

Wilderness Politics in Finnish Lapland: Core and Periphery Conflicts

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Abstract

Approving public policy for managing nature tourism or visitor use in national wilderness areas in Finnish Lapland is a source of political conflict. People living in northern Finnish communities have an ideology of nature and economic interests setting them apart as a rural culture distinct from southern urban populations. Using dependency theory, this paper argues that the Helsinki government should invest northern people with the rights of a minority culture, which would help to equalize power relations between the core and periphery regions of the country. Suggested policies include protecting customary hunting rights and developing nature tourism in ways that support local economies. Attention is also given to the need to preserve the wild character of designated wilderness areas.

Introduction

Finnish Lapland is located in the northern region of Finland and lies mostly above the Arctic Circle. The Helsinki government is now in the process of making public policy choices for managing newly created wilderness areas on national lands in the region. In 1991, the Finnish Parliament passed a national law, establishing twelve wilderness areas in its Arctic region, including some 3.4 million acres of public lands. The policy goals of the Finnish Act on Wilderness Reserves are "to preserve wild areas, to safeguard Sami culture and indigenous livelihoods and to develop the potential for the diversified use of nature" (17.1.91/62). The Parliament has charged the Finnish Forest and Park Service with the responsibility of developing and implementing management plans to achieve these major policy goals (Kajala & Watson, 1998). How the agency interprets its mission as a wilderness manager will have major impacts on the social values and economic lives of residents living in northern communities. Many people living in the thinly populated northern rural communities of Finnish Lapland are concerned about the future of allowable uses on these legally designated areas. Will the Forest and Park

Service respect their land-use traditions and help local citizens develop wilderness tourist services that support the economic base of their communities?

Fears about the future of policy decisions for managing wilderness areas may be partly explained by referring to dependency theory, with its division of geography into core and periphery regions. Young (1992, p. 34) uses this theory of international politics to study relations between northern communities in the “hinterland” and the southern “metropole.” He observes that power relations flow from south to north, so that the southern core region mostly controls public policy decisions for land uses in the Arctic region. Kymlicka (1995) argues that certain minority groups living inside democratic nation-states have a right to benefit from policies that protect their cultural rights. I use the ideas of Young on dependency and Kymlicka on minority rights to argue that rural people living in Finnish Lapland are a minority culture, and that national policies should address inequalities of power relations and the erosion of their group identity. This does not negate protecting the rights of Sami as a distinct ethnic group, but it does type all rural residents as members of a unique culture. People living near wilderness areas in Finnish Lapland are entitled to land-use policies that help them to retain a rural way of life. Some Helsinki policies should be *laissez-faire*, giving northern communities a degree of political autonomy to make their own collective decisions about land-use rules. This requires a willingness of local citizens to engage each other in policy dialogues and to work with public officials to approve and carry out plans for managing nearby wilderness areas. Other Helsinki policies should be active, providing support and partnering with northern communities to develop nature tourism venues rooted in local economies.

I discuss nature tourism as a wilderness policy issue in Finnish Lapland, and how it relates to the perception of threats by rural residents to the future of their communities. These fears take the form of challenges to the value traditions and economic interests of northern rural society. The former relates to an “*erämaa*” ideology of wilderness, and it entails a unique cultural view of the place of humans in nature. The term refers to undeveloped lands between human settlements that people use lightly for hunting, fishing, and gathering (Saarinen et al., 1995, p. 40). The latter focuses on developing public policies to promote the economic viability of northern communities. Referring to people living in the scattered villages of rural Alaska, Young (1992, p. 34) argues that their quality of life depends on sustaining the economic and cultural vitality of their communities. I explore the concerns of rural people in Finnish Lapland through the lenses of dependency theory and cultural rights, and go on to describe two wilderness ideologies in conflict. The work concludes by looking at some concepts for a Forest and Park Service *erämaa*-based policy in managing wilderness areas.

Dependency Theory

Dependency theory is a useful analytical construct for explaining a variety of observed events in international relations (Dos Santos, 1970). It divides the global political order into two categories of nation-states. The first composes a minority of nations that have passed through industrial revolutions and control sizeable amounts of wealth and power. The second category forms the majority of nation-states in the world system. Their economies are in a developing stage, and their governments have little ability to project power onto the world stage and to shape global events. Dependency theory argues that the core, or rich states, exercise their power in ways that keep the periphery, or poor states, in a position of arrested economic development (Dos Santos, 1970). The periphery nations are not self-defining and their peoples have little control over their natural resources. There are often larger political and economic forces at work that make people living in peripheral zones lose their cultural identity and, thus, a way of seeing the world that gives meaning to their lives (White, 1983). They lack any real measure of autonomy, and occupy the unhappy position of being mostly controlled by officials with loyalties based outside the periphery. Moreover, the powerful core nations tend to act in their self-interest and, in doing so, perpetuate the dependency relationship.

Young (1992) employs dependency theory to profitably analyze northern and southern relations in the circumpolar North. He formulates the construct in two ways for use in political analysis. First, the analyst can look at the Arctic as a distinct region of the Earth with its own northern ecosystems and indigenous cultures, and also with problems similar to those of other remote regions. These include the difficult policy task of sorting out the line between developing natural resources and protecting environmental quality. Also, as the Arctic modernizes and integrates with a global economy, what is to be the fate of people living there, especially those who belong to aboriginal cultures? Young (1992, p. 34) argues that a study of the problems and prospects for the Arctic may be applied as lessons to other remote regions on the planet, such as Amazonia.

The student of politics can also look at relations between core and periphery regions where the unit of analysis is a single nation-state. That is, dependency theory may be applied to an analysis of power relations between the northern and southern regions of individual countries with sovereign claims to territory in the circumpolar North. I employ Young's second way of using dependency theory to study relations between Finland and its periphery region of Finnish Lapland. The northern, or hinterland, region of this European country is thinly populated and its land base is mostly in a natural state. The southern metropole lies well below the Arctic Circle, and is far more urbanized, industrialized and populated than the North. It makes up the eco-

conomic and political core of the country, with Helsinki the capital city for the national government.

