

Student Essay on Respect for Nature in "The World is too much with Us"

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Essay

In the 1807 sonnet "The World is too much with Us," William Wordsworth speaks out about the conflict between nature and mankind. Wordsworth has deep feelings of respect for nature. He is saying that man is wasting precious time by not appreciating nature and the environment. Human beings are too wrapped up in materialistic things in life. We don't recognize the value and power of the universe that we belong to. The poem begins, "The world is too much with us, late and soon." I think "late" refers to the past and "soon" to the future. Wordsworth is saying that we have sold our souls in order to make other things (money, worldly possessions, and careers) more important than the value of life. Man's only desire in life is to devour all that is around us, no matter what effect it has on nature. Endangered species, the destruction of the rain forest, animal cloning, and the depletion of the ozone layer are prime examples. The author wants nature and man to co-exist and live in harmony, but he is pessimistic. The transformation hoped for will not come by civilization changing its selfish ways, but by an uproar from Mother Nature. This is evident in the last verse of his sonnet when Wordsworth mentions Proteus and Triton, two very powerful Greek sea gods. Using that mythology in today's world, I feel that the recent tsunami and hurricane Katrina are Proteus and Triton.