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ARC356 | Term Paper

North American Landscape Narratives: Crawford Lake Conservation Area and Gasworks Park

Both Crawford Lake Conservation Area and Gasworks Park are preserved North American sites in which they reveal stories of the past that demonstrate how the indigenous and the European settlements have used and treated the North American landscape differently. The essay will examine the origin and history of both parks' development, how they were disturbed, what landscape meant for people, including the Iroquoians and Americans, and how people approach and preserve these landscapes today. It will also discuss Elizabeth Meyer's argument about site disturbance, nature, and beauty in her essay.

Crawford Lake Conservation Area is a preindustrial, historical, native settlement in Milton, Ontario, Canada, shaped by cultural and political traditions and reconstructed today into a rural park. In contrast, Gasworks Park is a brownfield site with a preserved industrial plant whose function transformed into an open city park in Seattle, USA.

Crawford Lake Conservation Area consists of two main elements: Iroquoian Village and the lake. It has overlapping loops that connect to several trails, such as the Woodland Trail, Side Bruce Trail, Pine Ridge Trail, Nassagaweya trail, Rattlesnake point trail, and Escarpment trail. The village has an entrance consisting of a narrow path surrounded by tall columns known as palisades (Fig.1) and a ramp to see all three longhouses from an elevated view to get a sense of the space (Fig.2). It has an artifact and agricultural area that consists of corn, wheat, and squash. (Fig.3) this area is reserved and quieter compared to the longhouses' location. The village is

located on a higher hill, (Fig.4) while the lake is further down the hills and deeper into the forest; (Fig. 5) this observation is not apparent at first due to the infrastructures, and the clear pathways added today that make the site more like a park, and less like a forest with hills. The first longhouse was extensive, with high ceilings (Fig.6) and various artifacts placed on the sides that give visitors insights into the Iroquoian lifestyle and activities, including food, clothes, plants, materials, and objects used during the Iroquoian occupation on the site. There are also three fire pits in the middle of the longhouse with square windows above on the roof to allow fire smoke to escape. Multiple firepits on the site and within the longhouses further demonstrate the Iroquoian activities on the site. The second longhouse surprises visitors as the interior is a modern and renovated version of the original longhouses. It is a museum to display the Iroquoian people and their achievements today. (Fig.7)

In addition, the forest has one looping path leading down to the lake that forces the visitor to focus on following other people to the lake unconsciously. (Fig. 8) However, when the forest is empty, the individual can get a better sense of the surroundings, hear the rustling of the trees, and almost imagine the Iroquoians navigating the area during their occupation. (Fig. 9) At the lake, there are stone benches (Fig.10) to admire the scenery before getting on a narrow boardwalk that forms a circle around the lake, with one exit at the end. (Fig.11) There are rest stops; some face the forest to give the visitors different experiences of both settings. (Fig.12) Overall, the experience and the site elements allow an understanding of how the Iroquoians lived. For example, the village felt reserved and was perhaps hidden among the trees before deforestation that made way for tourism activities today. The lake is also highly preserved today in a way where it is difficult for anyone to get closer or attempt swimming due to the boardwalk. Few adjustments have been made to accommodate the tourists with minimal disturbance to the

landscape. The lake site, however, does not present clear evidence of disturbance. Therefore, this essay will use research and data to understand further the site, and its past uses.

The site's use and level of disturbance are analyzed through the lens of four periods: pre-Iroquoians, Iroquoians, Post-Iroquoians, and Euro-Canadians.[1] Studies show that both Iroquoians and Euro-Canadian periods exhibit the most site disturbance through sediments and data gathered from nearby Crawford Lake to determine the activities performed within site.[2] It is confirmed that they disturbed the site through agriculture and deforestation.[3] The Iroquoian period has the highest rates of nutrients that reveal their land-use practices. Both periods also have the highest rate of nutrient availability and lake productivity, revealing the land-use practices of the Iroquoians and that the Canadians used charcoal and had ragweed pollen signifying their agricultural activities.[4] They also have high erosion rates, revealing their farming and deforestation activities within the site.[5] Pollens found in the lake indicate that the Iroquoians grew crops such as corn, maize, kidney beans, sunflower, and squash, accompanied by fungi spores that killed crops such as corn smut, corn rust, bean rust, and wheat rust.[6] Canada goose

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[1] Erik J. Ekdahl, Jane L. Teranes, Chad A. Wittkop, Eugene F. Stoermer, Euan D. Reavie, and John P. Smol, "Diatom Assemblage Response to Iroquoian and Euro-Canadian Eutrophication of Crawford Lake, Ontario, Canada," *Journal of Paleolimnology* 37, no. 2 (2007): 234, https://journals-scholarsportal-info.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/pdf/09212728/v37i0002/233_dartiaeocloc.xml.