Young (1992, pp. 31-98) is emphatic in building a normative element into his analysis of northern and southern relations. He argues that aboriginal peoples living on their ancestral lands in the North should have a greater measure of political autonomy and economic independence. He wants northern communities to be more self-defining in realizing their cultural values and economic interests. Young (1992, pp. 36-55) argues that indigenous peoples in the Arctic region are in the trap of internal colonialism, where larger forces outside the region mostly control the lives of people living in the northern hinterlands. This lack of political and economic autonomy helps to validate the explanatory value of dependency theory. Local governments, controlled by citizens living in northern villages and towns, do not make policy choices for managing wilderness areas on adjacent national lands. Policy-making goes beyond the grasp of local and even regional politics, resting in the national political arena. This allows for a huge shift away from the concerns of northern communities, and they lose most control over making choices for use of their surrounding lands. Interest groups based primarily in the southern core regions of Arctic Rim countries often have greater power to impose their political agenda on the national policy-making process. To gain a better sense of core and periphery relations and how they relate to the values of localism, it is useful to reflect on regional conflicts in the American political system.

Regional Conflicts in the United States

Finnish Lapland has some interesting parallels with regional politics in the United States over the use of national lands in the American West. This region is undergoing a political war between a traditional rural culture and the emerging urban culture. In a curious turn of events, the descendants of the settlers who displaced Native American peoples are now themselves under attack. There is a new manifest destiny afoot to undermine the old rural culture and replace it with the environmental values of a post-industrializing culture. The nature ideology of the rural culture is one of multiple uses of natural resources on national lands, including logging, mining, grazing, and irrigation-based farming. The emerging social values of the western region suggest a culture shifting toward a new paradigm of the place of humans in nature. This nature ideology stresses environmental quality and amenity values over the economic development of natural resources on public lands.

Cawley (1992) studies the Sagebrush Rebellion, a regional conflict centered in the American West, that took place in the late 1970s and early 1980s. He argues that its underlying cause was a reaction to what western interests saw as their growing loss of control over the direction of public policy for ma-

naging national lands in the region. The rebellion grew out of a belief that western interests and values had been pushed aside by outside environmental groups who were fixing their grip on US government policy for managing lands. The Sagebrush Rebellion may be interpreted in a wider sense as a war between two cultures based in different regions of the country. In 1987, the Nevada state legislature fired the first shot, demanding that federally owned lands be deeded by Washington to Carson City and that state authorities take over control of deciding the uses to be made of these national lands.

Gladden (1990) analyzes events giving rise to the Jack Pine Rebellion in northeastern Minnesota, called such because of the prevalence of this species of tree in the region. In 1978, the US Congress passed a law restricting the use of motorized boats for outdoor recreation in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area. This wilderness policy sparked bitter conflict between people living in the rural North and those in the southern urban region of Minnesota. The battle was fought in the national political arena, and rural people living in the northeast region of the state believed their rights were severely trampled on by outside environmental interest groups. They wished to maintain status quo motorboat use in the canoe wilderness area, but political forces—based mostly outside the region—prevailed upon Congress to change its recreation policy and reduce travel by motorboat. The policy outcome would undoubtedly have been different, had the locus of decision-making authority in the democratic system been situated inside northeastern Minnesota.

Allin (1982, pp. 206-265) and Nash (1982, pp. 272-315) examine another regional conflict in the United States, the tundra rebellion, over public policy for managing national lands in Alaska. In 1980, the US Congress passed the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA, PL 96-487), which threw many Alaskans into a fury. The new law placed 104 million acres of unclassified federal lands in wilderness areas, national parks, wildlife refuges, and wild and scenic rivers. In 1980, before ANILCA was passed, citizens of the state approved a ballot measure establishing an Alaska Statehood Commission (1982). Its purpose was to study the current state of affairs in federal-state relations. The working premise of the commission was that Alaska should retain its state authority as a policy-making entity in the American political system. Most Alaskan citizens believed that the national government had overstepped its authority and ignored, trampled on, and abused their rights.¹

Several parallels exist between the regional political rebellions in Nevada, Minnesota, and Alaska and the future of wilderness policy in Finnish Lapland. The Sagebrush Rebellion was a political conflict between eastern and western regions of the country over national land use. The regional axis of conflict in the Jack Pine Rebellion was north-south, with loyalties divided between northeastern rural people and downstate groups in urban Minnesota. The tundra rebellion axis was also north and south, with Alaska fitting

the periphery element of dependency theory. The southern core had the upper hand in power relations and was able to impose its values on a minority of people living in the Far North. The three rebellions are examples of core-periphery conflicts. They were based in relations of geography, where one region had the power to impose its land-use values on another. This was the case in northeastern Minnesota, where a majority of rural people living in the region felt they had public policy for managing the canoe area imposed on them by outside interest groups. Conflicts over managing national lands in the western region today appear to be less a function of struggles with the eastern United States than a matter of intra-regional conflict. New people who do not share the social values of the existing rural culture are moving into the American West.²

Cultural Rights for Northern Communities

Young (1992, p. 75) notes that one negative result of dependency is the onset of anomie, or the sense of isolation and lack of meaning people feel when the cultural values of their society begin to break down. Durkheim (1966) developed the construct of anomie to explain suicide, arguing that people are more likely to take their own lives when the society they live in begins to lose shared norms. The decay of a cultural identity and a structure of social support can yield the personal tragedies of suicide, alcoholism, and violence (Young 1992, pp. 73-84). A related factor that helps to explain the breakdown of social norms in a community is the loss of a self-supporting economic base. If the people of a town or village must rely on forces beyond their control to meet basic economic needs, the resulting sense of dependency feeds a disease of the soul known as nihilism.

