persons exceeded the need for labor, laborers had to accept lower wages and were indeed forced to do so because their means of subsistence had been taken away from them.

This has strong parallels with the Adirondack Park and Parnes (1989) and Jacoby (2003) have argued that the creation of the Forest Preserve and the Park, and the contemporaneous growth of large private estates acted as a system of enclosure by

limiting locals' access to previously open lands and the resources contained therein. As I discussed in Chapter 3, lands acquired through bills of attainder or tax default were sold at low prices, making them attractive targets for land speculators and those with liquid capital. As in England, those who depended upon use of common lands found their subsistence opportunities severely constrained, and thus were often compelled to labor in one or more of the extractive industries rapidly growing in the region. The boom period of tanning, mining, and logging in Adirondacks was fairly short-lived. The decline of these industries had little to do with the introduction of legislation for environmental protection but was rather the result of industries finding other sources of raw materials that were of better quality or less expensive than what was found in the Adirondacks.

This process started towards the end of the nineteenth century. One example was the failure of the iron mine at Tahawus. The isolation of the mine meant increased cost to ship iron out. The ore was also contaminated with titanium and difficult to smelt with the technology of the day. Sparse settlement in that particular area also made labor dear. These conditions ultimately led to the failure and closing of the mine. Likewise, the expansion of settlement and railroads westward led to the opening of the great pine forests in the upper Midwest, where large, high-quality trees could be cut and moved more easily and cheaply than in the Adirondack interior.

This process continued throughout the twentieth century, as Adirondack logging and mining concerns fell victim to increased global competition. Thus, it was not fate, resource exhaustion, or environmental protection that ultimately sounded the death knell for Adirondack industry, but rather the fundamental logic of capitalism:

the elevation of profit above all else. The capitalistic foregrounding of profit over people in the Adirondacks took on a decidedly neoliberal bent in 2013 with the passage of Proposition 5, what became colloquially known as the NYCO amendment (named for the NYCO Minerals corporation). The series of events before, during, and after the amendment's passage offer a timely illustration of how economic concerns have come to dominate Adirondack land-use issues.

NYCO Minerals started out as the Willsboro Mining Company. Willsboro is a town in Essex County, New York, located on the west shore of Lake Champlain south of Plattsburgh. In 1951, the Godfrey L. Cabot Company of Boston purchased the Essex County deposit of wollastonite, a calcium metasilicate mineral used in the ceramics, paint, and automobile industries (<https://www.usgs.gov/centers/nmic/wollastonite-statistics-and-information>). By 1953, processing facilities in Willsboro were completed and commercial production began that same year. In 2007, Resource Capital Funds, a private equity firm based in Denver, Colorado purchased NYCO with the goal that it would “continue operating as the world’s leading wollastonite supplier” (Reiner 2007).

In 2012, Resource Capital Funds sold NYCO to S and B Industrial Minerals SA, based in Greece. It was under the ownership of S and B that the events leading to the drafting and passage of Proposition 5 began. At this time, NYCO mining operations were centered at their Lewis Mine, which borders the Jay Mountain Wilderness Area (the smallest Wilderness area in the Park). NYCO also had a second site, the Oakhill Mine several miles to the east of the Lewis Mine. According to NYCO, the wollastonite at the Lewis Mine was nearly exhausted, so NYCO proposed

a land swap with New York State, requesting that the state give NYCO 200 acres of the Jay Mountain Wilderness known as Lot 8 in exchange for company owned parcels of land to be named later.

This was, of course, wildly controversial as it directly contravened the spirit and letter of Article 14, the Forever Wild amendment. Local Green groups were split on the proposal: it was supported by The Adirondack Mountain Club (ADK) and the Adirondack Council, and opposed by Adirondack Wild and Protect the Adirondacks. Local government officials and organizations like the Adirondack Association of Towns and Villages (AATV) and the Local Government Review Board (LGRB) praised the proposal. This is not surprising, but how did Proposition 5 manage to capture the support of the two oldest and largest environmental groups operating in the Park?

NYCO accomplished this in two ways. First, they presented the proposal as a “win-win” situation (a ubiquitous phrase in the neoliberal conservation and development playbook) for NYCO, the Adirondack Park, and the local economy. This is a common theme everywhere that conservation butts up against capitalism and I will expand more on this in the following section on Development. For now, it is sufficient to say that NYCO made a convincing pitch that the swap would benefit local communities, the Forest Preserve, and New York State as a whole, and NYCO would benefit too. NYCO was careful to show, moreover, that New Yorkers would ultimately benefit more than NYCO did in the deal. NYCO agreed to swap one million dollars’ worth of land, which they and State agreed would comprise about 1500 acres, for the 200 acres in Lot 8. Additionally, when NYCO was finished mining the land in

eight to ten years, they would reclaim the land and donate it back to New York State, whereupon it could be added back to the Forest Preserve.

For supporters, this seemed like too good a deal to pass up. New York State would gain over seven times the acreage of land for what amounted to a long-term lease to NYCO. But there was a less altruistic side to NYCO's proposal. The company engaged in what Kazis and Grossman (1982) called "job blackmail," a tactic where the threat of job loss, such as through plant shutdowns, is used as coercive force to impact legislation related to environmental protection, worker safety, or labor organization. When using job blackmail, employers maintain that the cost of complying with proposed or existing regulation is too high, and the only alternative is to cease operations if the regulations are passed or if they are not removed. Put another way, regulations are seen as barriers to capital accumulation, and rather than bending the needs of capital to those of society, the deployers of capital seek a new frontier, in this case one of their own creation, where such barriers do not exist. In doing so they "make the pursuit of their own private interest synonymous with the public's interest in more and better employment opportunities" (Kazis and Grossman 1982:15).

This was exactly the course taken by NYCO. The company made it clear that if the Proposition 5 did not pass and the land swap failed, that NYCO would have to downsize its local work force and possibly shut down its Adirondack operations in their entirety. NYCO employed about 100 people at its site in Lewis, a substantial number given the town's population of a little under 1400 according to the 2010 census. Kazis and Grossman (1982:15) note that in addition to linking the company's interests with that of the greater public, job blackmail also scares "workers into

thinking they have no alternative but to support their employers' proposals." In a small town like Lewis these fearful workers serve as a proselytizing force for their employer's desires. They may do so actively, such as in conversation with friends, neighbors, and relatives, but their very existence also serves to influence the opinions of others. Nobody wants to see their neighbor lose their job, and companies depend on this sentiment when they use job blackmail.

NYCO also engaged in a public relations campaign to spread their message far beyond the Adirondacks. The company hired Behan Communications of Albany to run the campaign, spending over half a million dollars in the process (Knight 2013). The campaign included radio and television advertising aimed at the metropolitan New York market. The ads were persuasive: I had friends who live in Brooklyn and Manhattan who had seen the ads e-mail me asking why some people thought the swap was a bad thing. They planned to vote yes on Proposition 5 because it seemed like a win-win to them.

Ultimately a majority of New Yorkers thought this way and Proposition 5 passed. In June 2014, the APA approved NYCO's plan to mine Lot 8. In the fall of 2014, Paris-based Imrys, "the world's leading industrial minerals group" (O'Driscoll 2015) started the process of acquiring S and B Minerals, and thus NYCO, and the deal closed in February 2015. By the end of May 2015, Imrys completed test drilling in Lot 8, a process accompanied by extensive forest clearing and road-building. To date no lands have been transferred to New York State in compensation for Lot 8. Moreover, Imrys has cut its Adirondack work force by about one-third, including local management, and brought in non-unionized subcontractors from outside New York

State to do the mining work (Odato 2018).

It is clear that Imrys is the only real winner here. Its subsidiary NYCO did all the heavy lifting to deregulate the Forest Preserve, one of the key aspects of neoliberalism that I discussed above. The risk for the venture was placed on the public's shoulders while NYCO/Imrys reaped the benefits of cheap nature, in this case free nature because the company has not made any moves to compensate the State of New York since Proposition 5 was decided in their favor and Lot 8 was turned over to the company to be mined. The foregrounding of capital accumulation by private business in relation to management of Adirondack Forest Preserve has become a central part of land use issues in the Park. In Chapter 5, I discuss how this is so in relation to the Finch lands, a situation that bears strong resemblance to the NYCO case. The primary way this work on behalf of capital is achieved is by presenting it as development intervention. I turn now to a discussion of development in general and relate how its discourses and practices are deployed in the Adirondack context.

Development

The global project of development began in the post-World War Two years as colonial powers began to pull back from direct political control of their peripheries in favor of other kinds of interventions like infrastructure building, economic aid, and modernization projects. Gillian Hart (2001:650) calls this “‘big D’ Development” in contrast with “‘little d’ development or the development of capitalism as a geographically uneven, profoundly contradictory set of historical processes”, and I follow her convention throughout this work. Anthropologists involved themselves in Development from the start. An excellent example of early integration of

anthropology into Development is the Cornell Peru Project (CPP) at Vicos, a 15-year experiment in modernization. It is worth briefly discussing the CPP as many of its base assumptions and structures still characterize Development today, especially with regards to discourse and practice. I pay particular attention to three enduring aspects of Development: expertise, power, and temporality.

The CPP began in 1952 as a collaboration between Cornell University and the Instituto Indigenista Peruano. After the industrial lessee went bankrupt midway through its ten-year lease, the project assumed the remaining five-year lease on the hacienda of Vicos, “a Quechua-speaking community of about 2000 inhabitants located in the highlands of north-central Peru, for the purpose of conducting a research and development program on the modernization process” (Holmberg 1959:7). Haciendas are large estates, and in Peru’s system, *patrones* (essentially landlords) leased publicly-owned haciendas from Public Benefit Societies linked to the Peruvian government. The *patrones* would typically use the most fertile and productive lands to cultivate market crops, leaving the less desirable lands to be used by the resident peasants, often indigenous, for subsistence farming. There were a number of material problems with the Vicos hacienda such as low soil fertility, malnutrition, and endemic disease. Along with these issues, the experts from Cornell identified another problem that they hoped their intervention would solve: the hacienda’s lack of profitability.

CPP director Allan Holmberg (1959:8) noted that Vicos “had never been a very profitable enterprise” and that no previous lessee “had been able to realize a substantial yearly profit even though he had at his disposal a labor force of more than 200 men for three days each week.” So, the main problem at Vicos was a problem of

capital, namely its constricted flow and growth. Note that Vicos was not unprofitable, it was just not profitable *enough* by the standards of whatever metric the CPP employed, which is unclear. Holmberg and team deemed the optimal approach would be to turn the land over to the peasants, but noted that course of action was unrealistic because of political issues with land reform and lack of funds for development. A third reason was the Vicosinos themselves, who “owing to their lack of enlightenment...did not possess the skills necessary for rapid social and economic growth” (Holmberg 1959:8). Isbell (2009) noted that Holmberg and his team, like many social scientists at that time, viewed Vicos and its inhabitants as isolated and anachronistic, “not as a product of modern power relations.” Thus, to meet their goal of modernizing the hacienda and its peasants, the CPP needed to assume “the responsibilities of the power role at Vicos” (Holmberg 1965:5).

The nature of the power role was to determine what sorts of interventions the project would undertake. The CPP team favored an integrated approach that would “optimize change in all areas at the same time,” but they realized that “with scarce resources, all values could not be maximized concurrently” (Holmberg 1965:5). Thus, the CPP team made the decisions on which aspects of Vicos would fall under their strategic plan, and they focused on increasing the hacienda’s agricultural productivity as a means for capital accumulation or “enlarging the wealth base,” in the words of the project director (Holmberg 1965:6). Another of the project’s goals was the devolution of power, with the ultimate goal of putting the hacienda under the control of the Vicosinos themselves, breaking the old and exploitative system of *patrone* and peasant. After the initial five-year lease term expired, it was not renewed, but the CPP

remained at Vicos in a research and advisory role for another decade. Holmberg (1965:8) characterized the CPP's involvement with Vicos as a success, stating that the hacienda and its people had made "vast gains" and "undergone a profound change."

My purpose here is not to assess the successes or failures of the Vicos project, as Isbell (2009) has taken on that task. My interest in Vicos is heuristic: the situation there offers an excellent and early example of the relations among expertise, power, and temporality that continue suffuse Development interventions today. I now turn to unpacking these relations and situating them in the Adirondack context, drawing on additional examples from the anthropological literature on development along the way.

An enduring characteristic of Development interventions is their relation to temporality and temporal orientations. In particular, Development is predicated on an orientation towards the future. Development projects do not simply arise out of thin air: they are targeted towards specific problems, such as the low agricultural productivity, insufficient profits, and endemic disease at Vicos. In the Adirondacks, and especially with regards to the Finch deal, the main problem is defined as a lack of economic opportunity. Thus, the first step in such interventions is always a framing of the present in terms of its deficiencies. The undesirability of current conditions is placed in contrast with an improved future, the state that will be achieved as a result of the intervention. The hope for a better future is seductive and underlies what Tania Li (2007) calls the "will to improve."

Another word for improvement is progress, and the idea of progressive developmentalism, that things improve linearly in time, has a long history in the

Western intellectual tradition. With its sense of forward motion, the idea of progress has an inherent future-oriented temporality, but it is also related to the past. Ideas about and desire for progress can cast the past in a negative light, as something to move away from and leave behind. The idea of escaping the past has long been a part of the thinking on development, especially in relation to the creation of subjects appropriate for development. Developable subjects are often characterized as people who are mired in the past, unable or unwilling to escape it of their own volition and move forward into modernity. Underdeveloped subjects are viewed as an inverse mirror image of those who would bring development (Esteva 2010:2). The construction of underdeveloped subjects has a strong temporal component: these subjects are seen as “primitive and stagnant” (Truman quoted in Escobar 2011:3). Thus, they not only seem to be out of time with the modern world, but also not moving through time at all.

This was a central part of the Vicos project. Isbell (2009:42) citing Lynch (1982), writes that Holmberg and his team created two “polar ideal types” to serve as a framework for their analysis of cultural change, a central concern of anthropologists of that era. Their foundation for this frame was an explicit temporal scale: “modern, industrial Western Civilization” at one end, and “medieval Western colonialism” on the other (Holmberg, Dobyns, and Vasquez 1961:37). The CPP viewed the current state of Vicosinos as being trapped in the past. In an historical analysis of Vicos in relation to the Cold War, Pribilsky (2009:406) found that rural indigenous people were “frequently characterized in grant proposals and reports as ‘geographically and chronologically at the edge of industrialization,’” isolated anachronisms who needed

to be modernized.

The denial of coevalness (Fabian 1983) is pervasive in the world of Development projects. Indeed, Ferguson (1994:71) argues that the representation of a state as “aboriginal,” lacking infrastructure and roads and not fully integrated with a modern cash economy, is absolutely essential for Development because it then holds the potential to be “transformed” by the introduction of these things. The primitive condition of the Development subject provides the justification for the intervention. Ferguson discusses how the Thaba-Tseka Development Project in Lesotho (1975-1984) created representations of people living in the mountainous area of Thaba-Tseka as primitives who lived in “economic isolation” and who needed to be introduced to common agricultural tools like planters and harrows (1994:84). This characterization justified a Development “package of technical innovations designed for backwards farmers” (Ferguson 1994:86), even though many of its claims and assumptions were inaccurate.

The characterization of Development subjects as backwards, primitive, and isolated also serves to mark difference between them and other actors. In a discussion of the implementation of the Despos civilizing program in New Order period (1965-98) Indonesia, Li (2007:79-80) illustrates how the labeling of hill farmers as “isolated” served to “replace the racial divide of the colonial period” with a temporal one, placing emphasis on their primitive way of life and “cultural backwardness” compared to other Indonesians. Relocation of the hill farmers set the stage for a five-year program of modernization with the goal of replacing old, traditional dispositions for new modern forms (Li 2007:81). Underlying this move to modernity was the

assumption that the hill farmers would only progress so far, reaching the level of modernity of average Indonesian citizens but not that of the officials and experts in charge of the development program. The temporal narrative of the primitive not only serves to create appropriate subjects for development, but also works to maintain the necessary distance between these subjects and the expert actors tasked with making development happen.

This separation is critical because it allows development actors to pin the blame for failed interventions on the target population, rather than accepting culpability. Crewe and Harrison (2002) point out that traditional culture is widely seen as a barrier to progress in the development world. In this context culture has strong temporal connotations. It signifies the old way of doing things and also suggests a static and bounded character. Traditional culture is old-fashioned and resistant to change, lacks a basis in rationality, and is seen as being “linked to a psychological or cultural disposition that is in some sense backward and prevents people from embracing modernity” (Crewe and Harrison 2002:43). Thus, once again, local people are characterized as deficient.

This deficiency carries along with it a tacit moral narrative: that those who do not make the choice to improve deserve the end consequences, no matter how dire. Kathryn Dudley’s (1994) work on the 1988 closing of the Chrysler assembly line in Kenosha, Wisconsin, underscores this point. The city of Kenosha was rocked when Chrysler pulled out and closed its plant, leaving 6000 workers jobless. In the wake of the plant’s closing a new city council was elected. Once dominated by blue-collar auto workers, the new city council became populated by white-collar professionals with a

new vision for Kenosha as a bedroom community for upper middle class professionals working in the Chicago metropolitan area. This included plans for a large-scale waterfront development project that would level the former factory to make way for a marina and upscale waterfront housing. Tremendous conflict ensued, characterized by Dudley as a battle between the “culture of the mind” of white-collar workers, (1994:49) and the “culture of the hands” of blue-collar workers (1994:101).

Ideas about time and morality played a significant part in this conflict. The new city council members saw the plant closure and proposed development as the “dawn of a new age” (Dudley 1994:59). Former auto workers bitterly opposed the new development and destruction of the plant. Their opposition led to their characterization by development supporters as being stuck in the past. Their predicament, jobless and without ‘modern’ credentials like college degrees or white-collar skills was seen by local elites as being the auto workers’ own fault for failing to “change with the times” (Dudley 1994:69).

The representation of auto workers as being out of time with the rest of the modern world had several effects. First, it engendered a feeling of superiority among Kenosha’s white-collar professionals who (in their minds) had met the challenges of modernity head on and acquired the credentials and skills that would allow them to succeed in the modern world. It also placed the blame for the current situation squarely on the shoulders of the auto workers. These workers had failed to adapt, to modernize. In Crewe and Harrison’s (2002) terms, their ‘traditional culture,’ working with their hands, was the barrier to their success. Finally, deployment of this temporal narrative allowed those in better straits to navigate the ambiguous moral terrain of

being a 'have' while one's neighbor is a 'have not.' Rather than guilt, unease, or even sympathy, viewing auto workers as 'primitives' unwilling or unable to modernize allowed white collar Kenoshans to feel pride in their own accomplishments and hopeful for the future.

The temporalization of Development in this way is problematic because it obscures power relations by giving current conditions an air of inevitability. To return to Vicos, Isbell (2009) notes that the CPP's portrayal of Vicosinos as anachronistic ignored their long history of political interaction -- including land claims -- with the Peruvian state. How does this occur? Experts map on specific temporalities through their actions. As the above examples show, these future-positive orientations are shared by a diversity of actors, but one group --trustees-- have a significant hand in the production, dissemination, and reproduction of future-oriented discourses. Trustees are actors who lay claim to the "capacity" (Cowen and Shelton 1996:25) for action, which often translates as the possession of special knowledge or skills relevant to the problem at hand. As noted by Li (2007:5), this claim to knowledge is also a claim to power. How do trustees exercise their power? In what ways do they bring it into the world? How does it engender resistance and how is it resisted? One answer to these three questions, in Development as a general sphere and in the Adirondacks in particular, is through discourse.

The relations between discourse and Development have received a lot of scholarly attention (Crush 1995, Escobar 1991, 1997, 2011; Grillo and Stirrat 1997; Gibson and Clocker 2005; Cornwall 2007; Cornwall and Eade 2010). Here I wish to focus on the temporal and affective aspects of Development discourse, especially

orientations towards the future and dispositions towards positivity. One especially salient example is the work of the Adirondack North Country Association (ANCA), particularly their role in facilitating the Adirondack Common Ground Alliance.

ANCA (Adirondack.org) is a local development organization that has been active since the 1950s. Based in Saranac Lake, ANCA serves the Adirondack region as well as the North Country, a vast area encompassing northern New York from Watertown in the west to Lake Champlain in the east.

ANCA works in two basic domains: energy and the economy. Their energy work is focused on helping municipalities and residents connect with sources of renewable energy, building upgrades, and tax incentives and grants for projects employing renewable resource technology such as solar power or geothermal heating and cooling. I focus here on their work in economic development.

In their economic work, both in terms of function and discourse, ANCA is resolutely neoliberal. First, the organization serves as a civil society flanking mechanism as discussed above in the section on neoliberal capitalism. ANCA has taken on the role of attempting to improve the economic conditions in the Adirondacks, lifting the burden from government and placing it squarely on the private sector. Moreover, ANCA seeks to place this burden, and its attendant risks, on individuals, as evidenced by their emphasis on entrepreneurship. This mirrors broader societal patterns whereby individuals are expected to function as discrete business entities, such as in the rise of the “gig economy” where workers forego (voluntarily and involuntarily) the security of traditional jobs for contingent employment, such as the “side hustle” that features prominently in the marketing of the ride-sharing service

Uber. ANCA operates squarely in what Anand Giridharadas (2018) calls “Market World.”

Giridharadas characterizes Market World as a space of ideas that posits markets and market relationships are the best way to promote positive change in the world at large. Denizens of Market World prize positivity over critique, frame problems in terms of individuals rather than systems or structure, and look to business-centered solutions (especially entrepreneurship) to solve those problems. The elites who inhabit Market World embrace “win-win” thinking. Giridharadas argues that this kind of thinking allows elites to preserve their privilege while acting as agents of change. Giridharadas gives the example of the focus on poverty as a problem rather than inequality. Elites can address poverty by making donations, creating foundations, and the like. None of this activity threatens elites. To address inequality would require the wealthy to interrogate and change the very structures that allowed their accumulation of wealth in the first place, and open the door to very real and substantive material sacrifice on their part.

ANCA’s vision for the Adirondacks is to create a region full of self-reliant, independent entrepreneurs, mostly producing locally-made goods for eventual retail sale. ANCA calls this vision the “New Economy” and have created a hashtag -- #neweconomy -- that they employ with great frequency. The trouble is that none of this is really new: there isn’t any such thing as a “New Economy.” The new generation of entrepreneurs envisioned by ANCA still need to hew to the logics of capital. They will need to create a surplus, and since they will be producing goods for sale in an economically depressed region, they won’t be able to depend on magically

inflated sales volume. They will need to create this surplus through cheap nature and cheap labor.

These contradictions have not gone unnoticed, and I encountered many people who viewed ANCA and their work with bemusement, skepticism, and even derision. Still, ANCA is a major player in Adirondack development and a trusted source of expertise. ANCA has positioned itself and its employees as trustees. I argue that ANCA builds support for its trusteeship by deploying three tactics in particular: jubilant win-win discourse (Büscher 2013), rendering technical (Li 2007), and future orientation. These work synergistically to bolster the perception of ANCA's expertise and support its claim to trusteeship. Additionally, ANCA's overall message, materials, and discourse appeal to an elite habitus shared by many of its members and supporters. Many of the people who praise ANCA are well educated and intelligent; often they are leaders in business, government, and the community. How then, are they taken in by some of ANCA's fantastical ideas, such as a recent blog post (<https://www.adirondack.org/BuildLocalWealth>) promoting ANCA's Businesses in Transition initiative? This project aims to match young entrepreneurs with older business owners who do not have a succession plan but wish to retire, or at least get out of a particular business, in the near future.