[2] Ekdahl et al., "Diatom," 237.

[3] Ekdahl et al., "Diatom," 237.

[4] Ekdahl et al., "Diatom," 235.

[5] Ekdahl et al., "Diatom," 237.

[6] John H. McAndrews, and Charles L. Turton, ""Fungal Spores Record Iroquoian and Canadian Agriculture in 2nd Millenniuma.d. Sediment of Crawford Lake, Ontario, Canada," *Vegetation History and Archaeobotany* 19, no. 5–6 (2010): 495, https://journals-scholarsportal-info.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/pdf/09396314/v19i5-6/495_fsriacsocloc.xml.

who inhabited the site would move the pollen and spores before the Canadian occupation and their hunting activities.[7] This data provides insights into the site's transformation and the level of disturbance during the Iroquoian period. Crop diseases affected bread and wheat crops during the Canadian period, and when they cleared the forest for farming in 1830, 300 years after the Iroquoians abandoned the site.[8]

The site has a unique forest of various tree species such as white pine, eastern white cedar, hemlock, sugar maple, red oak, white elm, American beech, white ash, white birch, ironwood, and basswood.[9] Each period had a forest succession. For example, it was red oak during the Iroquoian period due to the warm climate, and white pine trees due to the cold climate post-Iroquoian period.[10] Then during the Canadian period, white birch succeeded pine trees due to woodchopping.[11] Other evidence of site disturbance includes wood charcoal indicating the use of maple, beech, elm, and ash trees surrounding the site.[12]

Generally, many other Iroquoian sites have been disturbed for further excavations and city developments and completely perished, leaving behind hidden stories.[13] Crawford Lake

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[7] McAndrews and Turton, “Fungal Spores,” 495.
[8] McAndrews and Turton, “Fungal Spores,” 496.
[9] McAndrews and Turton, “Fungal Spores,” 497.
[10] McAndrews and Turton, “Fungal Spores,” 497.
[11] McAndrews and Turton, “Fungal Spores,” 497.
[12] William D. Finlayson and Roger Byrne, “Investigations of Iroquoian Settlement and Subsistence Patterns at Crawford Lake, Ontario—A Preliminary Report,” *Ontario Archaeology* no. 25 (1975): 33, https://www.ontarioarchaeology.org/Resources/Publications/oa25-3-finlayson.pdf.

[13] Gary Warrick, "The Precontact Iroquoian Occupation of Southern Ontario," *Journal of World Prehistory* 14, no. 4 (2000): 419-420, http://www.jstor.org/stable/25801165.

Conservation Area is unique in ways that it tries to preserve or reconstruct similar settlement patterns that once inhabited the site, revealing its narrative past.

Jennifer Birch and Ronald F. Williamson's "Navigating Ancestral Landscapes in the Northern Iroquoian World" presents an overview of the landscape meaning for Iroquoians, even after its abandonment and the reasons for their relocation using the Iroquoian Wendat people as an example. The Iroquoians believed the site they inhabited was part of their social and cultural identity and collective memory, including spiritual and cultural values and traditions.[14] Their perceptions of landscape and concepts of identity, legitimacy, and sense of place imbed natural and cultural elements into their sites.[15] Their relocation choice was influenced by population, soil exhaustion, resource need, or social or political changes.[16] When relocating, they practiced ceremonies and rituals such as ossuaries burial, where they emplaced their ancestors' souls within the site so they never truly abandoned the place after relocation.[17] Therefore, transforming the site into an ancestral landscape that connects to spiritual and cultural meanings related to nature and ecology through these practices.[18]

Gasworks Park was an example of a brownfield in which industrial development heavily affected the site's ecology, city landscape, and urban development and required ecological

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[14] Jennifer Birch, and Ronald F. Williamson, "Navigating Ancestral Landscapes in the Northern Iroquoian World," *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 39 (2015): 140, https://journals-scholarsportal-info.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/pdf/02784165/v39icomplete/139_nalitniw.xml.