Young (1992) argues that the southern metropole needs to respect the freedom of the northern periphery, giving it more political autonomy to work out a preferred future. He also argues that the southern core, by affirmative policy actions, must help northern communities develop self-supporting economies. In the case of Alaska, his normative focus is on indigenous people, such as Inupiat Eskimos living along the littoral zone of the Beaufort Sea. Young does not appear to want to include other ethnic or minority groups of American citizens in his analysis. Perhaps this is because other groups, as relative newcomers to Alaska, lack the moral standing to make a claim for policies to protect their cultural rights. Kymlicka (1995) also focuses on the rights of indigenous peoples in the Arctic region of Canada. He believes that the liberal state should adopt special measures to assist minority groups in keeping alive their traditional cultural values. These include devolving political power from the core to the periphery and offering forms of economic assistance to promote the cultural vitality of northern minority groups.

Kymlicka (1995) examines the difficult question of how to justify giving special rights to minority groups in a democratic political system founded on the ideology of liberalism. A primary value of any liberal society is equality among its citizens, and this requires that the state treat each person as having equal rights. This basic rule of fairness and impartiality appears violated if the citizens of a given group are able to claim minority rights with special privileges not enjoyed by others. Kymlicka attempts to maneuver around this objection by arguing that an essential part of liberalism is the right of individuals to fulfill their lives. He maintains that a person needs a cultural sense of self in order to pursue happiness, as it is a critical source for generating a belief system and a sense of purpose. Kymlicka (1995) argues that the many groups of aboriginal peoples living in northern Canada have their own cultural traditions, and that efforts to maintain them should be a governmental priority. The liberal state has a moral duty to fashion public policies that protect the cultural rights of indigenous peoples as minority groups.

Using the arguments of Young and Kymlicka, I wish to identify a new minority group within the greater citizen body of Finland. It includes all people who live in Finnish Lapland as the northern rural region of the nation. The Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980 (ANCILA) marks a precedent for this way of individuating a cultural group, although it has resulted in political conflict between rural and urban parts of Alaska.³ The Helsinki government should craft policies to help people living in northern communities conserve the social norms and core values of their rural culture. They face an uncertain future, with threats to their quality of life as a people who identify with a given milieu of cultural norms. These threats are closely related to the erosion of an economic base that enables people who wish to remain in the North to make a living. Based on how it interprets and implements the Finnish Act on Wilderness Reserves of 1991, the Forest and Park Service can improve the economic prospects of northern towns and villages. One means to do this is for the agency to develop a policy-based support system for locally owned nature tourism operations.

There are four problems with asserting that members of a rural culture in Finnish Lapland have a right to public policies for protecting their social values and economic interests. The first is how to individuate a distinct northern rural culture in Finland, and thus to identify who belongs to that culture and deserves special rights. This is perhaps the most easily met objection. With the exception of Rovaniemi and its population of around sixty thousand, most people in the region live in small towns, villages or in the country. Establishing residency is a matter of having a home address and a place of work, paying taxes, voting in elections, and providing other signs that a person lives in the region. On this basis, it is reasonable to claim that all residents of Finnish Lapland are members of a distinct rural culture in northern Finland.

A second, more difficult problem is how to define a rural culture in Finnish Lapland as a grouping of beliefs, values and attitudes that people share and use to assign meaning to their world. Is it a stable culture with enough force and robustness of identity to shape the thoughts and feelings of people who live in the rural areas of the North? Each year the residents of the circumpolar North are more directly linked with global markets and media outlets. The homogenizing trends of modernity appear to be moving once relatively insular groups into the sameness of a global culture. New people are moving into Finnish Lapland, and are bringing with them frames of thinking about the place of humans in nature that differ from those of people who were born and raised locally. Finnish Lapland is becoming a less isolated region and, over time, it will likely become harder to link its people with unique insular views and shared social values. How can policy makers protect the rural culture of the people who reside in the region when it appears to be in a state of rapid social change?

Over the past several decades Finnish Lapland has undergone advances in technology on many fronts and in the ways its people live and work. There are many examples, but two will suffice. Pelto (1973) studied the impact of snowmobile use on the reindeer herding culture of the Skolt Sami in northern Finland. He concluded that adopting snow machines eroded the vitality of their cultural traditions. His finding was rejected by many observers, who argued it is possible for the core values of a culture to remain fixed in conditions of social change. By this analysis, the cultural values attached to hunting remain the same, whether the hunter uses spears and pack dogs or rifles and snow machines. The basic views about the place of humans in nature do not change for the people who identify with the specific hunting culture. In another example, since World War II logging operations have become heavily capitalized and have formed economies of scale greatly changing relations between the worker and the forest (Suopajarvi, 1998). These advances in technology have likely resulted in changes to the cultural values of rural people and the meaning they assign to nature. Are there any traditional aspects of rural culture in northern Finland left to protect? If so, what are those aspects and how might they be nourished as an object of public policy by the Helsinki government? Is the rural culture of Finnish Lapland changing too rapidly for those who practice the art of statecraft to save it from oblivion?

A third problem is deciding which groups in a liberal nation-state of multiple cultures are worthy of protection by governmental policies. Why do the rural people living in Finnish Lapland merit special policies to help maintain their cultural ethos of *erämaa*? Are there not other minority groups in Finland with equally valid claims to set before the Helsinki government? Perhaps there are, although the criteria must be tightened to avoid a loss of rigor about how to define a culture. There is also a risk, by focusing on the special rights

of more groups, that such a policy will undercut a sense of national unity. Rural culture in Finnish Lapland, however, may merit policy efforts at protection because it can provide urban dwellers with valuable lessons about the place of people in nature. Lynge (1992) makes a similar point, but limits his analysis to aboriginal peoples living in the Arctic. He argues that urban animal rights advocates and environmental groups based in the South exhibit a profound ignorance of ecological realities. They are walled off and alienated from true nature, existing in a world of artifacts of their own making and clinging to distorted views with great passion. If enacted into policy, he claims, their misguided values would help to destroy the tenure of the human species on the planet.⁴