The authors present a fictional vignette about a harried mother of three, "Kelly," burdened by student loan debt and a car payment, whose story is "based on conversations with real people in the region." The owner of the consignment store where Kelly picks up shifts when needed wants to retire. Kelly would like to take over the store, but doesn't know where she would get the financing, or how to make a

business plan. The authors assert that “business ownership is the single most promising route to build wealth for low income New York families,” and talk about how the initiative will seek to provide services (like childcare and transportation) that will allow people to access business training and “address financing challenges.” This is a win-win scenario that seems like a very reasonable idea, at least the way ANCA presents it. But ANCA’s framing of the issue is clearly in the style of Market World/neoliberal development and as such it ignores some significant foundational questions. ANCA sees the problem as technical and individual, one of people lacking knowledge and access. Because of their focus on actionable solutions they fail to ask what I think is an absolutely fundamental question: Is increasing the indebtedness of low income people truly the best (or even a good) way to help them build wealth?

Milford Bateman’s (2010) analysis of microfinance would resoundingly answer “no!” Microfinance is a development intervention that was first proposed in the 1970s and has seen widespread use over the following four decades. The basic premise of microfinance is to provide small loans to individuals in poverty to provide capital for income-generating activity. Bateman’s analysis found that the real beneficiaries of microfinance were the lenders, and that the recipients often became caught in a “poverty trap” (51), unable to escape their debt. What ANCA proposes is different than traditional microfinance, but it is a difference of type not kind. The end result is still an increase of debt held by those who are least able to carry it.

This example shows all three of the aforementioned tactics in action. ANCA presents a scenario that they assert will benefit low income families and retiring businesses owners alike: a win-win situation. Moreover, they characterize their

proposal as “the single most promising” solution. ANCA renders the problems technical by framing them as lacunae within individuals that can be filled through the organization’s intervention. The structural problems of student loan debt and unaffordable child care in the United States are ignored. Kelly’s problems are her lack of business acumen and access to financing. Finally, their analysis is exclusively future-oriented. In their example, the ANCA authors focus solely on what they *will* do and what future needs may be. The past and current conditions that put Kelly and real people like her in their present predicaments are not interrogated at all.

To look at how ANCA appeals to an elite habitus, I turn to another blog post, this one written by Kate Fish, ANCA’s executive director. Fish is a former Monsanto executive who comes from wealth and is a great champion of Market World solutions for the Adirondacks. Fish’s blog post is entitled “The Future of Rural: Part 1” (<https://adirondack.org/Future-Rural-1>). Like all of ANCA’s media products, it offers a wildly optimistic view of what it hopes to accomplish. Fish writes “This is the first installment of a series of ANCA blog posts over the course of 2019 addressing the future of rural places. We will be looking at data, analyses, media coverage, anecdotes, trends, exceptions and the lived experience.” Fish’s task here is to engage with the lived experience portion.

Her narrative is centered on business and consumption, however. She begins: “I’m at the bar in a newly and lovingly renovated 1927-era hotel. The total all-in cost over the five years of construction was \$30M. The lighting is exquisite, and I’m marveling at the unusual flavor and texture of a cheese fondue made from local goat cheese.” Fish goes on wax rhapsodic about the remainder of her last-minute holiday

shopping in Saranac Lake, peppering her narrative with adjectives like “perfect,” “inspiring,” and “great.” She notes that “Local merchants offer everything I needed.”

Fish describes her visit to the Village Mercantile, a community-owned store whose investors “triumphed over Walmart’s efforts to open a big box store in town.” Contrasting the flannel and fleece clothed crowd with the well-coiffed, fur-clad couple she met at the hotel, Fish calls her outing “a multi-layered experience of a small-town economy.” But of course, Fish’s experience was far from multi-layered. In fact, I would call it a pretty constrained experience, maybe touching on only the upper rungs of the town’s socioeconomic ladder. None of the low-income people I know shop at the Village Mercantile, the prices are simply too high. They make the 45-minute trip to Walmart in Malone where they can find similar items for one-third of the price and do their grocery shopping all in one place. Another popular store with low income residents of Saranac Lake is the Dollar General at the other end of town, which Fish didn’t visit. Nor did she stop in for a drink at The Rusty Nail, a dive bar one-third of a mile in distance from the Hotel Saranac where she enjoyed her fondue, but a million miles away in terms of the economic class of clientele. “The Nail,” as it is known to regulars, advertises three-dollar call drinks; the least expensive cocktail at the Great Hall bar in the Hotel Saranac is over nine dollars.

So, Fish’s blog post and the stories it tells are designed to appeal to certain kind of reader. The description of “delicate silver earrings made by a local artist” that she purchased at the Hotel Saranac gift shop was not written to appeal to the Walmart shoppers in the area. Instead, Fish’s post is crafted to resonate with those who have bespoke sensibilities, people for whom the provenance and uniqueness of the products

they buy is primary motivation for their purchases, not cost. Shopping is a desirable and enjoyable way to spend their time. This is a distinctly upper-class disposition and one held by those who for whom the Adirondacks is a locus of leisure. On the other end of the spectrum, many people for whom the Park is primarily a place for labor -- like the workers in the Hotel Saranac -- reported to me that shopping is chore, something they fit in during their limited free time, and the goal is to meet their needs while spending the least amount possible.

Their blog is just one way that ANCA disseminates their Market World ideas about development, connects with others who share similar dispositions, and build their authority as trustees. The primary way ANCA does this is through their work with the Common Ground Alliance (CGA), a consortium largely composed of elected officials and NGO representatives. The CGA holds a yearly forum described on ANCA's website in 2015 as "an event where much of the leadership in the Adirondack Park and across the North Country assembles for one day a year to discuss and agree on strategies and actions that will create a viable future for the region." A press release published on the *Adirondack Almanack* website that same year (<https://www.adirondackalmanack.com/2015/07/common-ground-forum-set-for-july-15th.html#sthash.cjEqk7h5.dpuf>) states similarly, but with an important difference, that "The Common Ground Alliance Forum assembles *engaged residents* from across the Adirondack Park and the North Country for one day each year to talk about strategies and actions that aim to create a viable future for the region" (emphasis mine). Recent emails from the CGA mailing list (Figure 7) tout the Alliance as "a diverse network of dedicated people." A look at the attendee list, sent to participants

as an Excel spreadsheet the night before the forum, tells a slightly different story. The list reads like a who's who of state and local elected officials, NGO representatives, educators, business owners, state agency appointees and senior employees, and consultants.

The elite participants of the CGA Forum are treated to a daylong fete of jubilant discourse, future orientation, and market solutions. I attended the 2015 CGA Forum held on Wednesday, July 15. The midweek, nine AM to four PM scheduling and 30-dollar registration fee is the first clue to the kind of person who would attend the event.

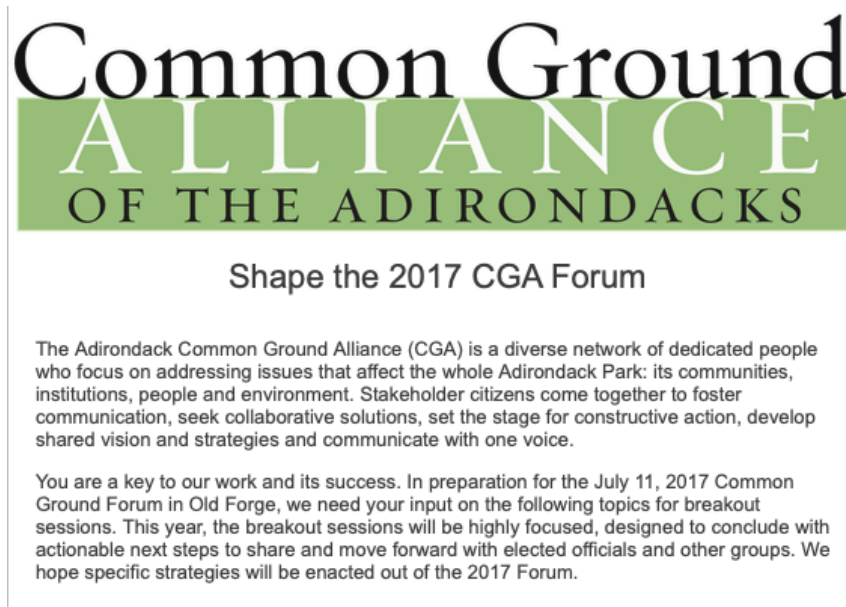


Figure 7. Screenshot of CGA E-mail received by author. (Author Photo)

Many working people would be unable to attend an event held during the day in the middle of the week. That is the reason the DEC and APA schedule public hearings to start at 7pm. The cost is also a barrier, especially for those who work in

service industry jobs. If we take a hypothetical service worker who earns fifteen dollars per hour, on the upper third of the pay scale for that industry in this area, the registration fee comes out to five percent of their gross weekly income. So rather than a diverse crowd that represents a cross section of Adirondackers, CGA attendees are self-selected as those who have (or can make) the free time during the work week, can afford to attend, and view the time and money as well spent. This type of event with panel discussions and work-group sessions also appeals mostly to the college educated who are comfortable and familiar with such things. In fact, I left the CGA early to meet with an informant in Long Lake that afternoon who did not want to attend the Forum, even though they had the time and I offered to pay their registration fee, because they said it wasn't their kind of thing and they wouldn't feel comfortable.

Standing at the Mount Sabattis pavilion in Long Lake on the morning of the Forum, I found myself wishing for the fleece jacket I decided to leave behind. It was chilly and overcast, the air cool and damp. The voices from the crowd waiting in the pavilion for the event to start resonated in a low thrum. It was an older crowd in general, and by appearances, is exclusively "white." Ross Whaley (emeritus president of SUNY ESF and former APA chair) kicked off the forum. He offered mostly congratulatory words for the work of the CGA over the last nine years, noting in particular the work of ADK Futures and that the principles of that effort will be receiving the Hochschild Award, given by the Adirondack Museum to people who have had great impact (as defined by the museum) on the Adirondack Park. The Whaley shifted into Market World mode. Whaley stated that the question going forward is "how do we change the forest preserve into an economic asset?" A few

moments later he repeats this with slightly different wording: “how do we take the Forest Preserve and make it into an economic asset?”

The unspoken subtext here is one that underpins all discourse centered on making nature work for capital: that it will do so at low or no cost. If Whaley’s question was phrased from a World Ecology perspective, it might sound something like, “how do we change the Forest Preserve into cheap nature?” This is a focal point of development schemes that position nature tourism, especially ecotourism, as a primary means of capital accumulation. Tourism was a central theme at the Forum. After Whaley’s opening address there was a panel discussion on young people working in the Park. The four participants shared their stories of what brought them to the Adirondacks. For all, preexisting social relations were the main factor in their coming to the Park. Three of the panelists grew up in the Adirondacks, left to be educated, and returned. The fourth spent summers here. Another common theme was that the panelists either had an established family business that they or their spouse could step into, significant family financial resources, or a spouse with a good “anchor job.” This was a panel made up of elites.

Two of the panelists emphasized the importance of tourism in the Park. Natasha Bristol, employed by a local marketing firm, expressed her excitement about her work “opening doors to tourism” in the region. Hannah Gibbons, the events director for Great Camp Sagamore stressed that locals needed to “make things more appealing for tourists.” She implored local communities to “work on aesthetics” as a way to capture tourist attention. This was a theme that came up over and over again during my fieldwork, and it was usually expressed -- as it was by Gibbons -- as a

critique of locals. Later in the day during the work group session a well-dressed brother and sister pair, owners of property on the private Little Wolf Lake, complained about how the residents of Tupper Lake took no pride in their town, as evidenced by the abundance of run-down properties. This critique was also touched on by Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul in her address to the CGA Forum participants.

As the panel discussion finished up, a large black SUV swooped into the lot and parked close to the pavilion, eliciting a quiet murmur in the crowd, “she’s here...” A stern looking man in a black suit exited the vehicle and surveyed the crowd. Then Hochul appeared. Venture capitalist Lee Keet quickly jumped up to get a photo taken with Hochul that Willie Janeway snapped on his cell phone. Hochul took the podium and remarked that being from Buffalo, she can handle the chill. Mystifyingly she chirped “I’m from up here!,” as if Buffalo and Long Lake were neighboring towns. She related how her family would come to the Adirondacks when she was a child. Hochul’s address was heavy on superlatives but light on substance and factually inaccurate. For example, Hochul stated that the “preserves that have been there for centuries,” but the Forest Preserve dates only to 1885. Hochul called the Adirondacks the “birthplace of wilderness movement,” and the CGA a “natural forum for stakeholders.” She asserted that we were “united stronger than divided,” and the “common good greater than all of us individually.” She noted that “local government, the economy, and the environment are interdependent.”

Hochul then turned to the REDC, she said that the Governor decided the standard economic development model wasn’t working so he “turned it around.” Now local communities are “competing for dollars for this area that would otherwise go to

other parts of NY.” She says that much of this money is being spent on infrastructure such as broadband internet connections, which would be an unlikely project for private sector investment because the return on investment is not big enough. Hochul asserted that the Adirondacks could have the “greenest economy in the state” and we need to “activate tourism as a driver to diversify the economy.” Hochul said the Park was full of “charming little areas” that needed spiffing up with facade improvements and Main Street improvements to attract tourists. She stated “tourism is the bread and butter of this community” and urged participants to “set aside your differences.” Hochul quipped that 130,000-people lived in the Park year-round and it looked like all of them were here today, drawing a hearty chuckle and nods from the crowd. Hochul finished her speech to rousing applause from the crowd.

Hochul’s address was a perfect distillation of the Cuomo administration’s neoliberal development agenda with its emphasis on competition and reliance on the private sector -- especially the tourism industry -- to turn the regional economy around. The reactions of the audience also spoke to their buy-in of Market World practices and solutions for the Adirondacks. Hochul’s glosses and inaccuracies were largely met with broad smiles, emphatic nods, and bubbling laughter. I only saw a few attendees frown, or wrinkle their brow, or indeed give any sort of indication that they disagreed with what Hochul was saying, even if it was clearly nonsense. Instead, the crowd embraced her statements. Her comment about it looking like all of the year-round residents in the Adirondacks were in attendance was particularly well-met, especially as it fed into ANCAs and the CGAs vision of their enterprise as being truly and comprehensively inclusive, even if it factually was not.

This blinkered positivity carried over into the work group sessions that convened after Hochul's address. Zoe Smith, then director of the Wildlife Conservation Society's (WCS) now defunct Adirondack Program (WCS ceased Adirondack operations in 2018), took the podium to explain the work groups. She said that "experts were brought in to facilitate discussions" and participants would choose which group to participate in. She tasked attendees to "identify primary problems" and "define solutions that are actionable" and multi-scalar. Smith also asked participants to name a fantasy solution. Each group would get about two hours to come up with a plan and then have five minutes to present it to the other groups.

I took part in the Adirondack Trail Towns (ATT) initiative group. Facilitators were Bill Farber and Margaret Irwin. Farber is the Chairman of the Hamilton County Board of Supervisors, Irwin is the principal of River Street Planning and Development, a private consulting firm. Both worked on ADVANTAGE Adirondacks, a development intervention described as a "comprehensive plan to advance economic opportunities across New York's six million acre Adirondack Park" that "advances a planning agenda for the new people-and-place-based economy" (<https://riverstreet.org/services/economic-development/highlight-advantage-adirondacks>). ADVANTAGE Adirondacks goals are Market World goals and they aim to "inspire a culture of entrepreneurship, globally competitive workforce and diverse business base; promote a sustainable and connected rural life with quality infrastructure and amenities; reinvent traditional industry across working landscapes in forestry, natural resources and agriculture; and advance the Park as a world-class destination." The ATT initiative is a key part of this agenda, and it focuses on tourism,

which Farber and Irwin told the working group was “an economic engine and low-hanging fruit for economic development in the Park.”

Despite their insistence that ADVANTAGE Adirondacks was pushing for a new kind of development for a new economy, the gist of the message was very familiar: increasing visitation to the Park would increase economic opportunity. What was new is the emphasis on entrepreneurship. As I discussed above, promoting entrepreneurship is one of ANCA's pet projects. But the focus on and excitement about new business creation elides some key structural and material problems that plague the tourism-based economy in the Adirondacks. I will now turn to a discussion of tourism and work, the last of the three key domains of my analysis.

Tourism, and Work

Anthropologists began to pay sustained attention to tourism in the 1970s. The primary focus of this early work was “the behavior (and socioeconomic impacts) of the modal tourists of the Western world” (Graeburn 1983:10). Common lines of inquiry centered on social and cultural changes in communities as a result of tourism. Much attention was placed on the motivations of tourists, often with an emphasis on tourism as a kind of liminal state (MacCannell 1976, Lett 1983, Graeburn 1989, Crick 1989, Wang 1999). Indeed, the definition of a tourist offered by Valene Smith in her seminal edited volume on tourism *Hosts and Guests*, first published in 1977, reads “A tourist is a temporarily leisured person who voluntarily visits a place away from home for the purpose of experiencing a change” (Smith 1989:1). The idea that people engage in tourism to experience a change -- sometimes radical -- from their everyday lives was borne out in my research with tourists in the Adirondacks and I employ

Smith's definition in this work.

Douglass and Lacy (2005) argue that anthropological engagements with tourism are located in anthropologists' angst, especially that centered on the deleterious effects of tourism on local communities and cultures. I share some of this angst, both as an anthropologist and as someone who has lived in tourist towns and worked in the hospitality industry for decades. However, my own experiences and those I observed or were shared with me by informants have revealed that tourism can be beneficial, often in unexpected ways, as well as deeply problematic. My work seeks to trace the contours of tourism's positive and negative aspects rather than offering blanket condemnations or cheerleading for the industry.

Stronza (2001) notes that anthropological studies of tourism can be roughly divided into two areas of focus: the origins of tourism and the impacts of tourism. She notes that, especially for the latter, this leads to a partial analysis, with impacts on host communities taking center stage and impacts on tourists themselves largely unexplored. In this work, my main focus is the impact (or lack thereof) of tourism on local people and communities, but I have tried heed Stronza's caution and attempted to capture the perspective of the many tourists I interacted with in the course of my research.

More recent engagements with tourism have focused on "alternative tourism" which "claims to go easy on the environment and on indigenous peoples" (Stronza 2001:274). Ecotourism in particular has garnered much scholarly attention in anthropology and other social science disciplines over the last twenty years (e.g., Fritsch and Johannsen 2004, Stonich 2005, Stem et al. 2007, Stronza and Durham

2008, Fletcher 2014). In part this is because ecotourism has captured the imaginations of conservation and development professionals and advocates as a win-win-win for the environment, communities, and capital. The concomitant explosive growth of protected areas starting in the mid-1990s (West, Igor, and Brockington 2006), and the surge of visitors to these areas has also spurred interest in analysis of ecotourism. A major problem with the analysis of ecotourism is the fuzziness of the term. Carrier and Macleod (2005) note that it is used in so many ways that it has become nearly meaningless. Indeed, ecotourism has been defined as broadly as “travel in pursuit of a non-extractive encounter with an *in situ* ‘natural’ landscape” (Fletcher 2014:7) and as precisely as “environmentally responsible travel and visitation to relatively undisturbed natural areas, in order to enjoy and appreciate nature (and any accompanying cultural features -- both past and present) that promotes conservation, has low visitor impact, and provides for beneficially active socio-economic involvement of local populations” (Ceballos-Lascuráin 1996:20).

What ecotourism means in the Adirondacks is a mixed bag. Frequently the word is used as shorthand for any kind of tourism related to nature or the outdoors. This is how it was used by Rail Explorers, the rail bike company I discussed in Chapter 1. Rail Explorers marketed their service as ecotourism even though it depended upon a highly-modified landscape and was far from having a minimal ecological impact, evidenced by the litter left behind by excursions and the multiple daily trips of their full-sized diesel coach bus between tour start and end points. Others, like Dave and Ruth Olbert of Cloudsplitter Outfitters in Newcomb, used it in a way that combines the definitions of Fletcher and Ceballos-Lascuráin. Their goal is to

promote the low impact use of Park lands and educate their clients on how to do so as part of their guide service while providing them with a wilderness experience. Other outfitters I spoke with also described their vision of ecotourism along these lines as did several informants who described themselves as Wilderness supporters.

But even though this kind of ecotourism is desirable, it is not widespread. Ecotourism of this sort requires an intermediary between the tourist and the environment, such as a guide, to educate the tourist about the environment and how and why to protect it. The idea that local people can serve as these interlocutors and get paid for it is a key part of ecotourism as defined by Ceballos-Lascuráin (1996). Gordillo Jordan, Hunt, and Stronza (2008) present a case study of an ecotourism lodge, Posada Amazonas in southeastern Peru, where this model has been somewhat successful. The lodge is run cooperatively by an outfitter and local people, was funded initially by government loans and grants, and is supported by international educational institutions that provide their knowledge of and ongoing training in conservation, biology, and ecotourism to locals. Those who entered and succeeded in the competitive guide training program reaped significant economic benefits, earning enough to make them among the wealthiest members of the community.

This scenario is what many development-through-tourism proponents envision for the Adirondacks. When I brought up the generally low paying and contingent nature of tourism-dependent jobs during a discussion with the principals of ADK Futures, one of them swiftly rebutted saying local people “could become guides, or boat builders.” I will address the problems with this thinking more fully when I turn to a discussion of work below, but a major issue with the idea that increased tourism will

lead to people becoming guides and finding economic prosperity is how people actually visit the Park. The vast majority of Adirondack visitors do not hire guides. Unlike the nineteenth century heyday of Adirondack tourism when “sports” from the city hired a local guide to feed them, transport them and their gear, put them onto fish or game, or lead them up a peak, today’s visitors mostly eschew professional help, preferring to make their way on their own.

It would be tempting to argue that this is because of the cost of hiring a guide. This was a frequently heard rejoinder in the Essex Chain debate when the growth of guide services was cited as a possible positive outcome of a Wilderness classification. While cost is certainly a contributing factor, I believe that habitus is the more likely culprit. Fletcher (2014) has argued that outdoor pursuits such as whitewater paddling are embraced by middle- and upper-class participants because these activities help them to cultivate personal characteristics such as self-reliance and tenacity that are beneficial in their working lives. Fletcher argues that the desire to accrue these benefits operates on a subconscious level, and while the articulated reason for participation may be recreation, the fact that the recreational activity also accrues valuable benefits locates it in the realm of elite habitus characterized by a disposition towards profit-seeking, broadly construed.

It is important to note that tourism as envisioned by development actors is always a middle and upper class endeavor. The two main prerequisites for this sort of tourism are disposable income and free time, two things that are much more readily available to those in the middle and upper classes. Tourism (at least for those who are not independently wealthy) is thus always materially related to work in that work

creates the material conditions that make tourism possible. The work of the middle and upper classes also manifests the psychosocial conditions that make tourism desirable for such people. In Chapter 3, I discussed how the pressures of urban office work led to a perceived epidemic of neurasthenia that drove white-collar workers to the Adirondack mountains. Though neurasthenia has been debunked as a medical condition, the stressors and sedentism of most urban middle and upper class, managerial/professional work still drive urbanites to challenge themselves in nature.

Work, then, exists in a dialectical co-constitutive relationship with tourism. The material benefits accrued from work, and the desire to escape from it, create tourism. Tourism itself creates work and does so at multiple levels of scale. Take for example the ubiquitous nylon backpacks carried by Adirondack hikers. Whether they are made in the United States, Vietnam, Thailand, or China, backpacks link together global commodity chains, many kinds of workers, and tourists. Nylon, plastic, leather, and metal are produced, shipped, assembled, sold as finished products, and carried up mountains.