[15] Birch and Williamson, "Navigating Ancestral Landscapes," 140.
[16] Birch and Williamson, "Navigating Ancestral Landscapes," 141.
[17] Birch and Williamson, "Navigating Ancestral Landscapes," 144.
[18] Birch and Williamson, "Navigating Ancestral Landscapes," 147.

management.[19] The history of the Gasworks site before 1903 is unclear. Some papers argue that Native Americans used it for fishing, and others, such as Shannon Satherley, explain that deers used the site to drink from the lake, but no traces of Native American attachment to the site were found.[20]

However, in 1903, architect John C. Olmsted provided a plan to stitch an extensive park system within the fabric of the city of Seattle that was influenced by political, economic, and cultural changes and influences over the decades.[21] The same year, landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted suggested a Gasworks site for a public park, but a gas company purchased it in 1906.[22] (Fig. 13) Olmsted influence is significant in Seattle and on its people. Satherley explains in her thesis that the idea of an industrial park was initially unsettling to the citizens who argued for Olmsted-style site redevelopment.[23]

Between 1906 and 1956, the site was disturbed twice by a gas company and an oil company productions.[24] Then, the City of Seattle purchased the site in 1962 and made plans to

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[19] Jin-wei Zhang, and Lina Ji, "Five Ecological Landscape Design Modes of Urban Brownfields," *Applied Mechanics and Materials* 174-177 (2012): 2687, https://www-scientific-net.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/AMM.174-177.2687.pdf.

[20] Shannon Satherley, "Identifying Landscape Meanings: Images and Interactions at Gas Works Park," (PhD diss., Queensland University of Technology, 2016): 112, https://eprints.qut.edu.au/92512/.

[21] Sarah Dooling, Gregory Simon, and Ken Yocom, "Place-based Urban Ecology: A Century of Park Planning in Seattle," *Urban Ecosystems 9*, no. 4 (2006): 300, https://journals-scholarsportal-info.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/details/10838155/v09i0004/299_pueacoppis.xml

[22] Satherley, "Identifying Landscape Meanings," 112.

[23] Satherley, "Identifying Landscape Meanings," 114

[24] G.L. Turney and D.F. Goerlitz, "Organic Contamination of Ground Water at Gas Works Park, Seattle, Washington*," Groundwater Monitoring and Remediation* 10, no. 3 (1990): 187, https://ngwa-onlinelibrary-wiley-com.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1745-6592.1990.tb00014.x

develop it into a park after the industrial plant was shut down in 1956 due to the import of natural gas to the city.[25] The heavily disturbed site was left with solid and liquid wastes over the 50 years, including slag, solvents, lampblack carbon, coal gasification by-products, oils, tars, ashes, cinders, wood, concrete, and bricks.[26] (Fig. 14) They were deposited on-site and were used to extend the shoreline into the lake.[27] Additionally, due to the 60 years of contamination by the gas and oil companies, vegetation growth was limited.[28]

Jin-Wei Zhang and Lina Ji provide five design models for remediations and ecological transformation of brownfields: 1. Ecological Preservative Design, 2. Ecological Restorative Design, 3. Ecological Functional Design, 4. Ecological Visible Design and 5. Ecological Artistic Design. Each of these design modes offers the best solutions based on the requirements of a disturbed site needs. Gas works park fits within the ecological restorative design model the most, in which the design aims to restore damaged ecological structures and improve the soil and water within site.[29]

Other researchers such as Meltem Erdem and Joan Iverson Nassauer focus on remediations required under government policies, including three fundamental problems to consider when redesigning brownfields such as Gasworks that comprise the problem of invisible environmental processes, false identity, and design as deceit.[30] While designers attempt to hide

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[25] Turney and Goerlitz, "Organic Contamination," 187.
[26] Turney and Goerlitz, "Organic Contamination," 187.
[27] Turney and Goerlitz, "Organic Contamination," 187.
[28] Satherley, "Identifying Landscape Meanings," 120.
[29] Zhang and Ji, "Five Ecological Landscape Design Modes," 2688.
[30] Meltem Erdem, and Joan Iverson Nassauer, "Design of Brownfield Landscapes Under Different Contaminant Remediation Policies in Europe and the United States," *Landscape Journal* 32, no.2 (2013): 279, https://www-jstor-

contamination and remediations when transforming brownfields, the authors argue that contamination of the site is "a fact of life for the post-industrial world,"[31] in which they play a part of the site's historical narration. The authors also suggest that covering the site's past uses and portraying it as healthy without the user's knowledge is a problem of false identity and design deceit.[32] The suggestion leads to Elizabeth Meyer's argument that remediation is not enough and that the site's identity should be more than just remediation with beauty.[33] Erdem and Nassauer then list design approaches and remediation requirements for Gasworks. These include improving human health interaction with the site, protecting groundwater, and improving industrial structures through cut and haul and capping methods.[34]