A fourth problem with positing a new minority group in Finland as the rural dwellers of the northern region and giving them special rights is that it may be unfair to the Sami living in Finnish Lapland. As a matter of public policy, recognizing a new minority culture may serve to dilute their uniqueness and erode their aboriginal identity. A few Sami with ethnic-based nationalist feelings desire to separate from Finland, and would likely reject any proposal for a new rural minority category invested with special rights. Those who believe this way insist on a wholly new order of things, electing not to participate in land-use planning for wilderness areas in Finnish Lapland with the Forest and Park Service. Refusing to do so signals their rejection of the premise that the northern region is the territory of the sovereign Finnish state. They believe the Sami living in the region should be framing the terms of the land-use debate and making the final decisions for managing wilderness areas. The Helsinki government refuses to participate in any dialogue on the politics of separatism for obvious reasons. It is not willing to lop off Finnish Lapland and lose its northern land base, nor does it want to abdicate its authority for governing the region.

Each of the above points raise objections to the argument that policy makers should invest rural communities in Finnish Lapland with cultural rights. Among others, the problem of how to go about conserving a culture under rapid change bears further analysis. It is not possible here to address this and other problems stated above in a more detailed manner. Instead, I will continue to examine core and periphery relations in Finland on the premises that a northern rural culture exists in Finnish Lapland and that its members are morally entitled to respect in policy decisions for managing wilderness areas. They may also be due greater amounts of political control for shaping the policy process to achieve their local rural values and interests. The competing wilderness ideas of *erämaa* and naturism remain to be worked out more fully, and to discuss some potential threats from outside forces to the future of nature tourism in the region.

Erämaa

The nature ideology of *erämaa* posits certain social values regarding the place of people in the environment. Two central values of this cultural ethos lie in the definition of *erämaa* as undeveloped lands between human settlements where people go to hunt, fish and gather other wild resources (Saarinen et al., 1995, p. 40; Hallikainen, 1998, pp. 15-18). The first part of the definition concerns freely evolving land areas maintained in a natural state. The second part involves a type of land use by people that does not alter in any major way the ecology of the area. It entails mostly non-commercial economic uses of wild nature by utilizing fish, game and other resources, such as wood or berries. Many residents of northern communities in Finnish Lapland do this harvesting in national wilderness areas and on other public lands, and realize important cultural and physical values from doing so. The first relates to affirming a cultural identity in the tradition of *erämaa*, tying them to a long tradition of ancestors who have used wild nature in similar ways and enjoyed customary rights. The second value satisfies dietary and other tangible wants of rural people living in the region.

The dwellers of rural communities in all parts of Finland have used wild lands for many generations to hunt, fish, and gather wild resources. The wilderness idea of *erämaa* comes out of a deep history of land use, and this concept of the place of humans in nature formed long ago in the southern region of Finland. It moved slowly north with Finnish emigrants into the ancestral lands of the Sami people, with their semi-nomadic reindeer herding culture. Suopajärvi (1998, p. 90) observes that as late as the 1970s there was a distinct rural culture in Finnish Lapland. She notes that, in the Vuotos area, about sixty percent of the households made their living from farming, working part-time as wood cutters, and hunting, fishing and berry-picking. New economic forces unleashed at the end of World War II eroded the conditions needed to maintain this northern rural culture. The advent of industrialized timber operations helped to displace the farming, logging, and hunting way of life, partly when there was no longer a demand for part-time loggers or horse teams. The loss of this sector of the economic base of northern communities meant that many young people had to think seriously about moving away from Finnish Lapland to find work.

Suopajärvi (1998, pp. 89-92) argues that the traditional norms of rural society have lost a good deal of their cultural robustness. The pressures of modernity are moving towns and villages in Finnish Lapland toward a new order of things. It may be similar to the loss of the old rural culture of small family farms in the American Midwest in the early twentieth century. Changes in demographics, technology and economics obscured these old agrarian values and generated new views of the world about using land for producing crops. However, today few people living in Finnish Lapland who hunt and

gather do so out of economic necessity. This is not to deny that they gain nutritional value from eating grouse or berries. Nor is it to deny that inherent in these activities is an important bonding with a tradition that helps them to affirm a very old cultural identity as a rural people. It is to suggest, however, that people living in the region no longer need to engage in these activities or face the stark option of going hungry. Alternative sources of food exist, either by earning money in the private or public sectors or by relying on various forms of welfare assistance programs. For obvious reasons, people prefer to support themselves by their own work and want an economic base that allows them to do so.

Naturism

Erämaa has its cultural roots in an understanding of the place of humans in nature developed long before the advent of the industrial revolution in Europe. Naturism, or deep ecology, is a more recent arrival on the scene of a national political dialogue in Finland about the use of nature by humans. Whereas erämaa reaches back into the mists of time and is less a formal philosophy of nature than a folk memory, naturism as deep ecology has its intellectual origin in an academic article published by Naess (1973). The literature of deep ecology is mostly disembodied and abstract, but some adherents claim its core values are rooted in the cultural traditions of prehistoric peoples (Oelschlaeger, 1990; Snyder, 1974). They argue that Paleolithic peoples had a different ontology of nature than exists in the modern industrial age with its nature-destroying ideology of liberalism.⁵

In some respects, deep ecology is an intellectual reaction to the level of ecological damage wrought by the industrial age. In Finland today, deep ecology is an emerging ideology of nature striving to find a voice in its own unique national idiom. It is hard for a foreigner to articulate any guiding values of the wilderness movement in Finland. However, it appears that fragments of the ideologies of erämaa and naturism found a voice in social protests organized to stop large-scale industrial logging in Finnish Lapland during the 1970s. The outcome of these political struggles was the 1991 passage of the Act on Wilderness Reserves by the Finnish Parliament. A reading of the statute suggests that the cultural norms of the nature ideology of erämaa are more evident than those of deep ecology. The Forest and Park Service is charged with protecting Sami culture and developing a policy framework for multiple uses of wilderness areas. However, managers must also preserve their natural wildness, and trying to harmonize these disparate policy goals is a true challenge for the agency.