All arguments for economic development through nature preservation as a means for spurring tourism hinge on the promise of creating jobs. This is the main thrust of the current discourse linking preservation, development, and the Finch lands. An array of actors argue that the addition of these lands to the Forest Preserve will attract visitors to the area, which will in turn provide entrepreneurial opportunities and increase the demand for labor, leading to the creation of jobs. As I show in Chapter 5, the most active participants in the Finch debate all believed that the addition of the Finch lands would have economic benefits in the form of jobs derived from tourism,

even if they disagreed how to reap such benefits. However, the quantity of such jobs created, and more importantly their quality, are most often entirely missing from discussion. Even when job creation targets are explicit -- such as those required for the REDC funding discussed above -- there is no mention of what the jobs will actually look like, what the working conditions and hours will be, and how much workers will be paid.

The majority of service jobs dependent upon tourism, like those in the lodging and dining sectors, are characterized by hard work and relatively low pay: a survey of hospitality job openings in the Tri-Lakes area posted on Indeed.com and Craigslist revealed a wage range of \$12-16 per hour. The current New York State minimum wage for workers outside of New York City, Long Island and Westchester is \$11.80. The United States Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics reports the mean 2018 hourly wage for cooks in New York State to be \$14.64. Most of my informants who worked in hospitality (including chefs, cooks, servers, bartenders, cleaners, managers, and front desk personnel) reported earning within this range. Some earned much less, working at jobs that were physically grueling, unpleasant, and typically denigrated as low-skill and undesirable despite their absolute and fundamental utility and necessity. For example, some dishwashers and cleaners I knew made minimum wage (\$9.70 per hour in 2016). Servers and bartenders, who are considered tipped food service workers by the New York State Department of Labor, made an even lower wage (\$7.50 in 2016 for workers outside of New York City, Long Island, and Westchester, increasing to \$7.85 in 2020), yet in terms of total income can often be some of the highest-earning service workers.

No matter what sort of income they make, restaurant and hotel workers who live and work year-round in the Adirondacks all live with a high degree of precarity. This is not unique to the Adirondacks, but is rather part and parcel of global neoliberalism: a recent study by Robinson et al. (2019) argued that despite the cheerleading of tourism's economic promise, tourism workers everywhere labor in precarious conditions that include low wages, employment insecurity, and even physical danger. Lee et al. (2015) explored how growing economic liberalism, transnational ownership of tourism resources such as hotels, and geophysical and geopolitical conditions such as natural disasters and terrorism make tourism employment in the Seychelles so precarious. Amason (2015:2) looked at how the "neoliberal 'flexible' labor system" and the precarity it engenders affected the materiality of tourism worker's lives with regards to their homes, and the new meanings of home that they developed in response to their uncertain working lives.

One of the main ways precarity manifests in the Adirondacks is the fluctuation of wages. The extreme seasonal nature of Adirondack tourism means cyclical ebbs and flows of income, what some informants called a "feast or famine" cycle. This cycle is not simply due to weather and environmental conditions, but is the result of the relationship between what Evans-Pritchard (1969:94) called "structural" and "oecological" time. Oecological time is time marked by the occurrence of natural events in the environment, such as the appearance of the passage of the sun through the sky, and the changing of seasons. Oecological time is not simply observed, but lived through and as such is deeply material. Seasonal changes may require different clothing, can usher in different sensory experiences such as smells, and can constrain

or enable specific physical activities. At the most basic level, the lived experience of oecological time works deep within our bodies as, for many people, the changing of the seasons leads to shifts in subsistence as foods become seasonally available or scarce.

Structural time is time marked by culture: holidays, work weeks, calendars. Daylight savings time (DST) is a good example of the intersection of these kinds of time and how they materially shape peoples' lives. DST maps structural time, the 8-hour workday, onto oecological time, the rising and setting of the sun, to add an extra hour of daylight at the end of the working day. Prerau's (2005) and Downing's (2005) histories of DST highlight the tensions between these categories of time, though they do not use Evans-Pritchard's terms. Structural and oecological time also conspire to shape patterns of visitation in the Adirondacks. Summer is the busiest season, and doubtless the long days and mild weather play into its popularity. Nineteenth century urban elites came to the Adirondacks in the summer to escape the stifling heat of the city in the cool mountain air, and this practice continues today.

But school calendars and holidays -- structural time -- are also responsible for the influx of tourists at certain times of year. The busiest part of summer falls between the Fourth of July and Labor Day, and these holidays mark the typical summer break in most United States primary and secondary schools. This period is often when families take extended trips, as parents match their vacation schedule with that of their schools. Summer camps also operate during these months and draw youths, their parents, and seasonal workers to the Park. In the Saranac Lake area, there are at least half a dozen such camps either privately owned or affiliated with Girl and Boy Scouts,

religious organizations, and colleges and universities.

Holidays and the school calendar also influence visitation at other times of year. The week between Christmas and New Year's Day (December 25 - January 1) is typically a busy one, as schools are not in session during that time. Other holidays like Martin Luther King Day, Columbus Day, and Memorial Day usually cause a spike in visitation, as the three-day weekend frees people for travel. Events at a local level of scale like Saranac Lake's Winter Carnival also draw visitors. Structural and oecological time have a profound impact on patterns of tourism in the Adirondacks, but environmental conditions also play a role.

Adverse weather can be particularly impactful, especially when specific weather conditions, like ample snow, drive visitation. The winter of 2015-2016 was rough on many workers and businesses as snow failed to accumulate in significant amounts until mid-January. The week between Christmas and New Year's, typically a very busy period that provides a much-needed cash infusion after the slowness of the fall, was a bust. Moreover, even when snow did begin to fall, tourists stayed away. One informant, the longtime owner of a retail store, told me "people need to see snow in their backyards before they come up here."

What happens during slow periods, cyclical or spontaneous, is that workers find their hours slashed. Some are sent home early, others taken off the schedule altogether. Employers may tell employees to stay home, but remain available to be called in to work if needed. Informants who worked as service staff reported this was a common practice. In 2017 New York State explored legislation against this practice, called "just in time" or "on call" scheduling, but ultimately nothing was passed. This

is a practice that benefits capital, not labor, and does workers a double disservice as they are hampered from finding other work by the need to remain available to their employer. Of course, there is limited availability of other work, which is why employers can get away with on-call scheduling. They know that employees with few options will acquiesce to their demands out of fear of losing the job they do have.

The root cause of on-call scheduling is the desire for cheap work (Moore and Patel). Making work cheap is a key facet of the “new economy” as described by Ilana Gershon (2017). Gershon’s new economy is made up of an independent contingent workforce who shoulder the risks formerly borne by their employers. So if business is slow, the new economy employer simply sends labor home to save money on wages, or terminates their employment altogether. The worker is reduced entirely to their functionality, stripped of humanness. They cease to be another being valued for their humanity and deserving of care by their employer.

These conditions are completely ignored by development through tourism proponents, lost in the rush of jubilant discourse that asserts tourism is a path to prosperity for Adirondack communities. Ironically, the fluctuation in income borne by many service industry workers would likely be unacceptable to the economic development actors who push for tourism, but most are simply unaware of this fact or if they are aware, they fail to grasp its magnitude. When I brought this up in discussions with tourism supporters, it was often glossed over by exclamations that this situation was better than having no job at all, or those confronted would take off on flights of fancy as did the ADK Futures principals and glibly proclaim that local people could become guides. Others, like Pete Nelson, proclaimed that if the resources

were there to draw tourists, businesses like restaurants and lodgings would soon follow to serve them. All of these positions ignore reality.

As I discussed above, patterns of visitation make guiding a tricky proposition for earning a living. Most visitors do not hire a guide for hiking in the Adirondacks. But even guides who work in specialized disciplines like fly fishing, climbing, and paddling, and who tend to have an established, regular clientele often need a secondary source of income. The Olberts of Cloudsplitter Outfitters emphasized several times that they depended on Dave's pension from his career as a schoolteacher to survive. Two other guides reported working as a carpenter and camp caretaker as their main sources of income. Yet another described his guiding business as "more of a tax write-off than a way to make money." When I pressed for clarification he said that between insurance, equipment, and other costs he barely broke even, and the main financial benefit he gained was writing off the room in his home that he rented to his business as an office, and other itemized deductions.

Even though guides have the potential to earn higher hourly wages than other tourism employees, they are also subject to the seasonal fluctuations and weather vagaries that plague the industry. At a party in early January 2016 I joined a conversation between two ice climbing guides, one independent and the other employed by a guide service, who both expressed worry about the warm weather and lack of business. The employee was concerned about making it through the winter after having already missed out on about a month's worth of wages. The independent had some larger worries, like if he'd have enough money set aside to pay quarterly sales tax, income tax, and his health insurance premium. This brief talk highlighted for

me another problem that is rendered largely invisible by the overwhelmingly positive talk about entrepreneurship: owning a business costs money, and ownership brings serious legal and financial liabilities along with its benefits.

This is especially true when it comes to businesses like restaurants. I spent 20 years working in restaurants and I draw on some of my own experiences and knowledge here as well as information gleaned from contacts -- both owners and employees-- currently working in the industry. Dining and lodging are the largest business sectors in the Adirondack tourist economy. ROOST's 2013 Leisure Travel Study (PlaceMaking 2014) indicates that lodging and dining respectively represent the top two expenditures for tourists visiting the region. Given this, at first glance it seems like restaurant ownership could be a good bet for the kind of budding entrepreneur that groups like ANCA wish to cultivate. The entry barriers and operational challenges however, are formidable, and these conditions are often elided in the discourse on tourism and businesses.

For example, when Pete Nelson (2015) writes "Then get ready to put in a restaurant...build it and they will come," his choice of words makes it seem as if opening a restaurant is as simple as swapping out a light fixture -- just put it in. Of course, expecting Nelson to actually grapple with the realities of his pronouncements is expecting too much. As a cheerleader for tourism as a vehicle for capital accumulation, Nelson's job is not to critique, but to build excitement and hold out possibilities. He does this by making bold, positive pronouncements while at the same time closing off avenues of critical thought with statements like "The nattering nabobs of negativity will say all this optimism is a fantasy. Don't listen..." Unfortunately,

listening to critique is exactly what is needed to grapple with economic issues in the Adirondacks. Restaurants are not a good pathway for economic development here for numerous reasons. For my purposes here I will focus on two important ones, seasonality and job quality.

As I have previously discussed, the seasonal nature of Adirondack tourism is a major limiting factor. Restaurants are especially hard hit by the seasonal fluctuations of business, largely because the fixed costs of the establishment such as rent and utilities need to be paid even when business is slow. The latter can be especially burdensome as commercial electricity in most of upstate New York is expensive, and heating costs in the Adirondacks can be extremely high because of the severe cold and the extended length of the heating season. Restaurants face a double whammy during the winter. As one local restaurateur explained to me “there aren’t many tourists, and none of the locals have any money either.”

This last point was one I heard numerous informants who owned businesses express. Even businesses that one might assume were insulated from the ups and downs of tourism-based economy, like auto repair shops, are affected. A repair shop owner in Saranac Lake explained to me that his business was always much slower in the winter. A healthy proportion of his clientele worked in hospitality and retail in Lake Placid and in the winter, they made less money. Anything extra “went into their furnace,” he said, and so they delayed routine maintenance and only brought their cars in for emergency repairs. When people put off necessary maintenance like oil changes and tire rotations, they likely stop dining out as well. The restaurateur I quoted above recently closed his place down despite having a loyal local following. He told me that

he and his family were tired of limping through the winters, never able to remain ahead no matter how busy the summer was.

Another problem with looking to service industry work as a solution to economic problems is the low quality of the jobs. I draw primarily on the restaurant industry for an example here, but the conditions are largely the same for other service sectors like retail and lodging. These jobs tend to be physically and emotionally demanding, often requiring long periods of standing and moving without rest, and the relentless pace of busy service periods can be extremely stressful. They are also low paying, insecure, and lacking in fringe benefits like health insurance or retirement plans. Only one of the five cooks who were informants had a job with these benefits, largely because they worked for a large hotel affiliated with a national brand. The other four only had health insurance that they bought on New York's open marketplace. None had any sort of retirement benefits. All made between twelve and sixteen dollars per hour, and all struggled with the seasonal peaks and valleys of their income.

In addition to the financial difficulties of restaurant work, it is also very hard. This kind of work entails long hours on one's feet, usually on a hard floor. Kitchens are hot and humid, the discomfort amplified by the cheap polyester uniforms most staff are required to wear. There is a lot of lifting both in the back of the house (the kitchen) and the front (dining room). One informant, a woman in her late twenties who worked as server, constantly wore wrist braces because of repetitive motion injuries caused and continually aggravated by her work duties such as lifting heavy trays, gripping plates, and frantically scribbling orders. Servers are some of the highest

earners in restaurants because of tips, but these earnings come at a cost. This informant described the constant emotional labor she was required to perform as “draining.” Servers need to be perpetually upbeat, friendly, and accommodating, even when faced with difficult patrons. Another informant who worked as a bartender described her shift as eight hours of nearly continuous sexual harassment.

I want to be explicit that I am focusing on the negative aspects of tourism work here. Of course, there are workers who have good experiences and fulfilling careers in tourism. Some may dislike their jobs, or their conditions of work, but put up with it because it affords them other aspects of their lifestyle. For example, I asked the bartender above if she had considered finding other work. She said that she liked working in the evenings, especially in the winter, so she could have her days free to ski. She indicated that she made decent money there, so she was inclined to stay. Despite the fact that there are individuals who have such positive experiences with tourism work, the structural issues I have discussed above make tourism problematic as a development strategy. Moreover, the negative aspects of tourism work are elided by the jubilant discourse of development pundits and must be brought into the light.

I now turn to my analysis of the Finch land conflict. Throughout the next chapter I tack back and forth between my data and the theoretical framework I laid out in this chapter. I will use a world-ecology perspective that foregrounds the question of what neoliberal capitalism asks of nature in the context of a conservation and development intervention. I pay special attention to the role and effect of habitus in this debate, and consider how ideas about time and morality come into play.

CHAPTER 5

THE FINCH LANDS

The Finch Deal I: Public Support and Private Profit

In Chapter 3, I showed how the preservation of capital flow has long been a primary driving force in the preservation of Adirondack forest land. This set of circumstances has largely benefitted elites (Parnes 1989, Jacoby 2003, Darling 2004), but has consistently been inscribed as being for the ‘common good’ and benefit of all New Yorkers. As I will demonstrate here, a recent and controversial deal to add land to the Adirondack Forest Preserve has been suffused with this common-good rhetoric and this has served to obscure the foundational role that neoliberal capital accumulation has played. The purchase in fee title of 69,000 acres of forest lands by New York State from The Nature Conservancy touched off one of the hottest land-use debates in the Park’s history. This 47-million-dollar deal took nearly seven years to complete, and has been widely touted by New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo’s administration as an historic moment. In a televised press conference broadcast from Lake Placid on August 5, 2012 the Governor called the purchase “a beautiful gift...for everyone.” As I will show, however, the primary beneficiaries of this “beautiful gift” were the finance businesses involved in the private side of the deal.

Finch, Pruyn (pronounced “prine”) and Company was a lumber concern started in 1865 in Glens Falls, New York, a small city on the southeastern margin of the Adirondacks. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the company acquired its massive holdings (more than 100,000 acres) of Adirondack forest land, becoming the

largest lumber company and second largest private land owner in the Adirondacks. By 1900, the company shifted its business focus from lumbering to paper manufacture, and constructed a pulp mill and paper mill in Glens Falls. Paper manufacturing remained the core of Finch, Pruyn and Company's business for the remainder of the twentieth century. Though a "leader in the premium uncoated printing paper market" (Blue Wolf 2009:8), Finch, Pruyn and Company faced serious difficulties in the early years of the new millennium.

At this point, the regional forest products industry had been in a state of accelerating decline since the 1980s (Neugarten 2010). Between 2000 and 2002, three paper mills -- one in and two directly adjacent to the Adirondack Park -- closed down, and forestry companies such as International Paper, Champion International, and Domtar began to liquidate their massive Adirondack holdings (Jenkins 2004). The local situation mirrored national trends, as American forestry companies contended with "intense global competition" (Bliss et al 2010:54) and the vagaries of international paper markets. Related to these broad-scale issues, Finch Pruyn also was experiencing major problems within the company itself. Finch Pruyn remained a family owned company throughout its tenure, and at this juncture it was "led by an inflexible and litigious group of over 100 descendants of one of the company's founders" (Blue Wolf 2009:8). It is likely that these characteristics in tandem with global conditions were a major contributing factor to the clashes between labor and management that dogged the company through the latter half of the twentieth century.

Unionized workers at Finch Pruyn went on three strikes over the last forty years of family ownership: one in 1961, another in 1996, and the last in 2001. The

final strike was the largest -- 600 workers from seven different unions -- and lasted nearly seven months (Finch Pruyn Timeline 2007). This conflict was precipitated by management's demand for increased health insurance contributions from employees, and the elimination of Sunday and holiday pay. In other words, Finch Pruyn needed to make labor cheap. The strike was acrimonious and included a lawsuit against Finch Pruyn and Company by the Paper, Allied-Industrial, Chemical, and Energy Workers International Union, AFL-CIO (PACE) that alleged the company violated sections of the National Labor Relations Act by subcontracting to purchase kraft pulp for paper making during an economic strike (Battista, Schaumber, and Walsh 2007). The court found in favor of Finch Pruyn, and the strike ended with the company making very limited concessions to worker demands. PACE president Oscar Everts called the new contract "straight union busting on a grand scale" (Murnane 2001).

Kraft pulp was central to the entire conflict as well as being the focal point of the lawsuit. Finch Pruyn operated its own kraft mill to produce pulp for its paper making operations. However, market conditions were such that kraft pulp could be purchased externally for less than it would cost the company to make it in-house. An internal Finch Pruyn memo quoted in the lawsuit's decision and order indicated that holiday and vacation pay and health care costs were the reasons why other kraft mills could produce pulp more cheaply. Throughout the United States the vertical integration that characterized forestry firms was disappearing as companies restructured to compete in global markets (Bliss et al 2010), and Finch Pruyn was no exception. Indeed, as the strike drew to a close, Finch Pruyn's pulp mill remained closed and the company continued to purchase kraft pulp on the open market.

It was within this context of contentious labor relations, a difficult management corps, and the competitive global paper market that Atlas Holdings LLC and Blue Wolf Capital Management partnered to purchase Finch, Pruyn and Company through an entity named Atlas Paper Resources LLC. Atlas Holdings LLC is a holding company with interests in the paper and wood products industries. Holding companies are entities that do not directly produce commodities or provide services, but rather hold majority stock positions in companies that do such things. This gives the holding company a controlling interest in a firm, but also insulates it from risk should the held company fail. Blue Wolf Capital Management is a private equity firm that specializes in restructuring companies (such as transitioning from family to institutional ownership) and negotiating with labor unions. In general, private equity firms provide both capital and expertise (management, operational) to the firms in which they invest. Blue Wolf's website (www.bluewolfcapital.com) uses much language about responsibility, accountability, and respect, but it is also clearly stated that their overriding goals, like that of all private equity firms, is to maximize the return on their investments, generate capital, and produce profits.

In the Finch Pruyn case, the first step in achieving these goals was for Blue Wolf to sell the 161,000 acres of Adirondack timberlands, mostly in Essex and Hamilton counties, that it would acquire as part of the \$52.5 million deal. Ownership of large tracts of land can be a financial liability for companies in the form of carrying costs related to taxes, insurance, and management. As I discussed earlier, this was why nineteenth century forestry concerns would often simply abandon Adirondack land to tax default. By 2007, however, changes in conservation, forestry, finance, and

economic theory and policy over the last four decades created the conditions that would allow Blue Wolf to liquidate their unwanted forest land in a way that would generate capital for the firm as well as other parties in this and subsequent sales, such as the Danish pension fund ATP. Blue Wolf already had a willing buyer for the tract, the massive international conservation NGO The Nature Conservancy (TNC): “We were confident in this transaction because of our ability to sell the timber to a unique buyer, one to which the family owners would never have agreed to sell to” (Blue Wolf 2009). Sale of the lands to TNC for \$110 million occurred concurrently with the close of the deal transforming Finch, Pruyn, and Co. into Finch Paper, LLC. Because of the timing of the deal, Atlas and Blue Wolf incurred no carrying costs associated with the timberlands and indeed were able to almost double their investment. TNC was able to acquire 161,000 acres of Adirondack forestland for \$683 per acre. It is impossible to devise an accurate dollar per acre average for undeveloped forest land in the Park because of the number of relevant variables, but realtors I consulted agreed that around \$1000 per acre is usually a good starting point.

TNC got a favorable deal, but Atlas/Blue Wolf’s was even better. If Blue Wolf had paid \$52.5 million for just the timberlands, they would have paid \$326 per acre -- an incredible bargain for Adirondack land, especially considering the amount of waterfront: 70 lakes and ponds and 250 miles of rivers and shorelines. But the purchase also included Finch, Pruyn, and Co.’s Glens Falls paper mill and twenty other parcels in Glens Falls that in 2018 had a combined full market assessed value of nearly \$76 million according to Warren County public records. In Chapter 4, I discussed how making nature cheap is a vital part of sustaining capital flow. Looking

at this deal from this perspective, we can see how cheapening the forestland allowed Blue Wolf to rapidly recoup their costs and gain returns that were nearly double their investment. As I will show, Blue Wolf and ATP paid the cheapest price for the Adirondack nature they purchased, while the citizens New York State paid the highest.

At the close of the deal, TNC became responsible for paying the management costs of the land as well as the property taxes. Under the leadership of TNC's Mike Carr, a complex, multiple-stakeholder deal was put into motion to transfer some of the land to New York State while keeping other parts of the tract operating as working forest. The deal was pitched as a victory for conservation and local economies. This type of arrangement was made possible by two major innovations throughout the 1980s and 1990s that changed the shape of conservation in the United States: the evolution of conservation easements, and the rise of community-based conservation. Both of these developments relied (and continue to rely) heavily on the narrative of the common good. Their growth occurred in the context of deepening linkages between conservation and development -- the "greening of development" (Sodikoff 2009:443) as discussed in Chapter 4. This is a partnership that tends to embrace "win-win-win-win-win-win-win" narratives (Büscher 2013:4), positing that properly structured interventions will benefit virtually everyone. Such narratives were a regular feature of the discourse on the Finch land deal, and were voiced by diverse actors including state and local government officials, NGOs representing preservation, conservation, and development interests, and residents and visitors.

The Finch land deal operated as a community-based conservation (CBC) initiative. CBC approaches arose in the late 1980s and early 1990s in an effort to

address critiques levied at top-down conservation interventions that tended to privilege the goals and world views of conservation professionals to the detriment of indigenous and local populations (Neumann 1998, Brockington 2002, Brockington and Igoe 2006, Cernea and Schmidt-Soltau 2006, Roe 2008 Dowie 2009). The goal of CBCs is to “build and extend new versions of environmental and social advocacy which link social justice and environmental management agendas” (Brosius et al. 1998:158). In the Adirondack Park, the social justice issue perceived as most pressing is the poor state of the economy. Such economic woes are often blamed on the Park’s environmental rules. This is a central theme expressed by the Local Government Review Board (LGRB), a legislation-mandated organization comprised of elected officials from the eleven Adirondack counties whose role is to offer counsel to the APA and, as stated on their website, be “the eyes, ears, and voice of local government at the Agency as required by Executive Law Section 803a” (adkreviewboard.com).

Gerald Delaney Sr., newly appointed executive director of the LGRB, recently espoused this narrative: “The Adirondacks was built around resource extraction -- whether it was mining for iron ore or garnet (and) logging -- and as the state has bought up a lot of land, that has really impacted the economy of the park” (Levine 2018). I heard variations on this theme from numerous interlocutors and informants, especially those who had family that had previously worked in such industries, some as many as four generations ago. As I argue elsewhere in this work, the decline of such industries in the Adirondack region had much more to do with technological advances and the vagaries of global markets than regional environmental regulations. The hollowing out of these industries is also not a recent phenomenon, but rather the

end result of a long-term decline that reached its nadir by the late 1970s. It has been decades since mining and logging served as major vectors for employment in the Park, but for some Adirondackers, these losses are very present. One informant, a 23-year-old woman with multigenerational roots in the Adirondacks who worked in retail presaged Delaney's remarks almost verbatim, telling me in 2015 that the State "buys up all the land so we either have to leave or work shitty jobs like this one."