Shannon Satherley analyzes what Gasworks Park landscape has meant to the people of Seattle since deindustrialized and redesigned as a park; this also includes the architect himself. Richard Haag's proposal was unsettling to the people at first. He invited himself and people to experience and interact with the site and challenge their perceptions of a landscape park to give it a new meaning and continue its historical narrative.[35] Gasworks Park is considered the first deindustrialized landscape redesigned as a public park that retains its toxic material and industrial structures on site.[36] (Fig. 15) Satherley also includes Meyer's judgment of the park. She

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org.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/stable/pdf/43323944.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3Af314bbcf8c364998e3810fbc67d146c4

[31] Meltem, and Nassauer, "Design of Brownfield Landscapes," 283.

[32] Meltem, and Nassauer, "Design of Brownfield Landscapes," 283.

[33] Elizabeth K. Meyer, "Uncertain Parks: Disturbed Sites, Citizens, and Risk Society," in *Large Parks*, edited by Julia Czerniak and George Hargreaves (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2007): 82.

[34] Meltem, and Nassauer, "Design of Brownfield Landscapes," 284.

[35] Satherley, "Identifying Landscape Meanings," 17.

[36] Satherley, "Identifying Landscape Meanings," 12.

explains that the park's success "engages with the site's past and continuing narrative, but without being either an aestheticization of industrial heritage or a didactic heritage lesson."[37]

Meyer further argues in her "Uncertain Parks: Disturbed sites, Citizens, and Risk Society" that beauty should not hide disturbance but instead construct a new community between people and the landscapes of the disturbed sites. She also argues that disturbance offers beauty and new environmental attitudes within the sites.[38] Both Crawford Lake Conservation Area and Gasworks Park manage to reveal beauty through their disturbance. For example, the longhouses, the agricultural area, the firepits, and the palisades in the Iroquoian village are signs that the site was inhabited and disturbed. Gasworks still maintains its primary element, the industrial plant, instead of demolishing and attempting to conceal the disturbance that inhabited the site. Both sites still manage to combine nature, beauty, and disturbance to form a new communication with people while preserving their historical stories.

Meyer also proposes and provokes intriguing questions about consumer culture being a part of the American identity in the 20th century with "landscapes associated with consumption and its display."[39] What do these landscapes mean today? How do they function? How do people interact with these landscapes today? How can a site like Gasworks Park prove itself as "more than a symbol of the American consumer culture?"[40]

Furthermore, Haag was successful in the way he managed to respond to Erdem and Nassauer's and Meyer's concerns by exposing remediations and preserving industrial structures

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[37] Satherley, "Identifying Landscape Meanings," 19.
[38] Meyer, "Uncertain Parks," 75.
[39] Meyer, "Uncertain Parks,"63.
[40] Meyer, "Uncertain Parks," 64.

as part of the historical narrative and identity of the Gasworks site. He avoided problems of false identity and design deceit by including capped mound signalling that it is not untouched nature and might not be completely safe, transforming the site into an inviting park that also conveys a story about its past. Meanwhile, Crawford Lake Conservation Area does not show any evidence that today's people perhaps reconstructed it or that drastic changes have been made to accommodate the visitors to allow them to understand the true nature of the site.

Moreover, both sites provide their ways of interacting with people. For example, Crawford Lake unconsciously encourages people to interact with natural elements such as the lake and the settlement itself. The materials used to construct the village also presents the longhouses as natural elements that blend with the rest of the landscape. (Fig. 16) At the same time, Haag transformed the Gasworks site's unnatural and industrial equipment and structures into interactive elements for people.[41] (Fig. 17)

In addition to Meyer's argument, Sonja Duempelmann and Susan Herrington's "Plotting Time in Landscape Architecture" discuss designed landscapes within the concept of time and continuous flow, explaining designed landscapes as mediums of time and a product of a material culture that shape social and political conditions.[42] They describe the designed landscape's transformation over time through human social and cultural processes and natural conditions, such as seasonal changes influencing landscape development and design elements.[43] They also explain that industrialization has influenced the need for leisure, private time, and natural space.