The social values of the nature ideology of deep ecology involve realizing the self and satisfying vital needs (Devall & Sessions, 1985). Self-realization for the deep ecologist is the need for an individual to find a deeper meaning

in life and relation to cosmic nature than the consumer hedonism offered by a liberal society. Using natural resources to satisfy vital needs is a second central value in the naturist ideology, and this is treated a little further on. In some respects it is quite similar to the erämaa focus on harvesting the abundance of natural resources, but avoiding human actions that cut into the capital stock and ecology of the natural world. It is by no means clear that erämaa and deep ecology are conflicting ideologies of nature in their core values, and future research needs to explore this question in more detail.

Naturism is similar to the environmental philosophy of deep ecology. The biocentric idea is that all living things in the natural world have a self-worth or intrinsic value, and so are more than only a means to reach human ends (Vilkka, 1997). The deep ecologist seeks to shift perceptions of the world to a holistic position of basic equality between humans and the rest of nature. In the realm of wilderness politics, naturism may be similar to a purist ideology stressing the value of leaving some natural areas strictly alone except for low-impact visits by a few recreational users who are free to seek aesthetic and spiritual values. Devall and Sessions (1985, pp. 63-77) articulate the basic premises of deep ecology as self-realization and biotic equality. The first focuses on the intuitive qualities of human nature and finding a deeper spirituality with larger forces.⁶ The second major premise of deep ecology is that humans ought to share the earth with other creatures living in the biosphere. Part of achieving this as a policy agenda requires setting aside large land areas in a natural state, free of changes wrought by human actions. In pursuit of this end, Devall and Sessions (1985, p. 70) argue that humans should learn to be frugal and to use natural resources only to satisfy their "vital needs." This suggests a world view similar to that of the literary characters populating the novel *Ecotopia* by Callenbach (1975), set in the Pacific Northwest of the United States.⁷

What does the curious phrase "vital needs" mean in the context of managing designated wilderness areas in Finnish Lapland? What sorts of public policy choices are suggested by a wilderness theory of deep ecology? Does it accept the use of all-terrain vehicles and snow machines as legitimate travel methods to gain access to wilderness areas? Or, does it reject motorized access as incompatible with the spirit of wilderness, sanctioning only travel by foot or canoe? Is use of these designated wilderness areas by small-scale, local tour operators to generate some income acceptable to naturists? Does a deep ecology point of view require a reduction in the grazing of reindeer herds in wilderness areas, over the objections of the owners of reindeer cooperatives? Should managers remove all trails, bridges, cabins, signs and other infrastructure used by recreational visitors, given that they fail to meet the vital needs criterion?

What are the vital needs of rural people living in Finnish Lapland, and who should be empowered to define what they are? Should a majority of the citizens in the south of Finland, if it has a different ideology of nature, be able to impose its values on the rural culture of a minority of people living in the North? Should government officials based in Helsinki impose strict land-use rules in the north, yet not require large changes in urban land uses? Truly adopting a deep ecology point of view would require the southern region to engage in a radical shift away from the status quo of its urban way of life. However, many people might not be willing to make large changes in their style of living, especially if zoning the North for national parks, wildlife refuges, and wilderness areas gave them a sense that they had done enough to protect nature. In effect, Helsinki could export the costs of protecting nature to the northern region of the country over the objections of a resisting minority. Would such a naturism-informed policy destroy the economic vitality of northern communities and turn the region into an empty quarter? Although there may be no basis for these fears, some people living in Finnish Lapland think such scenarios are likely if those who espouse biocentrism gain political power and are able to assert their values.

Perceived Threats to Northern Rural Culture

Robinson (1974) argues that two factors make public policy issues over managing wilderness areas difficult to resolve. One involves a "holy war" between those who support and those who oppose more tightly crafted rules for limiting human uses of wilderness areas. He argues that political conflict can escalate into an ideological struggle, where larger social values about the place of humans in nature collide with each other. Robinson terms the other factor "localism," observing that people who live near a wilderness area usually have a much greater stake in decisions for managing it than people who live far away. In the context of Finnish Lapland, localism refers to a situation where wilderness policy choices having little or no effect on citizens living in Helsinki or another southern city can have a major impact on people living in northern communities. These observations on wilderness politics are germane to the situation in Finnish Lapland.

Three basic fears regarding the future of nature tourism in wilderness areas concern at least some residents of Finnish Lapland. The first is a preservationist agenda by environmental groups; second, Forest and Park Service efforts to monopolize nature tourism, and, third, the desire of business interests outside the region to control tourism. The first fear has already been discussed; it involves a struggle between two ideologies of wilderness, with naturism emerging the winner. It is a war between two cultures, where the values of rural culture in the North collide with urban culture to the south. The result of the clash in the national arena of democratic politics is that the sou-

thern core is able to prevail over the northern periphery. This is not to say that urban Finns have adopted the norms of deep ecology, but it is a fear on the edge of the minds of people living in the North. Some believe that people living in the South do not care about the economic future of the North, and do not share its core rural values. An urban lifestyle has blunted their ability to relate to a tradition of beliefs organized around the cultural ethos of *erämaa*. These old national values are today mostly consigned to the past, and Finnish views of the place of people in nature are evolving in new directions. They are still alive in the North, however. Rural people, therefore, argue they must have continued access to wilderness areas to sustain their values and interests.

The second perceived threat does not originate in radical ideologues gaining political power and making good on a deep ecology agenda. It comes from the Forest and Park Service, as the public manager of the twelve designated wilderness areas in Finnish Lapland. One aspect of this threat deals with a loss of customary rights of land use enjoyed by citizens living near the newly classified wilderness areas. The agency may decide to begin charging land rent for private cabins, or make local snowmobile users pay fees to run their machines in wilderness areas. A related fear, and a potential source of great anger, is that the agency may rent cabins inside wilderness areas to paying clients who will be able to exploit hunting and fishing resources that, by custom, have belonged to rural residents.