The linkage between environmental protection and negative economic outcomes, despite its tenuousness, makes conservation interventions a tough sell, and town governments hold veto power over proposed Forest Preserve land acquisitions funded through New York State's Environmental Protection Fund (EPF). Created in 1993 with the enactment of the Environmental Protection Act, the EPF is primarily funded by real estate transfer taxes and used for environment-related capital projects. Because the Finch lands would be paid for with EPF monies, the governments of the five towns -- Newcomb, Indian Lake, Long Lake, Minerva, North Hudson -- in which the parcel lay could vote against the purchase. Local governments have historically been opposed to State land purchases and this deal was no exception. The debates over whether the state should make this purchase happened long before I started my research, but several informants indicated after the fact that opposition to the plan was fierce. One local government official explained their position this way: "We're surrounded by state land already. Our town only has so much developable land left, and it's not much. So having the opportunity for more developable land being taken away was a big thing."

Structuring the Finch deal as a CBC initiative was a key way for TNC to win

support for the addition of these lands to the Forest Preserve. Carr stated, “we did a lot of listening at the time to local concerns to gain support” (Nearing 2011). After replying to one initial inquiry, TNC did not respond to my requests to speak with representatives regarding the Finch deal. However, informants who were engaged as stakeholders unanimously praised Carr and TNC, even if their support for the purchase was grudging. The main way the idea of the purchase was made palatable to opponents was by presenting it as an opportunity for communities to capitalize on ecotourism. TNC also agreed to sell approximately 1000 acres to the towns of Newcomb, Minerva, and Long Lake (Nearing 2011), and to fund a grant program to support ecotourism-focused local businesses. The emphasis on ecotourism is a regular feature of CBC projects and is a primary way that conservation and development are linked together all over the world (Aylward and Lutz 2003, Fritsch and Johannsen 2004, Honey 2008, Stronza and Durham 2008, Frost and Hall 2009). The idea that the addition of these lands to the Forest Preserve would draw visitors and their dollars to surrounding communities was widely promoted by TNC and other Adirondack-focused environmental groups. New York State Governor Andrew Cuomo, elected in 2010, became a vocal proponent for the deal. Again, the potential economic benefit of these lands to local towns was stressed. Finally, in August of 2012 the deal closed and New York State took ownership in fee title to 69,000 acres.

Without a CBC approach, it is unlikely that this deal would have been approved by the towns. The other important part of the puzzle that made the Finch transaction possible were conservation easement agreements that would allow some of the land owned by TNC to continue as working forest. Conservation easements are

tools that allow “lands to remain in private ownership yet restrict the rights of the property owner in a way that fosters conservation” (Fishburn et al 2009:1). Easements are widely used in the Adirondacks: 13 percent of the total acreage in the Park, nearly 800,000 acres, is protected by conservation easements with 98 percent of easement lands containing working forest (Virtanen 2018). Easements confer financial advantages to property owners in exchange for ceding certain property rights such as the ability to subdivide or develop the land. New York State pays partial property tax on easement lands, and landowners may also qualify for an income tax credit.

The public benefits of easements as opposed to fee title ownership by the state include protection of the land, a reduced property tax burden (compared to that if the land were owned), and potential public access for recreation. However, the degree to which the public benefits is unclear. Neugarten (2010) found that numerous obstacles hindered the monitoring and assessment of easement lands such that their success in meeting conservation goals is extremely difficult to discern. Public access, even when included an easement’s terms, is not always guaranteed. In 2012 access to the Madawaska/Quebec Brook Primitive Area, a parcel of state land surrounded by easements, was cut off when the owner of adjacent non-easement land closed the access road that passed through their property and ran through nine miles of conservation easement land leading to the area. The road remained closed for four years until the non-easement parcel was sold and the new owners negotiated public access.

In 2010, nearly 94,000 acres of timberland was purchased from TNC by the Danish pension fund Arbejdsmarkedets Tillægspension (ATP) through their

subsidiary ATP Timberland Invest K/S, a Timber Investment Management Organization (TIMO) that also owns and manages timberland in Wisconsin, Louisiana, Arkansas, and Queensland, Australia. TIMOs first came on the scene in the United States in the 1970s (Binkley 2007), and were a product of rapid changes in forest ownership as vertically integrated forest product companies (like Finch, Pruyn, and Co.) divested themselves of timberlands (Bliss et al. 2010). Unlike vertically integrated companies, TIMOs use timberlands not as a raw material source for commodity production but as an investment, growing and harvesting timber for sale as lumber, for paper-making, or other uses when they can reap the highest returns. As with any investment, it is important to “buy low, sell high,” and ATP was able to acquire these lands, which the company has named Upper Hudson Woodlands, for \$38.8 million, about \$350 per acre. The real value in these lands for ATP lay in the timber, not the land itself, just as it was for the nineteenth century loggers in the Adirondacks, and while there is a wide gulf of time, technology, materiality, and philosophy between the old Adirondack lumbermen and twenty-first century Danish pension fund executives, the fundamental logic of capitalism -- extracting surplus value to make profit -- has remained exactly the same and has engendered strikingly similar relations between people, nature, and capital. In both cases, the creation of cheap nature was necessary.

Early loggers did so by locating operations on waterways, where the current worked for free to move logs for people. As I discussed in Chapter 3, real estate tax avoidance was also a major way that nineteenth century forestry companies made nature cheap. Companies simply just would not pay the taxes on their lands, and

eventually abandon them to tax default. Contemporary owners of large forest tracts in New York like ATP now can alleviate their tax burden by participating in state-sponsored tax relief programs for certified forests. The Fisher Act of 1926 was an early forest tax law that made tracts of forested land “eligible for bare land value assessments” (Gutchess 1982:1452): that is, assessment of the land without consideration of its potential development value or the value of the timber contained thereon. The Fisher Act is the progenitor of New York forest tax law Section 480 (1959-1974) and 480-a (1974-present), which allows up to eighty percent exemption of assessed value to landowners of fifteen to fifty or more acres who agree to manage their forest according to state-defined standards and pay a stumpage tax at the time of timber harvest. All of the Upper Hudson Woodlands forest land parcels have tax exemptions through either Sections 480 or 480a.

In my discussion defining neoliberalism in Chapter 4, I talked about specific processes that tend to be found across contexts of neoliberalization, such as the tendency towards making risk public in the service of private profit. This is what occurs with 480 and 480a tax exemptions: the tax burden shifts from the owners of exempt parcels -- like ATP -- onto the owners of non-tax exempt parcels. A 1993 report produced by NYSDEC and NYS Board of Equalization and Assessment (NYSDOTF 2017:3) notes that the heavy enrollment of lands in 480 and 480a in Adirondack region municipalities means “the resulting tax base erosion is likely to be significant for these jurisdictions.” The report identifies North Hudson, in which ATP’s Upper Hudson Woodlands is located, as one of the municipalities whose tax base is exempted by one percent or more, in this case 4.41 percent. Forty percent of

the affected municipalities are located in Adirondack counties, and of these, seventy-five percent are located in Essex County where the majority of the ATP purchase lies.

In addition to the 480 and 480a tax exemptions, ATP also enjoys tax benefits through conservation easements. New York State acquired easements on 90,000 acres of ATP land to secure recreational access and prevent development. I was unable to uncover the financial details of this particular easement agreement, but in general New York State pays a portion of the property tax on easement land commensurate with the rights they have purchased. In the context of this land deal, Adirondack nature was cheapened in three ways: ATP paid a bargain price for the land, taxable assessments were deeply discounted, and ATP's sale of easements to New York State further reduced the land's carrying cost. From an economic perspective, Blue Wolf and ATP did very well in this transaction. Blue Wolf was able to nearly double their initial investment in a very rapid fashion. ATP got quality timberland on the cheap and was able to offload some of its tax burden onto the people of New York State. I will now turn my attention to New York State's part of the land deal and the subsequent controversy over the land classification that is the focus of my analysis.

The Finch Deal II: For the Benefit of All New Yorkers?

Big initiatives in the modern Adirondack Park have historically been set in motion by a charismatic and powerful Governor reacting to perceived threats to the Adirondacks. In 1968, responding to concerns about large land purchases and the proposal for an Adirondack National Park, Nelson Rockefeller staffed the TSCFA which led to the creation of the Park as we know it today. In 1989, Governor Mario Cuomo established the Commission on the Adirondacks in the 21st Century: again, in

response to the threat of development as another wave of large-scale land sales and speculation, driven by newly acquired wealth from the deregulated financial markets in the 1980s, swept over the Adirondacks (see McMartin 2002 for a detailed account of some of the Commission's work, public response, and outcomes). The Finch deal was taken up with fervor by Governor Andrew Cuomo, the son of Mario, who began his tenure in office in January 2011. The understanding that New York State would purchase a large portion of the lands in fee title from TNC was in place when the deal between Blue Wolf and TNC was being made in 2007, so the threat of land development was not what spurred the Governor to action. Instead a perceived crisis of capital accumulation precipitated by several years of businesses leaving New York for more tax and regulation-friendly states provided the newly elected Governor with an opportunity to act.

Shortly after taking office, Cuomo (2011) declared "New York Open for Business" with the launch of "a coordinated communications and marketing effort that will demonstrate to business leaders all across the world the benefits of doing business in New York State." This opened the Governor's massive economic development initiative, which included the establishment of ten Regional Economic Development Councils (REDC) "made up of local experts and stakeholders from business, academia, local government, and non-governmental organizations" (<https://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/about>). The regional council geographic boundaries were based on preexisting Empire State Development and Department of Labor boundaries. The Adirondack region lies within the massive North Country REDC territory that stretches across the upper part of New York State from the eastern shore

of Lake Ontario to the western shore of Lake Champlain. The REDC's purpose is to serve as a first point of contact for projects seeking state grant funding. Project sponsors such as municipalities, institutions, businesses, or NGOs, submit the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) to their REDC which evaluates the application and advises the relevant state agencies that actually disburse the funds. From the very start the REDC system was pitched as a new way of governing and a radical change from the inefficient status quo. "Transformative" is a favored adjective in the REDC milieu. That proposed projects be "transformative" in nature is a clearly expressed criterion for selection. One aspect of this new economic development initiative that has indeed been transformative is the competitive nature of the REDC system. Instead of collaboration and cooperation with the support of state government, the regions have been thrust into "winner takes all" competition with one another. Critics of the REDC system have christened it Cuomo's "Hunger Games" (Blalock 2015, Ek 2015, Klepper 2015, Spector 2015, Fox 2017), referencing the series of dystopian novels and films wherein poverty-stricken peripheral regions ruled by a wealthy capitol send youths to fight to the death in hopes of winning resources. In Chapter Four, I identified competition as one of the key ideological tenets of neoliberalism. The REDC initiative is a clear manifestation of Cuomo's neoliberal governance in relation to development: private-public partnerships competing for public funding to create and expand markets for capital accumulation.

The North Country REDC did well during the first three rounds of competition, securing funding for a wide variety of public and private projects. Some projects would fall under the category of public works such as municipal sewer and water

upgrades, construction of municipal storage facilities, and construction or improvement of public parks. A large number of projects were aimed at providing capital to private enterprise. Projects related to tourism were well represented and included municipal improvements such as trails, and funding for tourism marketing and infrastructure. Private hotel projects were big winners, especially in round three (2013), when three hotel proposals, all in the Adirondacks, captured close to one-third of the \$25 million regional award.

Tourism was clearly a major part of the Governor's development initiative, especially in the Adirondacks. Other areas in the North Country region, such as the towns of Plattsburgh and Watertown, received funding for manufacturing-related projects, but the projects funded in the Adirondacks were overwhelmingly related to tourism: either directly such as the aforementioned hotels, trails, and marketing, or indirectly such as downtown revitalization. This was not by chance or accident, but rather a direct result of choices made by the REDC experts. In Chapter 4, I discussed trusteeship as an integral part of the ideology and materiality of development. Trustees are chosen for their expertise. They make claims to special knowledge, particularly that they know what is *best* for the context at hand. They use this knowledge to wield power -- in this case the decision of which projects were worthy of consideration for funding. In this way, the trustees who formed the North Country REDC decided and defined the appropriate possibilities for particular geographic spaces.

The REDC process positioned tourism as the best hope for the Adirondack's economic doldrums, and generated considerable hype and excitement. It was within this context that Governor Cuomo would work to sell the state acquisition of the Finch

lands to the towns with veto power. His message was that public ownership of the land would “provide extraordinary new outdoor recreational opportunities, increase the number of visitors to the North Country and generate additional tourism revenue” (PlaceMaking 2014). Resistance to the purchase was very strong, and while the controversy over the deal is not my main focus, it is worth outlining some of the positions taken against the purchase. Unsurprisingly, the alleged negative economic effects of the deal took center stage in the debate.

Taxes were a common sticking point, and objection to the deal related to taxes in a variety of ways. Some people objected to the use of “tax dollars” to make the purchase. When I pressed one informant, a self-employed logger, to explain what he meant by “tax dollars,” he indicated the income and other business taxes that he paid to New York State. I found this to be a fairly common misconception, perhaps even a willful ignorance in some cases, among people I spoke with who remained opposed to the deal. As I discussed above, the Finch purchase was made through the Environmental Protection Fund, which is funded by New York’s real estate transfer tax which is only paid by sellers in real estate transactions. This informant also had strong feelings about what he considered to be proper use of tax revenue. After I told him about the funding source for the EPF he grumbled that the money should be earmarked for more pressing issues than “preserving their [environmentalists’] view.” He pointed to the poor condition of many major roads in the local area and indicated that was where the real estate transfer tax money should go because roads benefit everyone.

Another common refrain, one employed by Adirondack Park Local

Government Review Board, the Franklin County legislature, and the Adirondack Association of Towns and Villages was “the claim that the state simply cannot afford to buy these properties” (Brown 2011). The timing of the initial understanding that the state would purchase the lands from TNC, shortly after the financial crisis of 2007, was no doubt part of the objection. However, as Brown noted in his article the state follows a budget process, and if an expense is budgeted for then the state feels it can be afforded, even in lean times. Again, the money for this transaction came from a dedicated fund that is funded by one particular tax. The issue of the state being able to afford this purchase, and its propriety given the less-than-ideal financial condition of the state and its communities was not limited to local discourse. In a thread on the Adirondack Forum -- an Internet forum dedicated to discussion of a wide variety of Adirondack topics -- users from around the state and other locales criticized the purchase on these grounds. One user, “cityboy,” wrote “as a former state employee who was asked to sacrifice because of budgetary concerns and knowing that the State’s 2013 budget is at least 1 billion in deficit any money spent irks me” (<http://adkforum.com/showpost.php?p=189568&postcount=8>).

An additional tax-related issue was the perception that the movement from private to public ownership would remove the land from the property tax rolls. New York State property owners have some of the highest tax burdens in the nation (Harris and Moore 2013). The subject of property taxes came up frequently in my interactions with informants, especially those who were middle and working class homeowners. Many feared that they would eventually be taxed out of their homes, like the example I presented in Chapter 3. This fear was especially salient among older residents who

had owned their property for a long time. One informant, a retired blue-collar state worker whose family has lived in the Park for four generations expressed his concern to me this way: “I’ve owned this land for forty years now, and every year my taxes go up. I got a fixed income and I pay my taxes with my camp wood [firewood he sells to campers from a roadside stand]. If they keep going up I don’t know how I’ll do that.” Tax shortfalls, like the 480 and 480a exemptions discussed above, are made up by the balance of taxpayers. The idea that the tax burden of state-owned land will fall on the shoulders of local property owners is what drives much of the resistance to state land acquisition. This is actually not the case in the Adirondack Park: New York State pays local property taxes on all Forest Preserve land, and while the land is taxed at a lower rate than that eligible for residential or commercial development, it is nowhere near the up to 80 percent discount on valuation enjoyed by private owners of Adirondack forest land who avail themselves of Section 480 and 480a exemptions.

Still, the assessment of such land at a lower value than if it were to be developed is problematic for some. A local government official in one of the Finch towns explained that “we only have so much developable land in our town, there just isn’t that much space left. Sure, the state pays, but not as much as if people could come in and develop it, so it limits how much we can expand our tax base.” They noted that the 2 percent cap on property tax increases mandated by the state since 2012 was a double-edged sword, good for taxpayers but tough for towns with limited ways to raise revenue. Adding properties assessed at residential and commercial values to the tax roll thus becomes an important way for communities to make money.

Taxes were not the only economic issue that fueled objections to the purchase.

As of 2012, there were thirty-three private hunting clubs leasing the former Finch, Pruyn and Co. lands from TNC (LeBrun 2013). Private hunting clubs are a longstanding Adirondack tradition, dating back to the first great wave of interest in the Adirondacks in the nineteenth century. Typically, such clubs lease, or less commonly own, large tracts of land that members can use for hunting, fishing, and other outdoor recreation. Often, clubs construct a central clubhouse or lodge, and individual members build their own small “camps” on the property. Forestry companies like Finch, Pruyn and Co., Champion, Lyme, and Molpus have historically formed the majority of lessors of land to hunting clubs. The Gooley Club had leased the tract of land surrounding the Essex Chain of Lakes from Finch Pruyn and Co. since its founding in 1947. TNC continued to lease land to the Gooley Club with the understanding that it would eventually be sold to the state, and the club would have to vacate.

Club members, some of whom had family connections to the Gooley Club since its inception, were understandably upset by this trajectory and proposed that the state secure easements on the land rather than the fee title purchase. The economic impact of the club was a major line of argument employed by club members and others opposed to the purchase: “...for the local communities, Club expenditures as well as member spending while traveling to and from the Camp provided an important and consistent boost to the Adirondack economy” (MacElroy 2018). One club member told me via e-mail that they spent more than \$4000 per year, mostly locally, on expenses related to their camp like propane, food, household items, and outdoor gear. In a purchase offer to TNC for about 100 acres of land around the Club’s main camp

on Third Lake (Gooley Club 2012), club president Ted Hicks stated “our club is one of the most important small businesses in the region, contributing roughly one million dollars per year to the local towns’ economies when our members’ expenditures are combined with our direct payments to our employees, vendors and suppliers.” Hicks noted that the towns of Newcomb, Minerva, and Indian Lake all passed resolutions in support of the Club because of its economic importance to the area. When the news of the deal was first disseminated, Gooley Club vice-president John MacElroy said “About 1,100 people visit every year. If it becomes state land, I don’t think you’re going to see as many people use it as you’re seeing now” (Earl 2007). Presumably these visitors would add to the money spent by the Gooley Club members.

In addition to the economic arguments, some people opposed to the purchase cited the erasure of Adirondack culture and history that would occur with the expulsion of the clubs: “Let’s just dismiss the Adirondack way of life,” as one commenter opined (Earl 2007). Others lamented the loss of familial experiences and connections. A former club employee stated “As the person cooking for the Gooley Club I have to say it’s a shame what TNC and NY State did. They don’t see the generations (sic) of family enjoying this club. They don’t see the smile of a son that takes his first buck or a daughter catching her first fish” (LeBrun 2013). This facet of the story emerged again during the debate on classification of the land, and I return to it in a later section.

Opposition to the purchase was strong and impassioned, with economic arguments taking the fore. As I discussed above, it was crucial for the state and TNC to overcome resistance at the local government level to nix the possibility of a veto

and ensure the deal went through. Ultimately, TNC's community-based conservation approach coupled with Governor Andrew Cuomo's forceful and charismatic leadership, savvy marketing, and aggressive economic development agenda swayed local governments to approve the purchase. The first part of the deal closed in August 2012, and added the Essex Chain tract to the Forest Preserve, but in many ways the conflict over these lands was just beginning. The forthcoming debate over the classification of these newly-added lands was instantaneously ignited, and it became one of the fiercest land-use debates in Park history to date.

The Finch Deal III: Conflict over Classification

Now that the state owned the land, its next task was to classify it. The state scheduled the public hearings on the Essex Chain classification to begin in June 2013, and the final classification decision was made by the APA on December 13 of that year. The final result was a mixed-use classification with some parts of the tract designated Wilderness, others Wild Forest, and the main part of the parcel that contains the actual Essex Chain Lakes as Primitive. As I discuss below, this compromise disappointed nearly everyone.

The APSLMP (2016) defines nine classifications that can be applied to Forest Preserve lands: Wilderness, Primitive, Canoe, Wild Forest, Intensive Use, Historic, State Administrative, Wild and Scenic Recreational Rivers, and Travel Corridors. The APSLMP (2016:16) defines the latter two classifications as "essentially corridor overlays to the basic land classification(s) through which they pass." The definitions of the seven major classifications detail the characteristics that define each category and what use and management activities and actions can or cannot be undertaken. In

this case, and indeed with most recent additions to the Forest Preserve, Wilderness and Wild Forest are usually the two most commonly proposed options. In the Finch case, the classification process was really a battle between these two categories, with local communities and special interest groups such as snowmobile clubs and sportsman's organizations favoring a Wild Forest designation, and state agencies, environmental NGOs, and user groups such as paddlers and hikers pulling for Wilderness. As of September 2018, Wild Forest (1,340,681 acres) accounted for fifty percent of Forest Preserve land in the Adirondack Park compared to forty-five percent for Wilderness (1,213,914 acres). In this section I begin with a discussion of Wilderness and outline some of the positions taken by Wilderness supporters during the classification period.

Wilderness

Wilderness is the linchpin in the overwhelming majority of public land conflicts in the Adirondack Park. It inspires tremendous passion -- both for and against it -- and heated emotions. In the Adirondacks, wilderness is a "quality" (Nash 2000:1), defined as much by the absence of certain traits as their presence. One word often heard in Adirondack wilderness debates is "intangibles" (Socash 2017, 2018, 2019), used to refer to qualities such as remoteness and solitude. It is a bureaucratic object, codified in federal and New York State law (in this context it is spelled with a capital 'W'). For some it is an embodied experience, all informants and interlocutors whom I considered to be wilderness-oriented described their experiences in somatic and affective terms. No matter how one relates to wilderness (or Wilderness), it is unquestionable that it is inseparable from the Adirondacks, just like industry and capitalism. Indeed, the relations and tensions between these things bring the

Adirondacks into being in every sense except perhaps for the region's geophysical creation.

A central aspect of Adirondack wilderness that I engage with here is its temporality. Wilderness (capital and lowercase) is always related to time, usually in multiple ways. One of the most salient relations between wilderness and time is the privileging of the pre-human past. This is due to the view of humanity as a harmful force against nature, an idea that grew out of Edenic narratives (Oelschlager 1991), took hold in the Romantic era during the nineteenth century, and remains a powerful trope today. Pre-human nature is conceived as an ideal state, a baseline for what nature *should* be were it not for human intervention. The view of people as destructive and disruptive forces and the nature that came before their interventions as true and ideal nature is a key tenet taught in college-level conservation biology (Primack 2014), restoration ecology (van Andel and Aronson 2012), and wilderness management (Hendee and Dawson 2002) texts. The teaching of this idea can start much earlier: my seventh-grader brought home an assignment on the Adirondack Park that stated “The Adirondack Park is a special place. A place that has miles of open forest and water that is *pristine and often left untouched from the harms of society*” (emphasis mine).