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[41] Satherley, “Identifying Landscape Meanings,” 122.

[42] Sonja Duempelmann and Susan Herrington, “Plotting Time in Landscape Architecture,” *Studies in the History of Gardens and Designed Landscapes* 34, no. 1 (2014): 1, https://journals-scholarsportal-info.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/pdf/14601176/v34i0001/1_ptila.xml

[43] Duempelmann and Herrington, “Plotting Time,” 1.

It is obvious in cities such as Seattle, where the leisure landscape is realized in ways that an industrial landscape such as Gasworks Park can transform to cater to this need.[44]

Additionally, the authors argue that landscapes are characterized by their expression of time that combines elements of the past to symbolize time and history.[45] Gasworks Park is an example of this concept where its site signifies its historical time and transformation from a labour landscape to a dynamic, playful, recreational landscape. Meanwhile, Crawford Lake Conservation Area echoes a serene historical narrative landscape, with a reflection of the 'stuck in time' concept where visitors contemplate the history and narrative of the landscape. Their arguments shape the understanding of Crawford Lake Conservation Area Lake and Gasworks as products of historical time narrated to the person experiencing the space.

Before concluding, the essay will discuss the differences and similarities between both sites. Gasworks Park had been through extensive reconstruction over the decades before finally transforming into a semi-natural landscape park in the 1970s. Through its transformation, the changes are not invisible or concealed. However, while the Iroquoian village presents a historical and indigenous landscape with the longhouses, the village could have been reconstructed today in a manner that still preserves the design and the environment for the viewer to experience the Iroquoian settlement. Interestingly, architects and engineers managed to build longhouses as close as the original and included the firepits, but how does this define what real and natural landscape is? Secondly, the paths of both sites are similar in their construction to guide visitors toward the crucial landscape elements. It prompts questions about the decisions taken to form the paths and presents their roles in shaping the landscape. How would a person's perspective and

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[44] Duempelmann and Herrington, “Plotting Time,” 3.
[45] Duempelmann and Herrington, “Plotting Time,” 3.

experience of the space be if the paths were changed or remained the same before the transformation/reconstruction?

Thirdly, Crawford Lake Conservation Area emphasizes and defines itself as a Rural Landscape Park, whereas Gasworks Park is a transformed Post-Industrial City Park. Crawford Lake Conservation Area portrays a natural landscape with a forest, rough edges, and curves around the lake. Meanwhile, Gasworks Park's landscape is organized, pristine, and maintained regarding the paths and the well-tended grass. Crawford Lake Conservation Area's location seems secluded and intimate compared to Gasworks' public and spirited atmosphere, considering its location within the city with more visitors in the area.

Lastly, the wood palisade columns at the Iroquoian Village and the industrial concrete frames at Gasworks Park, both situated near their entrances, (Fig.17) share a resemblance, creating a connection between natural and humanmade. Although the palisades may not be entirely natural as they had been cut down and modified into a particular order, it still provides insights into how people utilized materials around them to provide meaning to their landscape.

Finally, while Crawford Lake Conservation Area and Gasworks Park are preserved sites transformed into public parks, their historical origin, function, and sociopolitical, cultural, and economic drives differ. They are also distinct in that the sites have been disturbed to different degrees for different purposes. They demonstrate unique characteristics that reflect their heritage and how the indigenous and European settlements have used and treated the North American landscape differently. Today, they provide new social meanings, functions, design approaches and challenges through their transformations in 21st-century landscape design architecture.

ILLUSTRATIONS:

Fig. 1: Palisades entrance to the village

Fig. 2: Ramp View of Iroquoian Village

Fig. 3: Agricultural Area. Right: (From left to right) squash, wheat, and corn crops