These fears may lack any substantive basis, but they are circulating in various quarters of northern communities. They are closely related to the threat that the Forest and Park Service may choose to monopolize nature tourism operations in wilderness areas. Promoting its agenda in this way would preclude local citizens in the private sector from developing their own business ventures. Much of this nature tourism revenue might flow outside the region and into the Helsinki headquarters of the Forest and Park Service. This could be viewed as a form of outside control, taking away economic opportunities from northern communities. The budget of the agency depends partly on the revenue it generates, and the Forest and Park Service has set up a program called "The Wild North" at its office in the town of Hetta. This is a town in the jurisdiction of Enontekiö Municipality, and it is located about 200 kilometers north of Rovaniemi. The focus of The Wild North is to design ways to generate income from nature tourism on the public land it manages. There are three major paths the agency can take in the role it chooses in managing wilderness areas for nature tourism. One is a public monopoly route, where the agency mostly controls nature tourism and deposits the revenue earned from marketing vacations to clients into its own accounts. Another is a middle route, with the agency co-developing nature tourism in wilderness areas with locally based operators and sharing the profits. A third option is

for The Wild North to act mostly in a supportive role, designing programs to help local people capture most of the revenue derived from operating their own nature tourism venues. The last option may not be practical for the Forest and Park Service, but it is worth exploring in the interest of making local communities more economically viable.

The third threat is with large business interests establishing an industry to exploit the potential of nature tourism and draining any profits out of the region. The potential for this is evident, given the example at Saariselkä, with its heavy buildup of hotels and ski lifts near Urho Kekkonen National Park. Of course, the 1991 Finnish Act on Wilderness Reserves would not permit intensive land uses inside the boundaries of official wilderness areas. However, the romantic aura of these areas could act as a tool for advertisers of big companies to market a wilderness experience by booking clients into nearby multi-storey hotels.⁸ The fear is that big corporations might set up capital-intensive operations to siphon wealth out of the North and into their accounts. It is a form of colonialism, where outside interests with large amounts of money enter a region, exploit its resources, and extract the profits. In this respect, the Helsinki government should be vigilant in promoting the economic interests of residents who live and work in northern communities.⁹

Policy Options for Managing Wilderness

The Forest and Park Service has three basic options for managing nature tourism on the wilderness lands under its jurisdiction. First, it may support an increase in nature tourism activities in wilderness areas, apart from the question of who gains the most economic benefits from this choice. It would entail adding more trails, bridges, and cabins in wilderness areas, thereby creating improved access for visitors. A second option is for the agency to move to decrease the existing infrastructure for supporting visitor use in wilderness areas. It would do so in the view that preserving the quality of wildness of the designated areas was more important than increasing the number of visitors. The third policy option would chart a difficult path of trying to find a middle way for managing wilderness areas. This would entail allowing some infrastructure for tourism but not destroying the natural conditions needed for people visiting the areas to have a wilderness experience.¹⁰

The first policy option for the future of nature tourism in wilderness areas is consistent with a more intensive use of these national lands. The major issue is how much and what types of nature tourism are consistent with preserving the wilderness character of these areas. The cultural idea of *erämaa* appears to make Finns lean more toward building human structures in official wilderness areas than what a deep ecologist might be willing to accept. By way of contrast, Americans are on average less tolerant of a built environment of infrastructure to support nature tourism in wilderness area than Finns. One

way to explain the reasons for this is to contrast the history of land use and expansion in the United States and Finland (Gladden, 1999). To promote more commerce for nature tourism, people in northern rural communities may want the Forest and Park Service to build more trails and cabins in these areas. Although more visitors would be able to use the areas for recreation, it would also threaten to degrade their wilderness character.

The second policy option relates to a deep ecology point of view, and suggests minimizing infrastructure in order to optimize the naturalness of a wilderness area. This policy would move toward divesting areas of most human artifacts and promoting a quality wilderness experience for a few visitors. At the extreme, it would entail removing many of the existing trails, bridges, cabins and other support structures that make it easier for visitors to backpack and to stay overnight. Approval for this policy option at the national level of Finnish politics is not likely to gain majority support, but future preferences are unclear. Nash (1982) analyzes the history of a shift in thinking by Americans toward wilderness lands. Finland is an evolving society, and new ideas may appear on the horizon of national values about the management of northern wilderness areas.

The third policy option lies somewhere between the other two, and the language of the 1991 wilderness statute suggests the agency must work out many compromises in planning for land uses. Defining and protecting wilderness values has not been part of the historical mission of the Forest and Park Service, and it is now on a rather steep learning curve. Finding a middle way for protecting the wilderness character of the areas and providing venues for nature tourism operators is a daunting task. It is similar to the dilemma of Odysseus, who must steer his ship between Scylla and Charybdis. The agency is sure to provoke criticism, regardless of the policy measures it adopts for managing nature tourism in wilderness areas. It must wend its way through a number of policy issues and attempt to satisfy the demands of interest groups based inside and outside the region. The agency is not free to satisfy entirely the policy agenda of partisans for either the core or the periphery, but must try to chart an uneven course in stormy political seas. It must follow the statutory provisions laid down by the Finnish Parliament, staying within the bounds of several laws relevant to managing its northern public lands.

While the Forest and Park Service must attempt to work out compromises between northern communities and interest groups outside the region, a clear preference should be given to the former. I have identified the residents of northern communities as members of a rural society entitled to cultural rights. They lack the political and economic power at the national level to protect their social values and economic interests, and compensation should be made for this fact. Among other strategies, the Forest and Park Service can help to conserve northern rural culture by developing three na-

ture tourism policies. First, it should only give nature tourism operating permits to applicants who live and work in northern communities. Second, the Forest and Park Service should work closely with private citizens and municipal governments to develop nature tourism venues. Third, the agency needs to put into place some triggering rules to prevent overuse of wilderness areas by ambitious business owners whose plans for expansion threaten to destroy their wild character.