An examination of the legal codification of Wilderness in New York State is a good place to begin unpacking what it means and its relation with the past. The orientation towards the past suffuses the language of both the legal definition of Wilderness and the professional and popular discourse surrounding it. New York State's definition draws heavily on The Wilderness Act of 1964, the statute that created the legal Federal definition of Wilderness to be used in the designation of

national wilderness areas. The Wilderness Act was drafted by Howard Zahniser (1906-1964), the executive director of The Wilderness Society, a conservation organization that includes Aldo Leopold and Bob Marshall among its alumni. The relationship between the Wilderness Act and the Adirondacks is dialectical. Zahniser was inspired by Article XIV (Schaefer 1989), the Forever Wild amendment of the New York State constitution discussed in Chapter 3, and indeed he labored over drafts of the Act at his family cabin in Johnsburg in the south-central Adirondacks. The verbiage of the APSLMP definition (2016:22) is nearly identical to that in the Wilderness Act but for small changes. It reads (emphases mine):

A wilderness area, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is an area where the earth and its community of life are *untrammelled* by man--where man himself is a visitor who does not remain. A wilderness area is further defined to mean an area of state land or water having a *primeval character*, without significant improvement or permanent human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve, enhance and restore, where necessary, its natural conditions, and which (1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable; (2) has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a *primitive* and unconfined type of recreation; (3) has at least ten thousand acres of contiguous land and water or is of sufficient size and character as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition; and 4) may also contain ecological, geological or other features of scientific, educational, scenic or historical value.

“Untrammelled” is a difficult word that has caused much confusion. Scott (2002:74) notes that “no other word in the Wilderness Act is as misunderstood,” and that definitions of untrammelled include “‘unrestrained,’ ‘unrestricted,’ ‘unimpeded,’ ‘unencumbered,’ ‘unconfined,’ ‘unlimited.’” Scott writes that untrammelled has frequently been misread or misunderstood as untrampled, “with the erroneous connotation that it describes the present physical or ecological condition of the land,”

(74) and that land management professionals at the highest level were not immune to such misinterpretations. Scott gives the example of Forest Service Chief Edward P. Cliff misusing the word as a synonym for trampled in senate testimony to describe an area experiencing heavy recreational use. Two issues contribute to the problems with interpretation of untrammeled. The first is one of scale: untrammeled does not describe the condition of a specific area, but rather that of “‘the earth and its community of life...’ the forces of Nature” (Scott 2002:74). The second is its temporality, or rather its contradictory temporalities.

Untrammeled looks both to the future and the past and it is this contradiction that proves to be a major sticking point in Adirondack land use debates in general, and the conflict over the Finch lands in particular as I discuss in Chapter 5. Untrammeled speaks to a “forward-looking perspective about the *future* of land and ecosystems” (Scott 2002:75 emphasis in original) and the word was carefully chosen by Zahniser to express this future potential for unrestrained nature. But untrammeled also evokes the past, particularly that of a time before humans began to confine or restrain nature, such as through domestication, agriculture, and the building of cities. It was used in this sense by Bob Marshall (1901-1939), a seminal figure in wilderness preservation in the Adirondacks and the United States as a whole. While a sophomore at the New York State College of Forestry, Marshall spent the summer of 1922 at the college’s summer camp in Cranberry Lake. During his time there he visited dozens of backcountry ponds. Journaling about his trip to Nick’s Pond, Marshall (1922:121) wrote “The forest outlined against the rising moon, the deer drinking in the rippling brook, the cool wind from the west were all as they had been when the first pioneer trapper

spread his blankets in the untrammelled country, termed Couchsachrage, the dismal wilderness.” It should be noted that Marshall’s wilderness temporality has a racial element. For Marshall (1930:141), trammeling the wild was the preserve of “the white race” as “the philosophy that progress is proportional to the amount of alteration imposed upon nature never seemed to have occurred to the Indians.”

Because these early inhabitants were assumed by Marshall (and others) to live on the land in a way that did not alter it, things like “trails and temporary shelters, which were common long before the advent of the white race, are entirely permissible” (141) in wilderness areas. So too are “primitive” activities and recreation as noted in the both the Wilderness Act and the APSLMP definition. Primitive has temporal significance, denoting the past, and it also has qualitative associations. Things that are primitive are basic, unrefined, essential. Primitive is often used in reference to developmental stages of humanity. A definition offered by the Cambridge English dictionary reads (emphasis mine) “relating to human society at a very early stage of development, with people living in a very simple way without *machines* or a writing system.” Federal and New York State law prohibit machines, even human-powered ones like bicycles, in Wilderness areas and this prohibition has been a source of conflict at both the state and federal level. The sectioning point for what counts as primitive seems to be mechanical advantage, as canoe dollies -- wheeled devices often using bicycle-type wheels and steel tubing that allow one to roll a canoe or kayak rather than carry it -- are allowed.

Another important temporal word in the definition of Wilderness, and one that appears with great frequency in Adirondack discourse is “primeval,” commonly

defined as of or relating to the earliest ages, and thus an invocation of the deepest past. Pete Nelson -- founding member of Adirondack Wilderness Advocates, informant, and friend -- often employs it in his writing (see Nelson 2012 a,b,c,d). Primeval is often described in terms of a feeling, or sense. It was used in this way by Evelyn Greene (2013:4454) in a written comment to the APA supporting a Wilderness classification of the Finch lands: “the Essex Chain Lakes have an opportunity to become wilder than they are now, really primeval in feel...” Nelson (2012d) wrote “the wonderful thing about entering the primeval forest is that you feel it before you really see it... continuing on into the virgin forest a completely immersive feeling descends... it is a weight, an immensity, some combination of sight, sound, and smell that presses in.” In an ADKForum post (<http://adkforum.com/showthread.php?t=15537>), user DSettahr wrote “it felt like a true wilderness pond - surrounded by the forest primeval, with peaks ringing the pond and keeping civilization far away.”

For Wilderness advocates, primeval signifies a past before people that can be accessed in the present. As noted by Nelson, this relation is located in sensory experience for many. One informant whom I first encountered in the Saint Regis Canoe Area (SRCA) in July 2015 described the role that sound -- particularly vehicle noise -- played in his experience of wilderness. We were talking about the Seven Carries, a historic canoe route that formerly linked two bastions of late nineteenth and early twentieth century summer tourism, Paul Smiths Hotel and the Saranac Inn, through a series of smaller ponds and “carries,” which is the preferred term in the Adirondacks for portages.

We met in Saint Regis Pond, midway through the route, having both come up

from the south via Little Clear Pond. When I caught up with him we exchanged friendly greetings, and he engaged me in conversation, asking where I was headed. I explained that I was paddling around looking for folks to talk to about their experience in the SRCA. He responded enthusiastically, saying that it was one of his favorite spots that he visited frequently since moving to the Park five years ago from the Capital region (Albany). We talked a bit about the various ponds we had visited and he expressed a preference for the cluster of ponds to the west of Fish Pond deep in the SRCA, part of the Nine Carries route. When I asked which was his favorite of the Seven Carries ponds, he gestured at the water with his paddle and said “this one.” I asked why and he said “The silence. Once you hit this pond all the noise stops.” I pressed him on what he meant by noise and he said “cars.” I listened closely, and he was right: there wasn’t any sound from vehicles on Route 30, over a mile distant to the south and shielded from the pond by thick forest and hills.

But it wasn’t silent here. A moderate breeze moved through the trees and over the water, rustling needles and leaves and causing gentle waves to lap on the shore of the small island we’d pulled close to with a soft clapping sound. An occasional high-pitched buzz crescendoed in our ears as mosquitoes, mostly kept at bay by the wind, swooped in close to feed. Around our boats, the wings of Blue Dasher (*Pachydiplax longipennis*) dragonflies thrummed as they sped by, hunting mosquitos. I pointed out the variety of sounds to him and he indicated that he didn’t mean actual silence, but rather the absence of human-made noise like that from vehicles or other machinery. A skilled tradesperson, he noted that his work days were filled with noise from beginning to end, and on his days off he liked to go to the wilderness (his words) to

get away from the sounds of everyday life: “I’m really after the peace and quiet.”

His feelings were echoed by a number of written comments in support of Wilderness. Evelyn Greene (2013:4451-4452 emphasis in original) wrote that “even the *possibility*” of motor noise from floatplanes in the Essex Chain “rules out the trip for the myriad recreationists trying to get away from the all-pervasive motor noise in every settled area in the country,” and having “an opportunity to listen to the quiet is getting rarer and rarer.” The Adirondack Mountain Club’s (known as ADK, a conservation nonprofit focused on recreation and education) official comment argued that the Essex Chain would “offer a remote, wild and quiet paddling and camping experience” (ADK 2013:3416). A comment by Steve and Judy Thomson (2013:2182) noted that they “value the experience of paddling on lakes and ponds in the absence of motorized craft for the solitude and respite that it provides from the modern mechanized world” as do many others who seek “the truly quiet, natural destinations” (2183). Andrew and Cynthia Love (2013:4134) wrote that they “are avid supporters of having as many ‘wilderness’ areas in the Park as feasible, as it seems there are fewer opportunities every year to find the peace and solitude that nature in its most unrestricted condition provides.”

Solitude, peace, quiet, and a feeling of remoteness are all attributes that are prized by wilderness seekers. Both sensory and affective, they engender physical and emotional responses for those who desire them. Pete Nelson, my informant mentioned above, believes that these responses are essential and universal. I believe that they are dependent upon habitus, and that rather than existing “out there” for people to encounter, they are cultivated aesthetic dispositions. Earlier in this chapter I discussed

the importance of education in the generation of symbolic and cultural capital and habitus. I argue here that education is a critical component in the development of wilderness-positive dispositions and that it acts both consciously through learning and unconsciously as an embodiment of habitus. Nelson is not alone in his insistence that wilderness and the somatic and emotional responses it engenders are human universals. Rather, wilderness has been naturalized to a degree that it is doxic for him and other proponents, as evidenced by their impassioned pleas. Ideas about time play a central role here, especially those that place high value on the pre-human past. This can clearly be seen in the definition of Wilderness as per the APSLMP. But wilderness is not solely oriented towards the past, and it is a mistake to think so. Instead, wilderness also has a strong orientation towards the future.

Wild Forest

Wild Forest lands have features such as roads or structures that impact their wilderness character. They may be adjacent to public roads or border tracts of private land, or lack sufficient acreage to meet a Wilderness classification. Perhaps the most important feature of Wild Forest, and one that remains central to the debate over the classification and management of the Finch lands, is that motorized and mechanized (i.e., bicycle) use is permitted under this classification.

The use of motors in the Forest Preserve is a perpetual hot topic. In 2003 Jim McCulley, Lake Placid snowmobile club president, activist, and provocateur, drove his snowmobile into the Sentinel Range Wilderness via the Old Mountain Road in Keene (he later drove his truck there in 2005), precipitating a 15-year legal battle over the status of the road that questioned whether or not it had been legally abandoned and

thus eligible to be closed by the state and incorporated into the forest Preserve.

Reviled by environmentalists, McCulley nonetheless enjoyed significant local support for his actions: one informant from Lake Placid, a member of the snowmobile club, called him a “hero” for taking on the DEC. In 2018, the state appellate court determined it had not been legally abandoned and turned the road’s ownership over to the towns of Keene and Lake Placid. Recently (April 2019) the Adirondack Council, the largest and best funded of the Adirondack environmental NGOs, released a report about the destructive potential of all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) that called for banning ATV use on Forest Preserve lands. A piece about the report was published on the popular Adirondack Almanack blog (Chlad 2019), and almost instantly comments attacking the report were posted.

Several common themes emerged in my analysis of the debate over motorized use. The most prominent, and the one I focus on, was the issue of *access*, which is a ubiquitous feature of Adirondack discourse. Parties on both sides of the Wild Forest/Wilderness divide had particular ideas about what access meant, and these often related to time, morality, social class, aesthetics and materiality. Arguments over access are a good place to examine the role of habitus in the framings of participants and interrogate why and how this contributes to the intractability of Adirondack conflicts. I’ll begin by outlining some basic positions on access expressed by Wild Forest proponents.

Much of the discourse in favor of Wild Forest focused on access in relation to physical ability. Proponents argued that a Wilderness classification would foreclose access to a significant amount of people because they would not be able to reach the

lands and waters of the Essex Chain on foot. For example, at the June 12, 2013 public hearing on classification of the Essex Chain, Hamilton County tourism and economic development director Ann Melious argued that “when our public looks at a map and sees that this is public land, that there should be some easy public access.” She noted that “the northeast is getting older,” that this region is where the Park draws most of its visitors from, and “access to public land by dragging a canoe several miles or backpacking is not necessarily a reality.” Later in the hearing, New York State Snowmobile Association president Jim Rolf echoed Melious’s comments, stating that the population of New York is aging, and snowmobiling is a way that aging New Yorkers can continue to enjoy the outdoors. The idea that the conditions imposed by a Wilderness classification would prove too physically rigorous for users, especially older ones, was pervasive among Wild Forest proponents. In a public comment submitted via email to the APA prior to classification, forest appraiser Paul Capone stated that because the lands had been purchased with state taxes, they should be widely accessible “rather than limiting access to a small number of people who are physically capable of transporting their gear to the interior. What about the elderly and young children? This property is a valuable asset, but the public should be given reasonable opportunity to enjoy it” (Capone 2013:4381). Another public comment in favor of Wild Forest submitted by Ralph Coon read “access to this remote area under any other classification would restrict its use to only the young and physically fit to enjoy the area that has been unavailable to the public for over a century” (Coon 2013:4393).

Many Wild Forest proponents argued that more restrictive classifications

would prevent disabled people from using the land, and they expressed these views in comments submitted to the APA, on blog posts, and in public forums. Some commenters made reference to disabled veterans, as did Dave Corr of Trout Unlimited. In a written comment submitted to the APA, Corr (2013:1033) urges “allowing electric motors for our many returning disabled veterans.” It appeared that few disabled people (or veterans) made this line of argument themselves. Instead, the assertion that a Wilderness classification would foreclose use by those with disabilities seemed to be made on their behalf by presumably able-bodied commenters. One notable exception was a wrenching hand-written letter to the APA by former logger Scott Remington, who was paralyzed in a 1999 logging accident on a nearby parcel of Finch lands (also part of the State’s purchase) when the top of a beech tree he was working near sheared off and hit him. In his letter, Remington (2013:2280) talks about how he loved to “hunt, fish, camp, boat” in the Pharaoh Lakes Wilderness Area and laments that he has not been able to go there since his accident. He calls closing the roads in the Finch lands (necessary for a Wilderness classification) “discrimination” against those who cannot walk.

Hunters and anglers who supported a Wild Forest classification also emphasized the negative impact on access that a Wilderness classification would have in terms of physical ability. In a comment claimed to be submitted on behalf of more than 2500 sportsmen and sportswomen represented by the Warren County Conservation Council, author John Currie argues that a Wild Forest classification would keep the lands accessible to “children, senior citizens, and handicapped citizens. If these valuable resources were closed to vehicular traffic, only a select few would have the physical

capabilities to reach the interior areas of these vast tracts” (Currie 2013:2421).

Similarly, the New York State Conservation Council asserted that “a Wilderness classification will place the lands off limits to 95% of the taxpayers of the State of New York” (NYSCC 2013:2062). These comments were echoed in general sense (not specifically related to this classification debate) by a group of six anglers I encountered while conducting fieldwork in the Saranac Lakes Wild Forest (SLWF) in the spring and early summer of 2015.

There is a pond in the SLWF that is regarded by locals as a productive brook trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*) fishery. This pond seems to be off the radar for visitors from away: I did not once encounter another person there who did not live in the Tri-Lakes area. Small and landlocked, the pond is not a likely draw for paddlers, perhaps reflected by the fact that several locally-produced boating maps fail to indicate the roads that lead to it. However, these roads seem to be key to its popularity with locals, who like the fact that getting to the pond is quick, meaning more time on the water fishing. This point showed up in submitted comments (e.g., Roalsvig 2013:4521), and it was also expressed to me by a number of informants and interlocutors. The majority of my informants who supported Wild Forest classification for state lands worked full-time jobs. Many of these were jobs that required hard physical labor such as construction and logging. Others, like those of informants who worked as cooks in restaurants or cleaners in hotels, necessitated long periods of being on one’s feet. Many worked six days per week during busy periods. Short on free time and with tired bodies, these people appreciated the quick and easy access to their favored spots for sporting or relaxation afforded by Wild Forest.

The people I met at the pond were four middle-aged guys and a couple of elderly men who had just come in from fishing, their heavy aluminum canoes pulled up on the shore. The group consisted of a father and his two sons, a father and son pair, and the son's friend. The family-based composition of groups engaged in sporting pursuits like fishing and hunting was something that I observed frequently in the course of my fieldwork. I asked how the fishing was and they proudly showed me their catch, a stringer of good sized brook trout, their brightly colored spots gleaming against the sparkling blue-black of their sleek bodies. One of the older fellows was quite chatty and he started talking about other spots where he liked to fish. He wistfully spoke about a couple of backcountry ponds, noting that it had been twenty years since he'd been physically able to cover the distance to get to them, especially carrying a boat. Slightly stooped, he walked with the hesitant slowness of someone for whom moving was painful. I asked what he did for a living and he said he'd spent twenty-five years on a DOT (Department of Transportation) road crew, which was why he had a hard time getting around now.

His son, a logger, said "Ya, he can only fish where I can drive 'em now," and the group nodded in agreement. I asked the son (who later became an informant) what he thought of the Finch deal and classifications – at this point they had been made – and he said that he didn't know much about it other than hearing that it was happening, and he didn't follow it. This highlighted an interesting contrast among my informants: for some the controversy was all-consuming, for others it barely registered. I gave him a brief rundown and he shrugged, saying he didn't know why they (meaning the state) wouldn't let people drive there if there were already roads. He added that if he

couldn't drive to the water, he wouldn't be able to fish with his dad. I asked if they often fished together, and he said he almost never went without him. It seemed that for him, being able to get out with his father was the most important thing, and limiting access by vehicle wouldn't necessarily hamper his individual ability to use the land and waters, but it would have a negative impact on the social relations that were the main reason for such outings.

Calls for the greatest possible access were also frequently underlain by economic arguments. The Finch deal was sold to the towns on the basis that the addition of the lands to the Forest Preserve would prove to be an economic benefit for them through the increase in tourism that would occur. Wild Forest supporters seemed to recognize that tourism depends on *volume*. Because of the extreme seasonality of Adirondack tourism (as discussed in Chapter 4), it is crucial that tourism-dependent businesses earn as much revenue as possible during the busy season. For such businesses, the biggest sectors in terms of dollars earned are food and beverage and lodging. These businesses, especially those that are locally-owned and not part of larger chains, suffer a kind of double bind in that their costs often increase as a result of larger market forces, but they are limited in how much they can adjust their prices. One informant, a local independent restaurateur, explained it this way: "So a few years ago, the prices of some of my staples, like butter and flour, took a big jump. The price of a bag of flour doubled. And while it's fluctuated, it's never gone back down to where it was before the jump. My suppliers have also done things like increase their minimum orders and tack on fuel surcharges, so overall it's gotten more expensive for me to operate but I can only charge so much. I mean, I can't ask \$20 for a burger, not

here, but that's where I need to be." This restaurateur found himself constrained not only by the prices of global commodities like wheat and petroleum, but also by the expectations of his customers regarding menu prices. Because he was limited in how much he could charge for individual items, he needed to sell more of them to make a profit.

Wild Forest proponents thus saw unfettered access as the key to driving visitation to the Essex Chain and maximizing the economic benefit of the purchase. At the June 12, 2013 classification hearing, the town of Minerva supervisor, Sue Montgomery-Corey, offered a simple equation to express the feelings of her constituents "access plus economic opportunity equals hope." Supervisor Montgomery-Corey noted the isolated nature of her town, calling it "the ultimate can't get there from here" location, and argued that a Wild Forest classification would draw the greatest number of visitors to the area. Written comments also reflected the idea that the greatest possible access was necessary to optimize the economic benefit of the purchase. For example, Roger Freidman (2013:2483-84) wrote that a Wild Forest classification would "have undeniable positive impacts on local economies" and that such a classification would "result in the most significant economic assistance to the local communities" by offering access for "snowmobiles, mountain bikes, horseback riding, dog sledding and more..." Kyle Curry (2013:4408) wrote that "an entire Wild Forest land classification would allow the maximum number of people to access the land, bringing the highest amount of economic revenue to the region."

A major sticking point for Wild Forest supporters was the foreclosure of snowmobile access if the tract was classified as Wilderness. Snowmobiling is a major

economic driver in the Adirondack Park, especially for towns that are distant from large downhill skiing areas, such as those in the central, western, and southern areas of the Park. These places are characterized by abundant snowfall (in a good snow year) and markedly flatter terrain than the Park's northern and eastern areas. One interlocutor, a local elected official and owner of an independent lodging business in the southern end of the Park said to me "we live and die by the snow machine." What they meant by this was that a good snowmobiling season was a key source of income during one of the hardest seasons. In Chapter 4, I discussed the temporality of Adirondack tourism and its sharp seasonal peaks and valleys. Sandwiched between shoulder seasons and subject to the vagaries of capricious weather, the winter season is difficult for all businesses, but doubly so for those dependent on tourism. Heating costs, especially for the older buildings that house many independent restaurants and lodgings, can be a tremendous burden. The restaurateur quoted above estimated that in winter up to twenty percent of the business's gross income could go into heating, and that it averaged out at ten or twelve percent for the year. The high cost of heating has ripple effects throughout the local economy, affecting businesses that are often assumed to be immune to weather effects because of their ubiquitous necessity. One informant, the owner of an independent auto repair shop, said that his business slowed dramatically during the winter as customers put their money into their furnaces rather than their cars.

No matter how one feels about snowmobiling, its importance to the Adirondack winter economy is undeniable. There are several reasons for this. First, given appropriate trail conditions (flat and frozen), snowmobiling requires less snow

than other winter activities like cross-country skiing, downhill skiing, and snowshoeing. Thus, it has the potential to draw tourists even when other activities are impossible. This was a major line of argument in the debate over the Adirondack Rail Trail that I discussed in Chapter 1. The removal of the corridor's rails and creation of a flat and uniform trail surface would allow use by snowmobiles with minimal snow. In its current condition with extant rails, the corridor is only safe for snowmobiles when it has accumulated in excess of twelve inches of snow. The winter of 2015-2016 was an exceptionally low snow year and never gained enough coverage to be safely used by snowmobiles: a point seized upon by trail advocates who pointed to the economic losses suffered by businesses along the corridor who depend on snowmobile traffic. An interlocutor who owned a bar popular with the snowmobile crowd characterized the winter's business as "terrible, absolutely terrible" and posited that things wouldn't have been so bad if the rails weren't there because even if there wasn't a lot of snow, there had eventually been enough to run on.

A second reason for snowmobiling's economic importance is due to the material nature of the machines themselves and the cultural behavior of participants. Snowmobiles (and their riders) require fuel, and the extensive trail system in the Adirondacks links communities by necessity. In the winter of 2014-2015 I observed around a dozen snowmobilers converge on the Stewart's (a regional chain of gas and convenience stores) to fill their sleds, warm up, and buy drinks and snacks. The noise was tremendous- most were newer machines with powerful engines, and their insectoid appearance coupled with their loud buzzing sound gave the parking lot the appearance of a frenetic hive as riders zipped in and out. In the store riders milled

together and it was apparent that most had come in pairs or groups. Snowmobiling is as much a social activity in the Adirondacks as it is a sport. A couple of my informants identified as avid snowmobilers. They pursued it largely as a family activity, spending weekends riding with their spouses, kids, and extended family members and friends. Bars and restaurants along the trail serve as destinations, and riders encounter small signs along the trail pointing to spots like “Belly’s” and “Charlie’s Inn.” During the winter, it is common to see numerous machines parked -- sometimes creatively perched on high snow banks -- outside of such establishments. Inside there are people spending money, and while the issue of alcohol use while snowmobiling is troubling, there is no denying the sport’s economic impact.