Fig. 4: Iroquoian Village on higher hill

Fig. 5: Varying hills to Crawford Lake

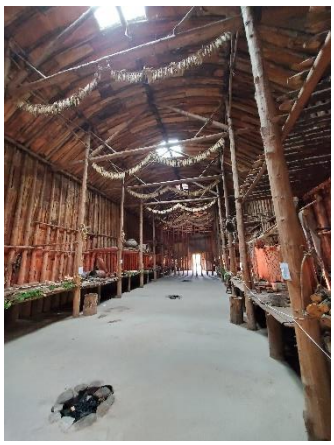


*Fig. 6: I*nside of first longhouse

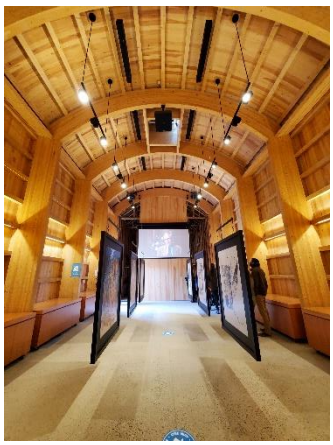


Fig. 7: Inside of second longhouse

Fig. 8: Looping path to Crawford Lake

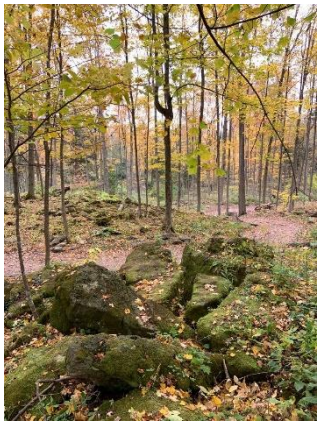


Fig. 9: Empty Forest

Fig. 10: Stone bench with Crawford Lake view

Fig. 11: Boardwalk around Crawford Lake

Fig. 12: Rest-stop at Crawford Lake

Fig. 13: Seattle's Gas Works, 1878.

("Bird's-Eye View of the City of Seattle, Puget Sound, Washington Territory, 1878." Drawn by E.S. Glover. University of Washington Libraries Special Collections Divisions. http://www.lakeunionhistory.org/Gasworks_History.html)

Fig. 14: Aerial View of Seattle's Gasworks, 1965

(City of Seattle, Department of Parks and Recreation. "City of Seattle, Parks and Recreation Department, Gas Works Park, Wallingford, Seattle, WA." *PCAD.* 1965. http://pcad.lib.washington.edu/image/1299/ .)

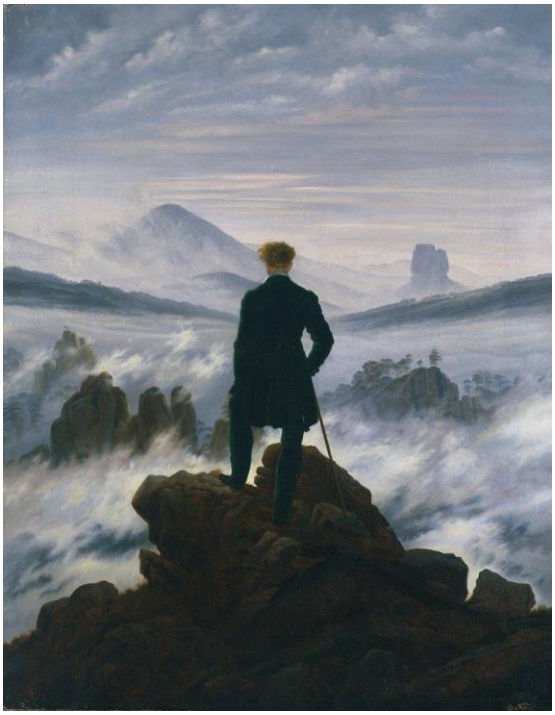
Fig. 15: Seattle's Gas Works, 2013

(Long Back Nguyen, "Gas Work Park in Falls, Seattle, Washington." PBase. 2013. https://www.pbase.com/image/152814407)

Fig. 16: Exterior of a longhouse at Iroquoian village of Crawford Lake

Fig. 17: Concrete Frames at Gasworks, Seattle

(Photograph by Kevin Casey. "Ghost Train." In *Explore Seattle's Urban Architectural Ruins, Seattle Magazine.*2011. https://www.seattlemag.com/article/explore-seattle-s-urban-architectural-ruins)



Left: Friend standing above Crawford Lake.
Right: Wanderer Above the Sea of Fog by
Caspar David Friedrich, 1817.
(https://www.artsy.net/article/artsy-editorial-mysterious-appeal-art-depicts-figures)

The cliff found at Crawford Lake resembles Friedrich's painting, in which the figure admires the landscape as part of a spiritual experience. It is also a reminder of Immanuel Kant and Friedrich Hegel's ideas and writings of beauty and sublime placed within contemporary timeframe and landscapes.

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