Some northern residents may interpret the third suggestion as another form of colonial hegemony by an outside power bent on imposing its values on them.¹¹ They might see it as a form of state oppression, but the Finnish Parliament has charged the agency with preserving the wilderness character of the designated areas. It is a political reality that status quo power relations between the northern and southern regions of the nation are unlikely to change significantly in the near future. Finnish Lapland will remain part of Finland, and the Helsinki government will set policy for land uses in these northern wilderness areas. Nonetheless, in developing, approving, and implementing plans for managing wilderness areas, the Forest and Park Service should take into account the social values and economic interests of northern rural culture.

Conclusion

In the study of wilderness politics in Finnish Lapland, dependency theory is a useful frame of analysis to look at relations between the northern and southern regions of Finland. I have argued that northern communities are relatively distinct cultures deserving special protection through public policy initiatives. I have discussed several problems with investing members of northern rural culture with special rights, and all of them have varying orders of difficulty. However, rural culture in the region demonstrates a relatively focused adherence to *erämaa* as a coherent nature ideology expressing the traditional Finnish idea of wilderness. Communities in the North also have economic interests that differ from interests of the more densely populated urban areas to the south. These two elements give residents a unique way of looking at nature and what wilderness means. *Erämaa* shapes how people living in the region, see their place in nature, and their economic interests and can easily bring them into conflict with groups based outside the region.

Rural residents in Finnish Lapland have more to lose by restrictive land-use policies in wilderness areas than do citizens living in the southern region of the country. They stand to lose customary rights to hunt and fish, and possible use of wilderness areas for generating income from nature tourism. A wilderness policy based in the nascent ethos of deep ecology might well lead to the sort of future many residents fear most. As a nature ideology, however, deep ecology has some intriguing overlaps with the *erämaa* concept of wil-

derness. Both stress that satisfying vital needs through using natural resources is an acceptable human use of the environment. Each appears to believe that wilderness areas should be managed so that natural forces, and not human actions, dominate the life cycles of plants and animals. Erämaa and naturism both suggest the placing of definite limits on human uses of wilderness areas. As rural culture in the North undergoes social change, some may attempt to use erämaa as an excuse to enlarge and intensify human uses in these set-aside areas. The Forest and Park Service will have to assume the unpleasant task of a gatekeeper to ensure this does not happen.

An erämaa policy for managing wilderness areas in Finnish Lapland should achieve three goals. First, it ought to support the customary use of wilderness areas for hunting and gathering by local people. Forest and Park Service officials should also encourage residents to develop nature tourism operations in wilderness areas that generate income but do not compromise wildness. Local people should be major players in deciding the appropriate forms of nature tourism, with the agency prepared to assist and give them advice. Lastly, the agency should stand as a barrier at some point to prevent northern communities from degrading the wilderness character of these areas if their economic goals become too ambitious. Agreeing on these policy goals and how to achieve them is by no means certain in the wilderness politics of Finnish Lapland. Nor, will it be a simple matter to make plans to reach goals. If it can be done, the chances of keeping alive the cultural vitality of rural society in Finnish Lapland will be improved.

The hard problem of approving policies for managing wilderness areas in Finnish Lapland lies somewhere between control by northern communities and by the Helsinki government. Trying to sort out a policy that conserves the core values of rural culture and protects the wilderness quality of designated areas is not an easy task. The proper design for a federal system that justly distributes political power between the parts and the whole varies with shifts in the paths of national life. The search for a federalist solution to power relations between the core and the periphery is ongoing, and finding agreed-upon policies for managing wilderness areas in Finnish Lapland will not be easy.

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Endnotes

1. Federalism is a political theory about how to organize power in society, and divides political authority between two levels of government in one system. Meeting in Philadelphia in 1787, the founders of the American political system faced a difficult problem. How were they to set up a federal system giving the national government enough, but not too much power relative to the existing states? One clear sign of the failure of the political theory of federalism, as embodied in the US Constitution, was that it did not prevent the outbreak of civil war between Union and Confederate forces. The northern and southern regions of the United States could not settle the question of power relations within the 1787 frame of government, and resorted to armed conflict. The South argued that it had become the minority, or periphery region, in the country and the North was using its superior political power in Washington to choke off the Southern economy and assume a controlling position. In the first founding of the American republic, the framers of the Articles of Confederation refused to invest the national government with any real policy-making power. The states thus held a monopoly on power and it led to problems of governance that inaugurated a second founding in 1787.
2. It is possible to divide the history of land use in this region into three eras: pre-settlement, settlement, and post-settlement. Each era conforms to a relatively distinct ideology of nature, and there is a dialectical conflict between opposing cultures. The settlement era of the western region generated armed conflict between Native Americans and migrating Euro-Americans. In effect, the latter defeated the former, and are now being displaced by the partisans of a new nature ideology. A post-settlement era is emerging and it comes with a different set of social values for managing national lands. The nature ideology of an emerging post-settlement era in the American West has some shared values with pre-settlement times, stressing a light use of land and natural resources. It searches for new, post-industrial technologies so that using national lands can favor quality of life amenities over a sheer volume of consumer products.
3. The US Congress passed a culture-protecting policy when it established a rural subsistence priority in Title VIII of ANILCA, based on where people lived and not their ethnicity. The national policy became a political problem when the state supreme court ruled it violated the equal protection clause of the Alaska Constitution. This decision rejected the rural subsistence priority, and the federal government has taken over managing fish and game on public lands under its jurisdiction. There are other indications of a growing rift between the rural and urban regions of Alaska. The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) is seeking new culture-

protecting policies and political allies outside the state to deal with what it sees as a biased Juneau government. The AFN argues that rural villages and towns are not getting a fair share of state funding for schools, public safety and capital monies. A minority of the state population lives in rural Alaska, and most of these residents are Alaska Natives. This gives them less leverage in a political system where the urban majority is able to control the policy agenda for the state government. Out of frustration with Juneau, the AFN has made overtures to the United Nations High Commission on Human Rights and aboriginal groups outside the state. This is similar to a route being taken by a group of Sami leaders in Finnish Lapland, who are working with the European Union and the United Nations to resolve conflicts with Helsinki.