Written comments in favor of Wild Forest often mentioned snowmobiling’s economic impact. In a succinct, three sentence comment Tim Pencille (2013:891) opined in favor of Wild Forest “so the land can be enjoyed by sports enthusiasts such as snowmobilers, who can bring good economic benefit to the region during the winter months.” Christine Jourdain (2013:4350), Executive Director of the American Council of Snowmobile Associations wrote, noting its importance during a time of seasonal precarity, that “snowmobiling is a catalyst for winter economies. Its overall economic impact is particularly important to many communities where snowmobiling-related tourism helps provide income and jobs during what otherwise would be an off season.” Ralph Coon (2013:4395) wrote that “the NYS government has seen what money this sport brings.” Alexandra Roalsvig, Director of the town of Long Lake’s Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Department, observed “I’ve seen hope and I’ve seen change with the completion of recently built snowmobile trails connecting Long Lake

to Newcomb and Indian Lake and Raquette Lake and Inlet. The Adirondack Hotel improved their winter 2013 numbers significantly, not just due to winter conditions which didn't arrive until February, but because the volume of traffic increased significantly" (2013:4524).

Two informants who own a bar and restaurant popular with snowmobilers told me that the snowmobile crowd, many of them local, is what makes it possible for them to survive the spring. Business is so slow during this shoulder season that they typically close for six weeks starting in late March. This gives them time to do a deep clean, perform maintenance, and rest tired and hurting bodies before the busy summer season. Both have repetitive motion injuries from their work, and the sustained break from the considerable physical labor of running a restaurant -- something I know well from personal experience as well as from descriptions by informants -- is not a luxury, but an absolute necessity to allow them to heal enough to be able to work through a busy summer. It also allows them to turn down the heat, shut off lights, and avoid costly food waste during a protracted slow period. "The first couple of years we tried to stay open," they told me, "but it just didn't work. The few people that did come in would get upset if we didn't have some of the things that we usually offer, so we'd end up prepping stuff and then throwing it away. It was just costing too much so we decided to close." In the winter this place always has snowmobiles parked out front and around the back. During happy hour, especially on the weekends, the bar is crowded with people in thickly insulated overalls, and helmets hang on coat racks like rows of disembodied heads. The bar area is small -- maybe fourteen feet long and twelve feet wide -- and close, and the air is thick with the penetrating, gassy smell of

two stroke exhaust. It's mostly an older crowd, middle aged and up, friendly and loud but not raucous, drinking steadily. The equally small but differently shaped dining area is off one end of the barroom. It's also usually filled to capacity on winter weekend nights, with families eating in the earlier hours replaced by drinkers as the night wears on. Except for the week between Christmas and New Year's, weekdays are quiet, so these busy weekends are a boon.

When the snow is good, as it has generally been over the last couple of winters at the time of writing, the business provided by snowmobilers can, thanks to these busy weekends, generate enough revenue to pay all expenses and put some aside for the spring. For this small business and others like it, going into the spring with all debts current and some operating capital on hand can make the difference between success or failure. A former Adirondack restaurateur related the trajectory of his restaurant's closing to me over a three-season arc from spring to fall. A tough winter put him in arrears in rent to his building's absentee owner and he owed debts to suppliers by the spring. The dead spring and then a cool and rainy early summer meant that business didn't take off until mid-July, leading him to fall further behind. The truncated summer season allowed some progress with meeting his debt service to vendors, who could withhold necessary product, but he still owed back rent. A wet and windy fall did not offer any relief, and by winter the landlord had asked him to vacate, fearful that he would continue to slide further behind.

When viewed in light of snowmobiling, the economic argument for a Wild Forest classification makes sense. Snowmobiling can provide economic benefits to local businesses during a tough season, and help get them through the spring, a

difficult shoulder season. The economic aspects of a Wild Forest classification were foremost in supporters' minds, especially those from the five towns, largely because Governor Cuomo's administration pitched the deal to them in those terms. As Sue Montgomery-Corey said during her hearing testimony, the assertion that local communities would see economic benefits from the Finch deal was "a promise worth making and a promise worth keeping." The preference for Wild Forest may have an economic basis, but it is also undergirded by specific and implicit temporalities. In particular, Wild Forest supporters are firmly rooted in the "now."

As the examples I have given above show, a primary concern of Wild Forest advocates is the ability to use the land in the *present*. In large part this is due to their pressing concerns about the economy, no doubt driven in part by the sense of urgency manifested by development experts in the Park and the Governor's office. To be fair, Wilderness advocates also advanced arguments that their preferred classification would reap economic benefits as well, though the evidence for this seems scant. As I have shown above, the desire for a Wild Forest classification is inextricably related to the use of motorized and mechanized vehicles. Some Wilderness supporters cast aspersions on Wild Forest proponents who wish to use motors in the Forest Preserve. I often heard Wild Forest supporters called "lazy" by their opponents. At one meeting, I overheard two Wilderness supporters sniggering and making disparaging comments under their breath about the bodies of some people speaking for Wild Forest. I also encountered this when speaking with informants: "fat" was often appended to "lazy" and "selfish" when Wild Forest advocates were discussed. Overall I got the sense that Wilderness supporters viewed the desire for motorized use as a simple preference that

could be put aside if only such people could be enlightened. I would argue, however, that such desire is more of a durable disposition and falls in the realm of habitus.

Some Wild Forest supporters I spoke with had deep relations with machines and motors. In particular, a number of them either used machines for work, such as heavy equipment operating or driving a truck, or worked on motors as their business. Several of the snowmobile enthusiasts I interacted with spoke about their engagement with snowmobiles as something they'd been doing their entire lives. Often this was in the context of the family-- they were taught to ride by their parents or grandparents. The time-depth and family associations of recreational use of motor vehicles was a common point made by Wild Forest advocates. It seemed to me that a positive disposition towards motor vehicle use may have been "selected and preserved by the habitus of successive generations" (Bourdieu 1990:108). I believe that such use falls into the realm of embodied practice.

Some Wilderness advocates I engaged with spoke disparagingly about the sound motor vehicles make, calling it "noise." Others objected to the smell of exhaust, "they stink" grimaced one informant as she expressed her opinion of snowmobiles. Some, like Evelyn Greene (2013:4452), subtly derided motor vehicle use as an easy way to access the Forest Preserve, stating that users of Wilderness waters "will earn the right to enjoy it by working for it." I want to unpack these statements looking at motor vehicle use through the lens of embodied practice. I'll start with Greene's comment and corollary arguments that assume motor vehicles require little physical effort or skill to use, with a focus on snowmobiles which were a central part of the Essex Chain debate as I have shown above.

While it is true that cross country skiing or snowshoeing is more physically demanding -- especially in an aerobic sense -- than riding a snowmobile, it is specious to suggest that there is little effort or skill involved in snowmobiling. February of 2015 was the first time I had ridden a snowmobile in more than twenty years. An informant took me out for an afternoon of riding after he gently suggested that I had no business writing about snowmobiles if I had little experience riding them. Before we set out in our group of five, he gave me a quick primer on how to operate the machine and the location and use of the lights, throttle, and brake. Most important were the instructions on how to steer: "It's not a car Adam, it won't just turn." Indeed, I quickly learned that attempting to steer by simply turning the handlebars was an exercise in futility. He showed me how to lean into the turns, shifting my weight back and to the inside of the turn while extending my arm and leg on the outside, pushing hard. I rode slowly and tentatively, and from my position as next to last in line I watched how the experienced riders seamlessly shifted and moved with their machines, floating around the curves without losing speed.

We stopped for a break after about an hour of riding, pulling into a small clearing in the forest. The near silence was for me a welcome change from the constant buzzing of the engine, muffled by my helmet. We got off our machines and stretched. My hands were numb and tingly and my forearms tight from over-gripping the handlebars and the vibrations of the motor. Another rider watched me stretch my hands and smiled saying "you'll get used to it." Cold cans of beer were passed around. For better or worse, alcohol is a deeply ingrained part of snowmobile culture. I remarked about the smell that hung around our group, two-stroke exhaust, thick and

sweet. “I love that smell” a rider said, “when your engine’s tuned just right.” Two-stroke (or two-cycle) engines burn their lubricating oil as part of their combustion cycle, producing a distinctly different smell than four-cycle exhaust, such as what is produced by automobiles. I asked the group if they worked on their own machines and all nodded. “You need to if you want to go anywhere,” chuckled one rider. These guys all had older snowmobiles, which require a lot of fussing and maintenance to keep them running right. The ability to do this work was a point of pride for these and other people I encountered who used machines for recreation or work.

As the example above shows, the embodied practice of snowmobiling is comprised of a number of physical and intellectual skills and preferences. Knowing how to work on the snowmobile, knowing when it is “tuned just right” is not something that is obvious to the casual observer but is rather the result of time invested in study, observation, and practice. The same is true with the physical maneuvers required to ride safely and efficiently. These are learned skills that through repetition become embodied habit. Earlier in this chapter I discussed how wilderness advocates prize the development of skill sets that allow them to function in the wilderness. So too do motorized recreation enthusiasts. I argue that the radically differing habitus of these users, often separated along class lines, is what prevents members of these groups from gaining understanding of the other and is what underlies the persistent and intractable conflicts over land use in the Adirondack Park.

Redress and Reintegration, or Schism?

The conflict over the Finch lands can be read as a social drama in the sense elucidated by Victor Turner in various works (1996[1957], 1980, 1982, 1987). Social

dramas are conflicts that “occur within groups of persons who share values and interests and who have a real or alleged common history” (Turner 1980:149). Turner argued that social dramas were a universal part of human experience, characterizing them as disturbances or “eruptions” (1996[1957]:91) that disrupt normal social relations. Social dramas have their own temporality, moving through four stages delineated by Turner as breach, crisis, redress, and reintegration or recognition of schism.

The first stage “manifests itself as the breach of a norm, the infraction of a rule of morality, law, custom, or etiquette, in some public arena” (Turner 1980:150). In the Finch case, I identify the breach occurring with the first calls for a Wilderness classification. As I have described above, the officials of affected towns signed off on the purchase with the understanding that State ownership of the land would bring substantial economic benefits through greatly increased tourism. The advocacy for Wilderness was seen as a betrayal by the leaders, residents, and some visitors to these communities and this precipitated a crisis, defined by Turner (1980:150) as “a momentous juncture or turning point between components of a social field -- at which seeming peace becomes overt conflict and covert antagonisms become visible.” This is an excellent description of what happened with the Finch deal. While the antinomies between Wilderness and Wild Forest supporters were never really covert, the classification crisis was the flashpoint that brought them to the fore and greatly heightened their public visibility by spurring the creation of volumes of articles in various media, blog posts, hearings, and public discussion in-person and online.

In this section I focus on the two latter stages of social dramas, redress and

reintegration or schism, in the context of the Finch deal. Redress is a course of action taken in attempt to quell the crisis and mend the breach. In this case it came in the form of the APA's classification of the Essex Chain tract, which occurred on December 13, 2013. After a year of debate and conflict, the APA finally decided on a classification for the 9,940 acre Essex Chain tract and created the Essex Chain Lakes Primitive Area (ECLPA). Basil Seggos, then the Cuomo administration's deputy secretary for the environment (now DEC Commissioner), said the classification "strikes the right balance between protecting the environment and providing recreational opportunities" (Brown 2013). Included in the classification was a Wild Forest corridor between the ECLPA to the west and the Hudson Gorge Wilderness to the east. This corridor would allow snowmobiles to pass between Newcomb and Indian Lake, which would be impossible if the Primitive and Wilderness areas abutted each other.

This classification displeased nearly everyone: Wilderness proponents bemoaned the presence of the Wild Forest corridor and the snowmobile traffic it would bring while Wild Forest advocates complained that access to the ponds was still limited by the need to carry a boat into the Essex Chain rather than being able to launch from pond-adjacent parking. Rather than providing a resolution to the crisis, this redressive action had the opposite effect and instead sparked even more debate and acrimony, leading to a state of schism. How did this occur? Why was a Primitive classification made for these lands? From a purely technical perspective, a Primitive classification made the most sense. Primitive areas are essentially managed as Wilderness areas, but there are two major differences that would cause lands to be

classified as Primitive instead of Wilderness. According to the APSLMP (2016:28), these include the presence of non-conforming structures or improvements whose removal cannot be pinned to a fixed deadline, or the fragility of the resource is such that it requires management as Wilderness even if its size and character do not meet the standards for a Wilderness classification.

In the case of the Essex Chain, the former was the issue that led to the Primitive classification. As I have discussed above, the Essex Chain tract is crisscrossed by miles of hardened logging roads. Hardened roads are not paved, but they also aren't simple dirt roads. The creation of a hardened road usually includes stripping off the soft topsoil and replacing it with sand and stone and then compacting the surface. Roads built in such a manner can withstand heavy log truck traffic without the severe rutting and washouts that occur in non-hardened roads. It also takes a much longer time for such roads to be reabsorbed into the forest when maintenance on them ceases. One of my informants owns about 100 acres of Adirondack forestland that he has been logging on for thirty years. His operation is at such a small scale that he doesn't need to make hard roads but rather uses skidders -- four-wheel drive heavy machinery with large tires (30-36 inches in diameter, 18-20 inches wide) -- to move logs out of the woods to a central loading point. He showed me a ten-year old skidder trail that had grown in thick with saplings and underbrush. This was a hardwood forest, and a decade's worth of leaves had fallen and decomposed on the once bare earth that was turned up by churning tires. The path was barely discernible, only revealing itself through the size differences between the older trees on its margins and the younger in the middle. In another ten years, you probably wouldn't see it at all.

The same is not true for hardened roads, which are made to be resistant to the forces of people and nature alike, and make a poor substrate for vegetation.

An additional non-conforming structure in the ECLPA is the large culvert between Fourth and Fifth Lakes (Figure 8). The culvert is large enough for a canoe to pass through, and indeed there is a rope strung along its ceiling that allows paddlers to pull themselves through, hand over hand. A road passes over the culvert, and traveling west to east will eventually bring one to the Gooley Club compound on the south shore of Third Lake. The culvert area would also be the proposed site for a two-car parking lot with a campsite and hand boat launch accessible to people with disabilities. This culvert was an issue for many Wilderness advocates who would have preferred its removal. But while the culvert drew the ire of some, it was not the most controversial non-conforming feature in the Essex Chain. That honor would go to an iron bridge, known as the Polaris Bridge, on the eastern edge of the ECLPA (Figure 9). The fate of the Polaris bridge figured heavily in the public hearings focused on the management of the ECLPA, and I now turn to those discussions drawing primarily on my experience at the DEC hearing held in Newcomb on July 7, 2015.



Figure 8. Culvert between Fourth and Fifth Lakes (Author Photo)



Figure 9. Essex Chain Lakes Primitive Area Map Showing Polaris Bridge (NYSDEC).

The first event on Tuesday, July 7, 2015 was a DEC hearing to present the proposed management plan for the ECLPA. Like the majority of public hearings, it was held at 7pm. The rationale for evening hearings is that they allow people to attend after work, but this assumption butts against the reality of working life in a tourism-

based economy, especially in the high season. Many people who work in or own businesses such as restaurants and bars or lodgings are at work during these hours. Still, the meeting drew a crowd of about fifty people, who milled about in the entrance hall of Newcomb Central School, enjoying the air conditioning on what was a hot and muggy Adirondack summer day. It was an older crowd, all white, and much of the pre-hearing talk was not about the proceedings ahead but about the now infamous prison escape at Clinton Correctional Facility in Dannemora.

Almost a month earlier to the day, inmates Richard Matt and David Sweat, both serving life sentences for murder, emerged from a manhole outside the prison walls and disappeared into the thick Adirondack woods, precipitating a massive manhunt that would last three weeks and cost 23 million dollars. Matt was shot and killed by Border Patrol agents on June 26, 2015 just south of Malone, about 50 miles away from the prison. Two days later, New York State Trooper Sergeant Jay Cook shot and apprehended Sweat in the town of Constable, about a mile from the Canadian border. The escape and manhunt had been a dominating presence in the lives and conversations of North Country residents since its occurrence, and even though it was now over it remained a constant topic of public and private discourse. Governor Cuomo was a ubiquitous media presence, and one man in a Corrections Officer uniform standing in front of me said to his companion, “everyone’s sick of listening to Cuomo.”

The mood of the room was pretty jovial as the crowd moved into the auditorium and began to take their seats. I sat about midway up a section on the right side of the room and noticed a spatial pattern that I would see repeated at the hearing

in January, which was also held in this location. Local people and their representatives sat on the right side of the room, while the representatives of environmental NGOs took their seats on the left. The usual cast of characters on that side was present: Willie Janeway, executive director of the Adirondack Council with the Council's conservation director, Rocci Aguirre; Peter Bauer, executive director of Protect The Adirondacks in his trademark red fleece jacket; and the managing partners of Adirondack Wild, David Gibson and Dan Plumley.

On my side of the room were the supervisors of four of the five towns in the upper Hudson Recreation Hub: George Canon of Newcomb, Ron Moore of North Hudson, Brian Wells of Indian Lake, and Stephen McNally of Minerva. Bill Farber, chairman of the Hamilton County Board of Supervisors, and Jim Rolf, then president of the New York State Snowmobile Association were also present. Dave Winchell, the NYSDEC Spokesperson, took the stage and said the hearing would be starting soon. It was already ten minutes after seven and Winchell cracked a joke that we were running on "Adirondack time." Winchell, a lifelong Adirondack resident, cuts an extremely amiable and engaging figure. Quick to smile and laugh, with ruddy cheeks and the crow's feet wrinkles that indicate one does so often, it was clear that Winchell was well-liked by both Wilderness and Wild Forest advocates. Winchell said that Adirondackers were always late, and again remarked about "North Country time."

After a few more minutes Winchell called the meeting to order. He explained that the purpose of the meeting was to give an overview of proposals for the Unit Management Plan (UMP) for the Essex Chain Lakes Management Complex (ECLMC). DEC staff are responsible for the creation of UMPs following the

classification of Forest Preserve lands by the APA. UMPs are large and complex documents: the ECLMC plan is 248 pages and encompasses a detailed accounting of the natural, historical, and recreational resources of the tract, in addition to objectives and guidelines for ongoing management of the unit. UMPs include a process to ensure compliance with the State Environmental Quality Review Act (Title 6 NYCRR Part 617). Commonly abbreviated as SEQRA and pronounced “seeker,” the act requires state agencies to perform environmental impact review and to consider them “equally with social and economic factors during discretionary decision making” (<https://www.dec.ny.gov/permits/6208.html>). APA staff work in conjunction with DEC to make sure the UMP adheres to the APSLMP, an issue that, as I have shown above and will below, is a central part of the Essex Chain conflict.

Winchell noted that the UMP process was also under the purview of New York’s Wild, Scenic, and Recreational Rivers Act (Title 6 NYCRR Part 666). This Act seeks enhanced protection for rivers the state classifies as Wild, Scenic, or Recreational. Three Wild rivers flow through the ECLMC: the Hudson, the Indian, and the Cedar. Winchell stated that because of this, hearings were required to be held near the rivers in question. Winchell introduced Corrie O’Dea, the DEC Forester in charge of the plan, before her presentation of a summary to the audience. He noted that this was solely a presentation and “not a time to debate, a time to ask questions.”

O’Dea took the podium and began a brief Power Point presentation, heavy on maps, that hit on the major points of the plan. She urged attendees to pick up paper copies or CDs of the full proposed plan at the back of the room, or to download a copy from the DEC website. O’Dea emphasized that recreation was the focus of the plan,

and there was a lot of motor vehicle access, especially to the Fifth Lake site for people with disabilities, and to the general public through DEC-issued permits. One important feature of the plan was the proposed Community Connector Trail (CCT) linking Indian Lake with Minerva. This proposed trail would be primarily for snowmobiles, though theoretically a multi-use trail. Two essential components of this plan were the Polaris Bridge on the Hudson River, and a bridge that DEC proposed to construct over the Cedar River. It was on these points that the evening's discussion would largely turn.

When O'Dea finished her presentation, Winchell stepped up to begin the public comment portion of the hearing. He urged the audience to be civil, and to heed the three-minute limit, especially given the number of attendees, which was around 50. Winchell asked that speakers please wrap up their comments quickly when the timer went off, and that he would give a warning beforehand. The first speaker was George Canon, longtime Supervisor of the town of Newcomb. Canon noted that the connectivity this plan provided was necessity for the towns, especially with regard to snowmobiling, which he called the major economic benefit of the purchase. Canon said that the supervisors of the five towns had met with Governor Cuomo two years before the purchase to discuss how the towns could benefit economically, and a key part of this was more motor vehicle access. Canon is well-known as a local leader with a long history of challenging the APA and its land use regulations, and the end of his comments he was met with a loud roar of applause, mostly from the right side of the room.

Ron Moore, supervisor of the town of North Hudson, followed Canon. Moore

said that “maximum reasonable access” should be the governing principle for management of the Complex to support a “wide array of uses.” He voiced his support for the UMP’s proposal to allow floatplane access on First Lake and a burst of applause erupted from around where I was seated. Moore concluded by stating that for the towns to see the full economic potential of the purchase the state needed to allow reasonable access. As with Canon, applause from the auditorium’s right side carried Moore from the podium.

The next speaker was Bill Farber. He praised The Nature Conservancy for doing “real outreach” with the communities involved in this “transformational” transaction. Like Canon, Farber spoke about how Governor Cuomo stressed the economic benefits of the acquisition and said the process showed people coming together to “make Forest Preserve an economic opportunity.” He asserted that snowmobiling was “the real economic lifeblood of these communities” and that they “desperately, desperately, need these opportunities to survive.”

The common thread running through these first three comments is the idea of putting nature to work for capitalism. During his comments, Farber stressed that the Forest Preserve was a good thing, and we should “protect it for eternity.” But he also emphasized that the job of the Forest Preserve was to provide opportunities for capital accumulation. This is a key area of focus in Moore’s world-ecology perspective, being attuned not to the effects of capitalism on nature, but how capital creates specific natures through what it asks of them. In this case, people like Farber, Moore, and Canon seek to put nature to work by using it as a place for motorized recreation. By transforming the forest through the creation of the Community Connector snowmobile

trail, the Five Towns hoped to enhance the recreational possibilities of the tract and drive tourism spending to their communities.

But Wild Forest advocates were not alone in their desire to use nature for capital accumulation. Wilderness advocates also lean heavily on this tack, with the general (and mostly unsupported) argument that Wilderness is the main reason why people come to the Park in the first place and preserving land as Wilderness is the pathway towards the greatest economic gains. Willie Janeway, tall, slender, and patrician, took the podium in his dark suit and began to speak about how the Adirondack Park is “ecologically unique” and “nationally significant.” He praised the plan for its wide stakeholder involvement, but asserted that protecting the resource was the paramount concern in order to “realize benefits for all New Yorkers.” Janeway stressed that preserving the “wild character” of the land would lead to the greater economic benefit.

Bob Kafin, the vice chair of the Adirondack Council and an attorney by profession echoed Janeway’s comments. He agreed that optimizing the economic benefits to communities was important, but that this should be done by preserving the tract as Wilderness. Kafin said the snowmobile trail would be an “economic downer” and would serve to drive visitors away from rather than to the Essex Chain. He hammered on the proposal to retain the Polaris Bridge, noting that it was “nonconforming, intended as temporary, and never open to the public.” Kafin continued to speak after the timer buzzed, ignoring the signal that his time was up. Speaking over calls for him to take his seat, Kafin said the plan “rewrites history and is misleading,” and that wild lands were more important than recreational

infrastructure.

