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STS.036 Technology and Nature in American History  
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## STS.036

### Reading questions for Cronon, *Changes in the Land*

#### Part I

- What is Cronon's project and purpose?
- How does one do an ecological history? (What are the sources? What are the theoretical challenges? What are the benefits?)
- How does Cronon describe the relationship between human and nature?

#### Part II

##### Chapter 2

- How did Europeans see the land? (20-22)
- How does Cronon characterize the colonial New England landscape? (25-31)
- How does Cronon conceptualize ecological change? (32-33)
- What was the "paradox" Europeans perceived in Native Americans' relations to the land? (33)

##### Chapter 3

- How did European perceptions of Native Americans' land use relate to European land claims? (56)
- What is the difference between natural and civil land rights? (56)
- What is the difference between individual ownership and collective sovereignty? (58)
- What are usufruct rights? (62-63)
- What is the significance of place names? (65)
- What is the difference between English and Native American conceptions of land transfer? (68)
- What was the paradox of Native American land sales? (70)
- What does Cronon mean by "the alienation of land as a commodity"? (75)
- What is Cronon's critique of capitalism as it pertains to ecological history? (76-77)

##### Chapter 5

- What were the causes and effects of the new Native American sedentarism of the 1630s? (101)
- What does Cronon say about changing notions of value with respect to fur, technology, and wampum?
- What, according to Cronon, were the causes and effects of the eradication of the New England beaver population?

#### Part III

##### Chapter 8

- In the conclusion, Cronon makes some important qualifications about how to explain causation and how to attribute agency. What are they, and why are they important?
- What, according to Cronon, are the two main "ecological contradictions of the colonial economy"? (169)
- What is the twentieth-century difference between "yield" and "loot" that Cronon refers to in closing? What is the difference between those terms in Cronon's history?