4. Lyngne (1992) argues there is a cultural war going on between people living in the urban south and those who inhabit the rural North. He points out what he believes is a paradox. Some urban-based interest groups want to ban hunting in the North, but they live in urban regions that spew out industrial pollution. Lyngne does not link this to global warming, but human-caused change in the global atmosphere has the potential for large environmental impacts. They would certainly go beyond the impacts of rural hunters in northern ecosystems. A larger threat to the ecological health of Arctic wilderness areas thus comes from external sources, and not from people living inside the region.
5. Locke (1960) argues that wilderness in North America is worthless until people begin to mix their labor with it and convert it into economic products. He rejects hunting and gathering as a way of using land because he argues it fails to change nature in value-adding ways. Locke writes "For whatever Bread is more worth than Acorns, Wine than Water, and Cloth or Silk than Leaves, Skins, or Moss, that is wholly owing to labour and Industry" (1960, p. 339). He claims that God gave the world to the "rational and industrious," denying that aboriginal people have title to their land base because they fail to use it in ways that add to the common stock of the human species. Locke, as a seventeenth century Englishman and founder of the political theory of liberalism, lacked ecological values and exhibited an insufferable attitude toward aboriginal peoples. His ideas about the place of humans in the natural world are in marked contrast to Leopold (1970, pp. 237-264), whose land ethic lays out wholly new concepts rejecting the liberal frame of thought.
6. The deep ecology view of things posits a deeper spiritual reality that attempts to ground itself in the cosmic order. It is a school of thought that looks at ecology in philosophical, rather than scientific terms. The goal is to design human society to fit comfortably with often-random shifts in nature, avoiding actions that work against and tear apart ecosystems. The premise of self-realization flows against fact-based rationalism, tapping instead into a deeper understanding of the world through intuition. The deep ecologist wants to encourage a new cultural attitude that sets people on a search for self-realization by closer contact with the natural world.
7. Callenbach (1975) gives an interesting account of regional conflict driven by differences in ideologies of nature. In the novel, the Pacific Northwest secedes

from the United States and forms an independent country named Ecotopia. Its citizens reject the reigning nature ideology of American culture, with its strong focus on material progress. In contrast, the nature ideology of Ecotopia favors a stable-state society using natural resources to meet frugal needs and wants. It focuses on realizing human values apart from a mania for consuming goods and tearing down the ecology of the land base. Ecotopia suggests a deep ecology view of the place of people in nature, promoting a radical change in attitudes and behavior. People who wish to visit wilderness reserves in public forests must enter and leave without any use of motors. No foot trails are maintained and people go to wild country in search of a deeper sense of the spiritual reality of nature. Those who wish to hunt, fish and gather in wilderness areas follow the rules on a voluntary basis. There is no need for patrolling officers to enforce rules and punish offenders, given that Ecotopians share self-enforcing norms of ecological behavior. Logging in other land areas is done to minimize impacts on the natural evolution of forests. The key value is for humans to learn to live with nature by fitting into and flowing with its larger cycles and quirky events. The assumption is that the flow of nature will take humans where they truly wish to go, and that trying to swim upstream or divert the flow of water by digging new channels is against the enlightened self-interest of the species.

8. The word romantic conjures up an image of pristine nature, or wild land unmarked by humans in any way. Of course this is a false image in Finnish Lapland, given the reality that Sami have lived in the region for thousands of years. The romantic, or pristine image suggests that humans do not belong in nature except as visitors who leave no trace, yet this is precisely the view that Cronon (1995, pp. 69-90) attacks in his critique of the received idea of American wilderness. He claims this view of the place of humans as apart from nature gives people license to more generally exploit and destroy the environment outside of wilderness areas. His views have opened up a vigorous debate on the meaning of wilderness and what it implies for the values humans seek to realize in managing designated areas.
9. If the Helsinki government accepts the free trade rules of the World Trade Organization, it may not be able to support the viability of local economies in Finnish Lapland by developing small-scale nature tourism. Large hotel chains, roaming the planet in search of profit, might come to the region and either prevent or displace small business efforts, given an inability to compete with outside capital on an economy of scale basis. Efforts to rationalize a global economy will likely work against the values associated with having a diversity of human cultures.
10. This raises the problematic question of the nature of a wilderness experience, and the extent to which it is a frame of mind based largely on cultural expectations. Nash (1982) argues that wilderness is an artifact of the human mind, and that it changes as a culture evolves. Hallikainen (1998) examines the unique properties of a wilderness experience in Finnish culture, and his study suggests that this point of view differs from that of the American idea of wilderness. It appears that Finns are generally more relaxed about the presence of trails, cabins, bridges and other human structures than Americans. These are factors that wilderness

managers in Finnish Lapland must take into account when designing policies for nature tourism.

11. A great chasm in the politics of wilderness exists between local control of land-use decisions and largely outside control of policy choices by interest groups wanting to preserve nature. Wuerthner (1999/2000, p. 88) argues that outside environmental groups are more willing to protect wild areas than local people with economic interests. As a deep ecologist, he wants to expand democracy to include "the votes of plants and animals," thereby resolving policy debates in favor of preserving nature. He desires to gain local support, but says that nearby residents nearly always oppose rules for protecting wilderness areas from heavier uses. If local people agree with his biocentric agenda, let majority rule flourish. If they do not, widen the circle of voters and use a politics of command to force land-use policies on rural people living near designated wilderness areas. His views are sure to provoke a flood of anger and attack by partisans who see the politics of public land use, or the place of people in nature, as primarily a local concern. There is an uncompromising spirit lurking in the debate, as it is driven by values and interests that both sides feel passionately about. It is a politics of geography, with an ongoing contest for power and control over public land-use rules between two regions.

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