When Kafin finally relinquished the podium, Pete Nelson came forward and began his commentary, which was primarily about himself. Nelson talked about his long engagement with the Park as a seasonal visitor, and noted that he would soon become a full-time resident, fulfilling a long-held dream. He talked about his purchase of an inholding (a parcel of private land surrounded by public land) in the High Peaks region and his commitment to preserving it as a wild place. He was adamantly opposed to the Polaris Bridge, and argued that the bridge and snowmobile trail would lead to fragmentation of wild lands. Like Janeway and Kafin before him, Nelson asserted that the greater good would be better served, and economic benefits more richly reaped if the land was allowed to return to its wild state.

David Gibson of Adirondack Wild spoke next. His main issue was with the planning process, which he felt had moved too fast. Gibson said that the presentation of the plan had “jumped the gun” and that the critical test of the plan was “does this comply with the State Land Master Plan?” Gibson said it did not, and scolded DEC staff, remarking that they should “confront the law and not try to evade the law.” The proposed and existing bridges, and the Wild Forest corridor with its snowmobile trail weakened the area’s wild character, it was not, he said, “a ‘primitive light’ area.” Peter Bauer, who followed the speaker after Gibson, shared many of his concerns about the violation of the SLMP. He argued that “if a part of Finch Pruyn has remained wild and trail-less to 2015 it should remain so.” He decried the “heavy foot print” of the snowmobile trail, noting that it would require the removal of thousands of trees, and calling the proposal the “largest expansion of motor vehicle use in the Forest

Preserve” to date.

In between Gibson and Bauer, Ken Helms of Newcomb stepped up to offer his support of the plan. Helms runs an excavating business, and while short in stature he has the thick chest and shoulders and ruddy skin of someone accustomed to doing heavy labor outdoors. He began by offering his hope that the stewardship of the former private owners would be replicated by the DEC. He noted that snowmobiling was key to the towns’ economies, calling it “vital.” He said that local communities needed to fill the voids left by logging jobs that were taken by the purchase, and that it “can’t be just summer tourism.” Helms’s commentary took a personal turn when he directed his attention to the Polaris Bridge. He noted that in the 1950s the Polaris Bridge was a wooden bridge, and it was of major importance for safety reasons, offering a quick river crossing to get help into or men out of the woods in the event of a logging accident. He spoke with pride about the hundreds of thousands of board feet of lumber his own father moved over the bridge. After the hearing, I spoke with Helms and was touched by how much the bridge meant to him personally. It wasn’t only about the snowmobiling, a sport he supported and participated in, it was also a material connection for him to a past and people who had gone on. He spoke about crossing the bridge with his father (now deceased) in a log truck as a boy and longed to go back there now that the land was open to the public. Revisiting physical sites is a powerful component of remembering and it was clear this was the case for Helms.

These examples of testimony highlight some key differences in the Wilderness/Wild Forest debate and participants and are worth unpacking. In particular, I wish to relate these differences to habitus and capital. One of the striking

differences between Wilderness and Wild Forest proponents that I noticed throughout my fieldwork, and that was on display during this hearing, was their physicality.

Willie Janeway, David Gibson, and Peter Bauer --the directors of the Adirondack Council, Adirondack Wild, and Protect the Adirondacks -- are all tall and slender. All have runner's builds, lean, with long legs and narrow shoulders. They dress neatly: Janeway favors dark suits; Gibson business casual chinos and a button up shirt. Bauer is usually the most casually dressed, often in jeans and a red fleece jacket. The bodies of these men and their manner of dress represent their middle and upper-class embodied cultural capital.

Janeway in particular is an elite's elite. He is a member of the Ausable Club, an exclusive private organization and bastion of old money that owns 7,000 acres of land in the High Peaks region. Club members have camps on the grounds, many of which are opulent mansions built in the Adirondack style. Membership is restricted, and the criteria are secret but a source who works at the Club told me one needed to have at least one million dollars in liquid assets (i.e., cash) to be considered. Janeway was educated at St. Lawrence University, an upper echelon private school, and was formerly a regional director at the DEC before coming on board with the Adirondack Council. He wears a dark suit not for comfort, but because his habitus dictates that is how professionals dress when they are working.

The physical appearance of Moore, Canon, and Helms stood in stark contrast to that of the environmentalists. Moore and Canon often wear windbreakers and baseball caps at public meetings. At this particular hearing, the only one where I saw him speak, Helms was dressed in jeans and a clean but well-worn T-shirt. All three

men are on the short side and share a thickness to their physiques -- not simply bellies, which all have to some degree, but also muscle gained through physical labor. Bill Farber shares these physical traits but dresses a little differently, usually in a button-down shirt and tie, sometimes with a sports coat. Farber's shirt sleeves are often rolled up to his elbows, giving the appearance of a man ready to get down to work. These men display a different sort of embodied cultural capital, one more in tune with their working-class backgrounds that demand practical dress.

In addition to their physical differences, there is a clear difference in discursive style among the two groups of men, both in how they speak and what they speak about. The wilderness proponents share a precise, professional manner of speaking, free from the dropped "gs" and self-effacements of their counterparts. Their diction is impeccable -- each word cleanly articulated and correctly pronounced, their voices free from accents and their use of vocalized pauses (Salazar 2014) and filler words (Hazel, McMahon, and Schmidt 2011) is minimal. They are confident and polished public speakers, entirely comfortable with standing before an audience and ensuring their points are made. Peter Bauer often appears slightly bored and exasperated, as if he is somehow above it all and this has caused his patience to run short. Listening to his testimony at the hearing felt like being lectured at rather than engaged with. When I discussed Bauer with other informants during the course of my work, a common complaint was that people felt he "talked down" to them.

The Wild Forest advocates on the other hand shared a more informal manner of speech. They dropped the g on words like "doing" or "getting," and their voices had a distinctive North Country twang, an accent that ties an "o" to "i" so words like

“right” come out as “roight.” Their style was conversational rather than presentational, and their testimony seemed to be given off the cuff rather than a prepared statement such as that given by Janeway and Gibson. As I discussed in Chapter 4, speech is a key marker of class and distinction, and how these men spoke was an articulation of their embodied cultural capital.

Another pronounced difference among the two groups was what they focused on during their testimony. The Wilderness proponents all foregrounded the legal aspects of the classification and management proposals. After the legal concerns, they appealed to science, such as the importance of biodiversity conservation and minimization of habitat fragmentation. The universal benefits of Wilderness and the legacy of Forever Wild were also ubiquitous talking points for Wilderness advocates. Indeed, the appeals to leave Wilderness untouched for future generations were a ubiquitous part of hearing testimony, lending a decidedly future-oriented perspective to their arguments.

Wild Forest supporters tended to focus firmly on the present. The main thrust of their arguments was the poor economic conditions that Park residents were faced with. Rather than a legacy, their concern was present survival of their communities. Instead of procedure and law, material conditions and emotional attachments were brought to the fore, such as in Helm’s comments about his family’s long ties to the land through work. The abstractness of law, procedure, and the future that characterized the comments of Wilderness supporters was eschewed in favor of the concreteness of the here and now: aging and shrinking populations, youth flight, and lack of economic opportunity.

These two temporal orientations have much to do with socioeconomic class. The emphasis on the present as opposed to the distant future has been shown to be a characteristic of people living on the lower income end of the socioeconomic class spectrum (Harrington 1962, Fitchen 1981, Payne, DeVol, and Smith 2009). Suzanne Lavigne, the Director of Franklin County Community Services and a poverty educator introduced me to the phrase used in the Bridges Out of Poverty workshops that she presents, “Tyranny of the Moment,” to describe the immediate present-centered temporal orientation of people in poverty. This orientation is shared by many Wild Forest supporters, especially those in the five towns containing the Finch lands. Even if they have moved into the middle class, the emphasis on the now remains as an expression of habitus. Conversely, the Wilderness supporters’ future orientation reflects an elite habitus shaped by freedom from necessity.

As the example above shows, Wilderness and Wild Forest advocates each bring their habitus and cultural and social capital to bear in the field of Adirondack land use conflict. It also demonstrates that these debates are as much about class as they are land, though this is elided by the discourse that centers on tourism as a development intervention. Much the same scene played out at the APA hearing on management proposals held in January 2016. All the people described above attended, and they said mostly the same things. The APA eventually adopted a Unit Management Plan that accommodated the hybrid classification of the Essex Chain lands, and like the classification, this compromise angered both Wilderness and Wild Forest supporters. Additionally, legislation was passed to amend the SLMP to allow bicycles in the Essex Chain tract, a series of events that caused another controversy to

flare.

Ultimately, there was no resolution to this debate and parties remained locked in a state of schism. As I was finishing my fieldwork, another land classification debate erupted over the Boreas Ponds tract. I did not study this conflict, but as I had remained in the Adirondacks I couldn't help but pay some attention to it. Again, the same arguments about Wilderness or Wild Forest and which was better for economic development were trotted out. This process too ended in a classification that left both sides unhappy and cynical about the future of the Park.

CHAPTER 6

AFTERMATH

Tourism in the Essex Chain

As discussed in the previous chapter, the Primitive classification of the Essex Chain Lakes tract and the attendant legislative revisions to allow bicycles there did little to settle the conflict and in fact had the opposite effect. In this chapter I examine the material experience of tourism in the Essex Chain and draw comparisons between it and the Saint Regis Canoe Area, the other land management unit in the Park with a focus on non-motorized watercraft recreation. I draw on visitor data obtained by FOIA request from NYSDEC, participant observation, and interviews with tourists and outfitters. As I will show, tourism in the Chain was not the economically transformative experience that it was touted to be by the Governor, environmental NGOs, and local leaders. While there were some benefits (and some unexpected negative consequences) at a micro-local scale, the tract ultimately failed to draw increased numbers of visitors to the area and thus had little substantive effect on the broader local economic situation.

On my first visit to the Essex Chain in June 2015, I drove right past the access road because there still wasn't any signage on the main road despite the land having been opened to the public two years earlier. Once I turned around and got on the right track I found myself on a narrow two-lane paved road hiding into the forest. The day was clear, and the midmorning sun already hot, which made me thankful for the ample shade cast over the road by the tall trees along its margins. The road wound past

numerous tightly-spaced driveways that lead to seasonal camps on the shore of Goodnow Flow. About five miles in the road turned to dirt, at first fairly well-graded but becoming rougher and rutted the further I got from the pavement's terminus. Progress was slow, and I was grateful my truck had four-wheel drive and relatively high ground clearance as I could see bowling-ball sized rocks jutting out of the road ahead. I passed by cleared areas on the side of the road that once served as log landings: points where logs were collected before loading onto trucks. There were clearings blanketed in slash -- logging waste -- that evidenced fairly recent work, while others presented as thick meadows of wild raspberries, chest-high, the growth of several seasons.

About 40 minutes after leaving the main road I finally saw the familiar brown and yellow of a DEC sign that indicated the Deer Pond access to the Essex Chain was just ahead. I pulled into the lot, a simple dirt and gravel clearing -- likely another former log landing -- and parked. There was ample room, the clearing could probably fit a dozen vehicles but there were only two others that day, both mid-sized pickups with boat racks in their beds. There was also an outhouse, a somewhat unusual fixture at a DEC trailhead. It was clean and freshly painted. A DEC employee who did not take the vagaries of human behavior for granted had written "clean toilet paper only" on the lid of the large coffee can that held the roll to protect it from being chewed by rodents.

I shouldered my canoe, a borrowed lightweight pack boat that weighed about 20 pounds, and headed down the moderately steep trail towards Deer Pond. The pond is shaped like a skillet, and the carry leading to Third Lake, the largest in the Essex

Chain, is reached by paddling across its handle. Once across, another moderately steep trail quickly links up with a dirt road that forms the main part of the carry. The walk was fairly flat until the descent to Third Lake, and halfway down the hill I could hear the whine of a chain saw coming across the water, probably from the Gooley Club main compound on the south shore of the lake. I slid my canoe into the water and headed east, following the sound of the saw. I didn't see any other paddlers on the water. The only activity was at the Gooley compound, where in the distance I could see members milling about on the shoreline, dragging brush. These were the only people I saw during my day on the Essex Chain.

In fact, all of my visits to the Essex Chain were characterized by few encounters with other users. This was a marked contrast to my trips in the Saint Regis Canoe Area (SRCA), where every time I encountered other paddlers, sometimes many. On one August day on the SRCA's Long Pond I counted over a dozen other parties. On summer weekends the parking area at Little Clear Pond, one of the main entry points to the SRCA, was almost always full. On my three weekend visits to the Essex Chain, I never saw the lot even close to full capacity. The light usage of the Essex Chain did not escape the notice of Wilderness advocates, who argued that the hybrid classification of the area was keeping people away. Peter Bauer (2016) compared visitor data from June through August 2015 from the Essex Chain, Little Tupper Lake, Lake Lila, and Low's Lake. Bauer found the usage to be light compared to these other areas and argued that "the hodge podge of conflicting uses allowed there may be keeping people away."

There are some significant problems with Bauer's analysis, however. The first

is that it is restricted to only one year. Visitation patterns vary from year to year, and are influenced by such disparate factors as the weather, the price of gas, and the state of the broader economy. One year of visitor data does not offer any insight into patterns of visitation. I also found the areas Bauer chose for comparison to be questionable. While they are all popular Adirondack paddling destinations that are motorless, they are dominated by large lakes, a very different experience than that offered by the Essex Chain, which is characterized by visiting many small bodies of water, often carrying the boat overland between them. It is not safe to assume that tourists who seek that type of experience have the same motivations as those who would visit areas like the Essex Chain. Bauer's analysis is solely based on numbers: he did not actually ask any visitors to these areas why they chose to go there. Thus, the conclusion that he drew is extremely suspect to say the least. Finally, the question of Bauer's own motivation is an issue. Bauer, through his organization Protect the Adirondacks, had been a vocal supporter of a Wilderness designation for the Essex Chain, and fierce critic of the subsequent classification and management decisions. It was very much in his interest to show a negative outcome resulting from this process.

I conducted my own analysis of visitor data from the Essex Chain. I chose the SRCA as a comparison because it is the management unit closest in character to the Chain: a network of ponds connected by carries that offers a motorless paddling experience. Through Freedom of Information Law requests, I obtained electronic copies of register sheets from Deer Pond in the Essex Chain and Little Clear Pond in the SRCA. Both are main entry points for their respective units. The SRCA does have another entry, a landing on Upper Saint Regis Lake, but the register box is not located

there. Instead it is on the shore of Bog Pond, and necessitates paddling across the lake and then a carry to get to it. The register at Little Clear Pond is right near the parking lot and impossible to miss, as is the one at Deer Pond. Additionally, the access point on Upper Saint Regis Lake is shared with motorized watercraft. The Little Clear Pond launch was closest in layout, character, and experience to Deer Pond.

Register data always needs some caveats. The first is that the count derived from the register should be considered a minimum number. Signing the trailhead register is required, but unenforced, and there is no way of knowing how many visitors choose to not sign in or overlook it. On several occasions, I examined the register in person at Little Clear Pond and found more cars than signatures, or cars from other states with no corresponding entry in the address column. Figure 10 shows a sample from a Deer Pond register sheet.

DATE	NAME (if group, leader only)	ADDRESS (Street, City, State or Province)	TELEPHONE (include area code)	TOTAL NUMBER IN GROUP	LENGTH OF STAY (Days)	CHECK OUT	Where do you plan to go, and what trail or route will you take? (example: Marcy Dam, Lake Colden, Mt. Marcy, back to Adirondack Loj on Van Hoevenberg Trail)
9/14	[REDACTED]	LP	[REDACTED]	1	1	✓	chain
9/25	[REDACTED]	Lancaster PA	[REDACTED]	4	DAY	✓	1st + 2nd
9/25	[REDACTED]	Saranac Upper Lake, NY	[REDACTED]	3	2	✓	show site 3 #1
9/25	[REDACTED]	HANSBURG VT	[REDACTED]	2	1	✓	255th CHAIN LAKE

Figure 10. Deer Pond Register, Names and Telephone Numbers Redacted (Author Photo)

Another issue with using trail register data is that it can be difficult to pin down accurate counts. Sometimes people sign the register but don't indicate the number of people in the group. I counted visitors using the figures from the "Total Number in Group" column, and if no number was provided I counted the entry as one visitor, but there is no way to know how many people might have actually been in the group. Reviewing these records also demands diligence as dates are frequently out of sequence, and sometimes people flip to a random empty page to record their visit. Still, despite these pitfalls trail registers remain the only source of visitor data for land management units, and these data are sufficient to show broad patterns. I compared total visitor numbers from July and August combined over the three years. These months are the height of the busy season in the Park and I wanted to capture a picture of how these areas fared during the busiest time of the year.

In addition to the register data, I also interviewed people who visited these areas. Most of these took place in town, but I did conduct two in the SRCA and one in the Essex Chain. I spoke to tourists, locals, and outfitters, focusing on why they chose to visit a specific area, their experiences there, and their desire to return. What I found both complicates and compliments Bauer's conclusion about low visitor numbers on the Essex Chain. Figure 11 shows the total number of visitors, single and multi-day, for July and August combined for both sites over the three-year period between 2014-2016.

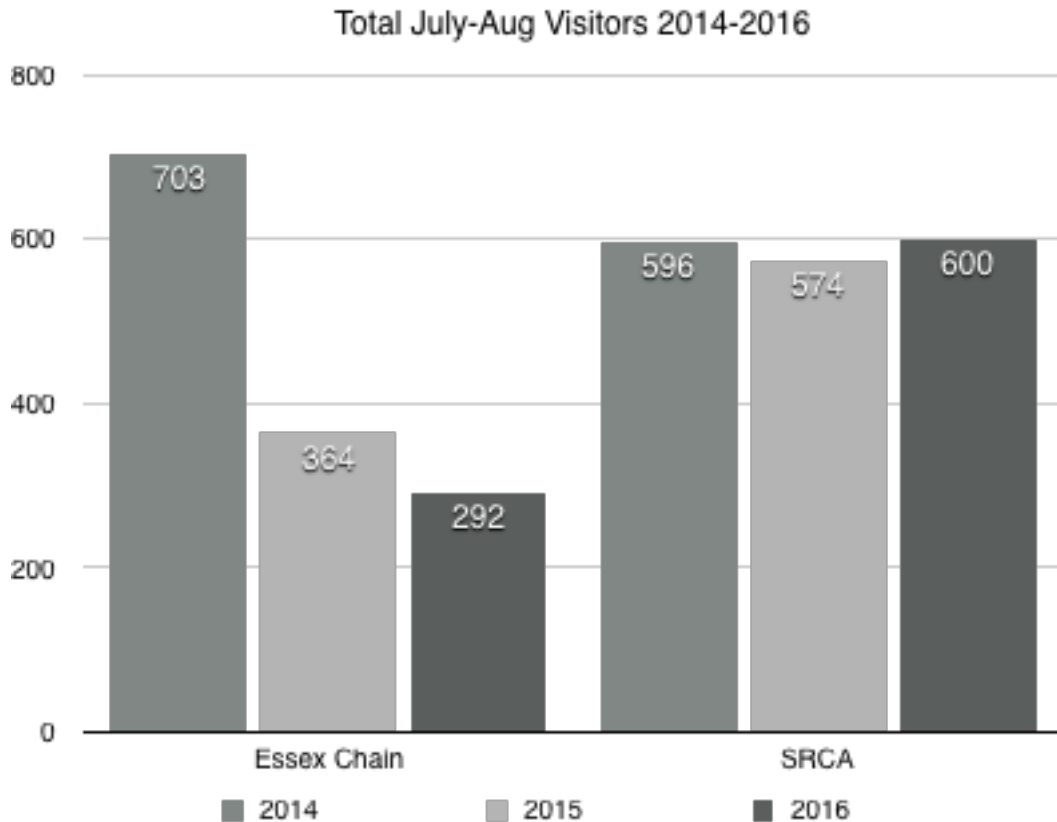


Figure 11. Total Visitor Numbers for July-August 2014-2016

My results support Bauer’s finding that the Essex Chain sees lighter use than a comparable area. Indeed, visitor numbers for the Chain declined precipitously between 2014 and 2015 and fell even lower in 2016, while numbers for the SRCA remained relatively constant. However, some of the reasons given for why people visited the area and would or would not return do not jibe with Bauer’s assertion that the classification of the tract, and its “conflicting uses” were keeping people away. One issue with the Essex Chain that several interviewees brought up was its relatively small size. One paddler noted that, even going at an easy pace, it was possible to visit every pond in a single day. Indeed, on my last trip to the Chain in September 2016 I visited Deer Pond, First, Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Lake in a little over five hours, and I am neither a particularly fit nor fast paddler. One informant, a guide,

said that it was a nice area, but there really wasn't much to it, and he'd only return if he was getting paid to guide a client there.

Access to the Chain also was an issue, but not in the way it was presented by Wild Forest proponents. People who complained about access to me were focused on the rough condition of the access road to the Deer Pond trailhead. Speaking of this road, an outfitter I interviewed said that the Essex Chain was a hassle to get to, especially for a group that required several boats. "There's no way I would pull my trailer down that," he said. A couple from Saranac Lake that I met in the SRCA had been to the Essex Chain once, and they complained about the rough road and having to practically creep down it in their Honda Civic. They noted that the access road to Little Clear Pond in the SRCA was also in rough shape, but it was only one-third of a mile long, not five, and they were thus able to spend more time paddling and less time driving.

Other patterns of visitation emerged from the data as well. There was a marked difference in the number of single day versus multi-day visits between the two sites. I counted multi day visits as any that indicated more than one in the "length of stay" column on the register sheet. Much of the difference is likely due to the size of the areas: the SRCA is much larger and has more than three times the designated camp sites (70) than the Essex Chain (22), but some informants reported that the camping regulations put in place when the Chain was newly opened were onerous and made camping less attractive. Figure 12 shows the three-year totals of single and multi-day visits in July and August to the Essex Chain and SRCA.

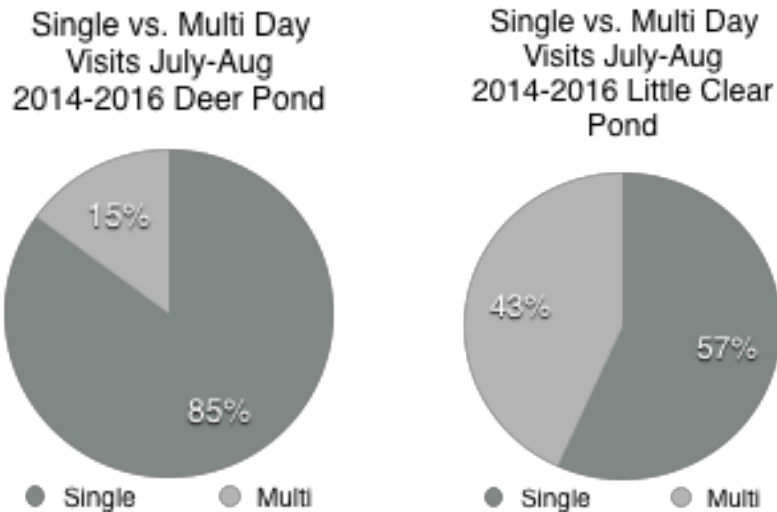


Figure 12. Single vs. Multi Day Visits

As the Figure shows, single day visits comprised the majority of use in the Essex Chain, while single and multi-day visits were more evenly distributed in the SRCA. When the Essex Chain was first opened to the public in 2013, camping was prohibited. This had some unexpected consequences for at least one local business. The first rush of visitors filled the Lake Eaton campground in Newcomb. In addition to running an outfitting service, Dave and Ruth Olbert also vend firewood, ice, and other sundries at the Lake Eaton campground. The Olberts reported that they had many regular customers who were displaced from the campground by the initial Essex Chain visitors who stayed there. Moreover, Dave noted that these visitors were markedly more self-sufficient than the usual Lake Eaton campers. “They were wilderness paddlers,” he said, and had come prepared with everything they needed. The Olberts’ business suffered as a result.

In July 2014, when camping was opened in the Chain, the DEC initiated two regulations that were widely met with displeasure: a ban on campfires and a permit and reservation system for waterfront campsites. Additionally, two campsites on First

Lake were reserved for the exclusive use of float plane customers. Both of these regulations have precedents in the Park, but their application in the Essex Chain was somewhat unusual. For several years, a ban on campfires has been in place in the eastern part of the High Peaks Wilderness Area. This area is the most heavily used place in the Park, and the campfire ban was instituted to prevent the cutting of live trees for firewood, as the forest around designated campsites had become denuded of dead and downed wood by the thousands of campers who visit each season. Likewise, camping on the islands in Lower Saranac Lake has also required a reservation and permit going back at least two decades. The application of a reservation and permit system to a backcountry camping area and peremptory ban on fires was something new, however.

To obtain a free permit, campers needed to call no more than ten days before their planned trip and then pick up their permit at SUNY ESF's Adirondack Interpretive Center in Newcomb, which was open 9am-7pm seven days per week. Campers could also stop into the center to acquire a permit, and they needed to have it before entering the Essex Chain. Reactions to the permit requirement were resoundingly negative. Even though the permit was free, potential visitors resented the hassle, especially the need to stop and pick the permit up. A DEC contact told me on background that the permit system was implemented because the Department was concerned about a flood of visitors when the tract was opened for camping. As the numbers in Figure 11 show, there was indeed a rush of visitation to the Essex Chain in 2014, but visitor numbers dropped substantially in the following years. In mid-August of 2016 the DEC discontinued the permit system, but the campfire ban remained in

place.

Reactions to the ban were also mostly negative, though it did have some support among hardcore followers of Leave No Trace principles. A thread on the ADK Forum (<http://adkforum.com/showthread.php?t=20434>) showed a mix of positions regarding the campfire prohibition. Campfires, though, are an Adirondack tradition and many campers cannot conceive of camping without one. This is evident by the multitudes of camp wood stands that pop up all over the Adirondacks just before Memorial Day weekend. Like mushrooms after a spring rain, these stands suddenly appear, dotting the landscape. Some are rudimentary affairs, a simple rack with a hand lettered sign advertising the price, while others are more elaborate. My unfriendly neighbor's stand provided a serendipitous source of informants and frequent annoyance, as patrons would often come knocking on my door when they found the stand empty as it is in Figure 13. After the Essex Chain regulations were made public, I would frequently intercept customers when I heard them at the stand and ask if they would ever consider camping without a fire?



Figure 13. My Neighbor's Camp Wood Stand (Author photo)

For the most part I would be met with an incredulous look. A few stand customers who reported that they spent a lot of time in the eastern High Peaks were agreeable to the idea, but the vast majority of campers said that a fire was an integral part of their camping experience. Some talked about how much they loved the smell, and how it lingered on their clothes and gear, a sensory reminder of their time away when they returned to their homes. Gathering around the fire to cook, and eat, and drink, and relax was a focal point of the experience for many. A pair of campers I met in the Essex Chain in July 2015 contacted me after their trip to talk about their experience. They reported that while they did have a very enjoyable time camping in the Chain, they missed the fire and found that it truncated their evening in camp as

they turned in for the night shortly after dark.

It is impossible to ascertain with any certainty why visitation to the Essex Chain was so light. Some of the factors I have discussed above doubtless contributed to the low number of visitors, but it is unclear which factor or combination of factors was most influential. The fact remains though that, given the extant data, the opening of the Essex Chain has failed to bring the large numbers of tourists to the area that the State and its NGO partners asserted it would. Thus, it has also been a failure as an economic development intervention. As I argued earlier in this work, tourism depends on volume because the goods and services that tourists spend money on, especially ecotourists, are primarily things like food, beverages, gasoline, and maybe lodging. These items have market-defined price ceilings that proprietors need to stay at least somewhat in line with if they want to move inventory. Of course, it is a usual practice to charge a little more for convenience, but even then, retail and service businesses need a certain amount of cash flow provided by high customer volume to survive. If this wasn't the case, the shoulder seasons in the Adirondacks would not be the problem that they are.

Overall, the opening of the Finch lands did not prove to be transformative to local economies. There were some small successes: The Nature Conservancy partnered with the DEC to offer \$500,000 in grant money to spread among small businesses focused on recreation and tourism in the Five Towns Recreation Hub. The Olberts joined forces with another guide to create the Newcomb Guide Service (NGS), and they received a grant which they used to purchase lightweight canoes and whitewater boats. The Olberts reported that having this gear has allowed them to offer

enhanced services to their clients. Dave Olbert told me that another business in Newcomb, a combination laundromat, deli, and grocery had also gotten a grant, but had closed the store down anyway. When I asked him if it was the place with the 24-hour self-serve gas pump he told me yes, and that the owners kept that going because otherwise they'd have to repay The Nature Conservancy for not keeping the store open for five years after receiving the money, which was part of the grant terms.

Beyond the Essex Chain

It is not surprising that the Finch lands intervention did not deliver the transformative economic impact that its boosters predicted. Development projects often fail to meet their stated goals (Ferguson 1994, Li 2007). In this case, not only did the intervention fail, but the situation also highlighted the fact that Adirondack land use conflicts remain intractable despite narratives of increased cooperation and participation. Indeed, as I was completing my fieldwork another debate over the classification of the Boreas Ponds erupted. This parcel was also part of the Finch land deal, and was the final tract to be purchased by the state. All of the themes I discussed in my analysis of the Essex Chain conflict were rehashed here: the economic benefits of Wilderness versus Wild Forest, access, roads, bicycles, and snowmobiles.

The tone of this debate was even more acrimonious than that over the Essex Chain. The Boreas Ponds conflict spawned two new advocacy groups, Adirondack Wilderness Advocates (AWA) and Access The Adirondacks, who argued for Wilderness and Wild Forest respectively. The major Adirondack preservation NGOs joined forces as a coalition, BeWildNY, to aid in getting members to public meetings. Their presence at these meetings was evidenced by their green T-shirts which bore the

slogan “I Want Wilderness!” Over 11,000 public comments were received by the APA during the classification comment period, aided in large part by form letter generators on the websites of all the Wilderness advocacy groups. AWA’s analysis of the comments found that 84 percent of comments supported either AWA’s proposal for a total Wilderness classification, or BeWildNY’s proposal for a one-mile Wilderness buffer around the ponds (Brown 2017). If the themes and lines of argument were similar to those deployed in the Essex Chain conflict, so too were the outcomes. The classification of the Boreas Ponds tract was mixed Wilderness and Wild Forest, with a motorized corridor, another hybrid classification aimed at satisfying everyone but ultimately pleasing no one.

The conflict over the Community Connector Trail is ongoing. Protect the Adirondacks has been a party in two lawsuits against the DEC related to the Trail. The first was filed in early December 2017 and it alleged that the DEC was contravening Article XIV because of the number of trees that the DEC would need to cut, which would constitute destruction of timber. The heart of the argument was the definition of timber, which according to the DEC is a tree that is three inches or greater diameter at breast height. Protect argued that the trail construction would necessitate the cutting of thousands of saplings and small trees. Their other objection concerned the grading and width of the trail, which they argued was more road-like and not in keeping with the wild character of the lands. The judge disagreed and found in favor of the DEC.

The second suit involved the proposed bridge over the Cedar River (not the Polaris Bridge) that I mentioned in Chapter 5. This bridge was an integral component of the Community Connector Trail plan and was viewed as the linchpin that would

allow snowmobilers -- and their money -- to move between Newcomb, Minerva, and beyond. Adirondack Wild joined Protect and the lawsuit was filed to block construction of the bridge in January 2019. The allegations of the suit were that the DEC violated New York's Wild, Scenic, and Recreational Act by proposing to construct the bridge for motorized vehicles over a river designated as Wild by the Act. This time the court agreed with Protect and Adirondack Wild, and issued a restraining order to stay construction in June. The matter remains unsettled despite the court decision, and it is likely that DEC will appeal in the near future.

This was not the only conflict related to public land that was (and still is) ongoing in the Park. In 2016, journalists and environmental groups began to sound the alarm that the Adirondacks, especially the Eastern High Peaks Wilderness Area, were suffering from the effects of overuse. One of the biggest problems noted was the improper disposal of human waste, and hikers complained of finding feces and toilet paper along the sides (and sometimes in the middle) of popular trails. Trail degradation and erosion were also cited as issues. A great irony of this situation was that groups like the Adirondack Council and ADK, who argued for the purchase of the Finch lands with the express purpose of increasing tourism, were now saying that there were too many tourists.

New York State did not take action to address these concerns, but it finally did when another crisis surfaced that had the immediate potential to impact public safety: insufficient parking. Many High Peaks trailheads are located on major highways, especially Routes 73 and 9. The parking areas for these were made decades ago and are woefully inadequate in size for the increased visitation the Park has seen over the

last decade. As a result, visitors park on the narrow shoulder of the road, and the overflow of cars lines the highway in both directions. The trailhead for Cascade Mountain is a particular problem because of its location and popularity.

Cascade is probably the most popular High Peak. Its clear rocky summit offers fantastic 360 degree views, and it is a relatively short hike at a little under five miles. The trailhead is on Route 73 at the head of Cascade Pass, and the road is narrow and winding. Route 73 is a main artery between Lake Placid and I-87, known as the Northway, an interstate highway that serves as main corridor to the Park from points south. As a result, Route 73 has a constant flow of traffic and a speed limit, often exceeded, of 55 mph. In August of 2015 I helped an informant move from Lake Placid to North Hudson, an undertaking that required multiple trips through the Cascade Pass. It was a beautiful Saturday and Cascade was busy as evidenced by the long line of parked cars snaked along the highway. Every so often a door would fling open into the road, causing us to swerve into the other lane. It was a hair-raising experience, and one that was repeated again and again. We encountered a similar situation south of Keene Valley, where there are numerous popular trailheads along Route 73 until it terminates at the junction with Route 9.

In 2017, the DEC moved to address the problem with a temporary closure of the Cascade and Pitchoff trailheads and parking areas on the Columbus Day/Canadian Thanksgiving holiday weekend. Additionally, parking along Route 73 was banned. DEC directed hikers to park at the Mt. Van Hoevenberg Sports Complex a little over a mile to the east. Hikers could then take a route through the Complex's Nordic ski trails to link up with the Cascade trail, adding close to four miles round trip to the hike. This

solution proved controversial, and many arguments about access, fairness, and the need to accommodate tourists cropped up. The trailhead was closed again in 2018, but this time hikers needed to take a shuttle to Cascade and Pitchoff, a further move by the DEC to limit use.

Along with the holiday closures, the DEC implemented a roadside parking ban on Route 73 south of Keene Valley in May 2019. Again, hikers and businesspeople complained about access and driving tourists away. Perhaps the most controversial part of the ban was that it would be the responsibility of Forest Rangers to police the parking situation and write tickets. With the increase of visitation the Park has seen over the last decade, the workload of rangers has risen, especially that related to search and rescue incidents, of which there were more than 100 in 2015 (Van Laer 2017). An informant who was a Ranger told me that rescue operations were so busy that he was required to spend most of his time patrolling in his truck, rather than in the backcountry, so he could respond to incidents. Rangers and their supporters decried this decision, even if the ban was necessary to protect hikers and drivers.

Conflict related to the Forest Preserve is a constant feature of life in the Adirondacks. It does not touch everyone at the same time or in the same way, but it is always there. Some Adirondack actors, like ANCA, have stated that the Park is in a new era of collaboration and inclusiveness with regards to problems related to land use and development. I argue that while there may indeed be more material opportunity for people to participate in the social dramas that are Adirondack land use conflicts, they are still fields of highly unequal relations.

Conclusion

In Chapter 1, I asked: what makes Adirondack land conflicts so resistant to resolution? Is it truly the case that, as Ross Whaley stated, “Adirondackers would rather fight than win?” In subsequent chapters I laid out the historical context of Adirondack land debates and described a recent conservation and development intervention and the discourses and practices that made it possible. Ultimately, I judged the intervention to be a failure: not only did it fail to transform local economies as proponents had promised, but it also led to increased conflict rather than ameliorating it. This is a direct contradiction to the assertions made by some actors that collaboration and cooperation are increasing in the Park. So how did this situation come to be? Unlike Whaley, I do not lay this at the feet of personal choice, but locate the persistence of such conflicts in their relations with neoliberal capitalism, the temporal orientations of conservation and development discourse and practice, and the habitus of actors.

The political-economic milieu of the contemporary United States is one of increasingly neoliberal capitalism. This affects conservation and development projects, and the conflicts that surround them, both materially and ideologically. The material conditions of capitalism are such that within this system there are winners (capitalists) and losers (labor). As I wrote in Chapter 4, the fundamental logic of capitalism is profit seeking. This is achieved by minimizing costs, especially for labor. In development schemes that hinge on tourism, cost savings are achieved by cheapening the labor of service workers who form the bulk of a tourism labor force. This is done through means like paying low wages or using on-call scheduling, as I

discussed in Chapter 4. This is not a win-win situation as presented by development actors. Such interventions do little to alleviate the conditions of poverty, inequality, and lack of economic opportunity that characterize places where development through tourism is proposed.

Castree (2008a) urged scholars of nature's neoliberalization to not simply rely on definitions of neoliberalism, but to give an accounting of actually existing neoliberalism and its effects. In the case of the Finch intervention, the first characteristic of actually existing neoliberalism was the wholesale marketization of Adirondack nature. In Chapter 5, I showed how marketization of Adirondack nature suffused the Finch lands debate, as evidenced in hearing testimony, public comments, and materials produced advocacy groups and government agencies. Increasingly, the value of protecting the Adirondack Park is seen and expressed in terms of its usefulness with regards to capital accumulation. It is rare for any call to protect the Park to not include an appeal to capital. A senior representative of one of the major Adirondack environmental groups expressed that they often felt pressured by board members to include language about economic impact in materials supporting Forest Preserve protections.

In addition to rampant marketization, another real manifestation of neoliberalism in the Park is the increased participation and importance of civil society flanking mechanisms like development and conservation NGOs. These flanking mechanisms take on roles, like the facilitation of economic development and citizen well-being, that generally fall under the purview of governments. Here is where the tensions between textbook neoliberalism and actually-existing neoliberalism come

into view. While organizations like The Nature Conservancy, which played a major role in the Finch intervention, are flanking mechanisms separate from the state, other entities like the Regional Economic Development Councils are a sort of hybrid. The REDCs are sanctioned by the state, but they are comprised of public and private sector experts who are tasked with making decisions.

The experts who staff these flanking mechanisms exercise their power by acting as trustees. This trusteeship involves claims to specialized knowledge and therefore power, as I discussed in Chapter 4. A primary way in which trustees deploy their power is through public discourse. Because of their authority and resources, discourse produced by trustees is often highly visible and accepted as being reliable. As I showed in Chapter 5, the discourse produced by development and conservation actors/trustees has strong temporal orientations, especially towards the past and the future. Future orientations are expressed in a variety of ways, such as hope for a better economic future, or preserving nature for future generations.

The future orientation of much conservation and development discourse is powerful. It distracts attention from current real-world conditions by imploring people to look forward to an improved future. It also serves to quash dissent by positioning those who resist looking forward as backward and anachronistic, like the Kenosha auto workers in Dudley's (1994) study, or the Sulawesi highlanders in Li's (2014) work. Those who do not look toward and embrace the future are seen as deserving of being left behind. In the Adirondack case these temporal orientations were also paired with moral judgements. The idea that people in the present have a moral duty to preserve the environment for future generations is in large part taken for granted as a

universal fact (Weston 2012). Thus, people who question that narrative can be seen as amoral and unworthy of consideration. I often heard Wilderness supporters criticize Wild Forest advocates as being selfish and caring only for themselves because of their present-centered perspectives.

The future-focused temporal perspective of development actors in particular also feeds conflict because of the lack of reflection and assessment to ascertain the effectiveness (or not) of interventions. As Fforde (2009) noted, the focus of development projects is generally on their implementation. As a result, assessment frequently gets short shrift. For example, in a discussion of a corporate social responsibility (CSR) audit at Newmont's Batu Hijau mine in Indonesia, Welker (2014) noted that the extremely short time frame of the evaluation, only five days, led to tensions between the mine staff and the auditors. While a number of factors contributed to the tension, including the fact that the auditors were outside consultants, the short time frame of the assessment led to conflicts between the needs of mine staff who were dealing with "urgent crises" and the needs of the auditors who had to conduct a "painstakingly detailed assessment" (184) in a very short period of time. The brevity of the auditor's time on site lent a sense of urgency to their demands for information, engendering resentment among mine staff. At the same time, the demands of 16-hour workdays left auditors exhausted and frustrated with errors that would be trivial in other contexts (Welker 2014:195).

I had a serendipitous encounter with an international development professional at a party at the home of a wealthy informant on Upper Saranac Lake that underscored the limited amount of time given to project assessment. This individual's job was to

create metrics for the assessment of development projects. When I asked her how she assessed projects and the typical timelines for assessment she laughed and said that she didn't actually do the assessment: her job was to swoop in, figure out which data points to look at, and then give her findings to another team that would conduct the actual assessment. Her goal was to do this as quickly as possible so she could move on to the next project. When I pressed her on timeframes she said that she usually spent no more than a few days to a week on any particular assignment.

In the Adirondacks, no time is given to assessing the efficacy of development interventions by the entities that undertake them. In fact, interventions go unassessed such that it is up to outside parties like myself or Peter Bauer to look at them and try to determine if they are working. State agencies like the DEC certainly do not make such assessments. Like development actors, the professionals in these state agencies are focused on the next project ahead of them, not looking behind. As Mosse (2005:103) wrote of development professionals, the work of these agencies is "more immediately shaped by their own 'system goals' -- those of organizational maintenance and survival," than effecting actual change. The end result is that interventions do not succeed in meeting the expectations of the public, and nothing is done to change the operating procedures or foundational assumptions of such interventions before another one is rolled out. This in turn leads to sustained conflict instead of resolution.

The habitus of actors is a major factor in the intractability of Adirondack land use conflicts. I would argue that it is the most important factor and also the one that is least likely to be amenable to change. Habitus is incredibly powerful: it shapes what people perceive as possible, natural, and right and does so at a level independent of

discourse. The invisibility of habitus makes changing it difficult, as does its long inculcation in the bodies of human beings. Habitus is acquired and transmitted over lifetimes, and reinforced by embodied practice.

In Chapters 4 and 5 I showed how habitus manifests in Adirondack land use debates and the difficulties it presents with regards to reaching consensus on land issues. Participants in these conflicts have relationships with nature that are in the realm of doxa. Breaking this doxa is possible, but it is very difficult and unlikely to be accomplished in the context of land use conflicts. The deep class inequality in the Adirondacks is doubtless a key factor. Socioeconomic class has a profound effect on the development of habitus. This is especially the case with regards to the acquisition of tastes.

As I discussed in Chapter 3, starting in the mid-nineteenth century, mostly urban, upper class people developed a particular set of relations with Adirondack nature. The Adirondacks were for them a place of respite and relaxation where they could shed the tensions of urban living in unspoiled nature. The creation of the Forest Preserve and Adirondack Park in the late nineteenth century was a direct result of the actions and lobbying of urban elites. The upper-class taste for wild nature was thus codified in New York State law. The advent of the automobile, highway systems, and post-World War II prosperity exposed middle class urbanites to the Park, and they too began to relate to the Park as a place of refuge, peace, and quiet, where they could vacation and have a radical break from their everyday existence. These upper-and middle-class visitors developed a set of aesthetic preferences for Adirondack nature that supported their conception of the Park as a place for recreation and rest.

Throughout this span of time there were people living and working in the Park, developing their own sets of relations with and dispositions toward Adirondack nature as a space to live and work in. Many saw the push for preservation as squeezing them out, which certainly was the case in the Park's early years (Jacoby 2003). Unlike the middle and upper-classes, where a college education is an expected part of the journey towards a career, many working-class Adirondack youths started their path to a job by accompanying their parents to work. I observed a number of my informants – carpenters, plumbers, loggers, caretakers, cooks, cleaners – take their children (or nephews and nieces) to work with them. Many of these kids were exposed to working in the woods with machines at an early age. The forest as a place for working became inculcated into their habitus through embodied practice.

Bourdieu (1984:56) wrote that “tastes (i.e. manifested preferences) are the practical affirmation of an inevitable difference.” Taste is manner of distinction, and a primary way in which this distinction is expressed is “by the refusal of other tastes.” Bourdieu noted that such refusal could be the result of “visceral intolerance,” a deep physical feeling of disgust for the preferences of others, and that such “aesthetic intolerance can be terribly violent.” I argue that aesthetic intolerance is the very root of the majority of Adirondack land conflicts, and certainly is the foundational problem with arguments concerning Wilderness versus Wild Forest classifications, such as the Finch lands debate that I discussed in Chapter 5. Aesthetic intolerance engenders powerful emotions and reactions that can result in violence: either structural, such as the enclosure of the nineteenth-century Adirondacks (Parnes 1989), or physical like the burning of APA board member Anne La Bastille's barn. La Bastille (1933-2011),

who held a Ph.D. in wildlife ecology from Cornell, was an environmental activist and best-selling author who consistently took pro-environment positions during her tenure on the APA board. In 1993, a barn on her Westport property was burned and the fire ruled as arson. On both sides, I have heard participants speak with disgust about their opponents' views and even threaten violence, like the "looks like I'll have to punch a fat guy" muttered by a Wilderness proponent in reference to a portly snowmobile advocate speaking at a public hearing.

Over one billion years ago a continental collision pushed the sea floor under what is now eastern North America. Pressure and heat slowly changed the sea floor into the bedrock that underlies the Adirondack region today. Ten million years ago this heated rock pushed up out of the earth nearly 7000 feet (Storey 2006) to create the Adirondack dome. About eight and a half million years later, glaciers pushed, and ground, and crushed the dome into the mountains we see today, some of them with billion-year-old bedrock exposed on their rocky summits. The Adirondacks were born out of conflict.

Before European colonists came, Indigenous people living in and around the Adirondack region fought each other over territory and game. Capitalism entered the Adirondack web of life through relations between Indian people and Europeans with the advent of the fur trade prior to colonization. When colonists came they fought the Natives and other Europeans, and continued to extract commodities from Adirondack nature, a process that reached its zenith in the early decades of the nineteenth century. The perceived and real destruction of the Adirondack forest precipitated a conflict between elite urbanites and the industrialists who used the forest as a source for raw

materials. This conflict led to the creation of the Forest Preserve in 1888 and the Adirondack Park in 1892. Caught in the middle of this battle were Adirondack residents, many of whom made their living laboring in the forest.

The twenty-first century Adirondack Park remains a locus of conflict, and as I have shown through my analysis of the Finch lands debate, the sets of relations among nature, capital, and people that sustain such conflicts have persisted over the last 150 years. Despite what some have said, I do not think that “Adirondackers would rather fight than win.” I think that was a flip comment made by someone whose habitus is aligned with that of the elites who guide and shape Adirondack policy. Instead, I would argue that an increasingly neoliberal capitalist political economy, that posits winners and losers rather than equality, is at the root of the intractability of Adirondack land use conflicts. This is obscured by the win-win discourses promulgated by government and NGO actors such as ANCA, and other experts who act as trustees (like Adirondack environmental groups) by making claims to special knowledge. The overwhelming positivity of these discourses obfuscates material realities of the Park, like the extreme wealth inequality that exists here, and the focus on technical solutions (More tourism! Entrepreneurship!) ignores the political and sociocultural contours that underlie Adirondack debates. As a result, rather than reaching resolution and coming together, the participants in such conflicts remain in a perpetual state of schism.

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