MORAL PLURALISM, NONSENTIENT NATURE, AND SUSTAINABLE WAYS OF LIFE

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ABSTRACT

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Ecologist Aldo Leopold called for a land ethic in which the entire "biotic community" has direct moral consideration. A major philosophic barrier to a land ethic is the *interest principle*, the notion that only sentient beings have interests whose loss could be a moral harm to them. Although strict adherents cannot be argued out the interest principle, a morally pluralistic position based on sustainable ways of life is a viable way to counter and transcend it.

Recent major approaches to a land ethic are examined. Monistic positions include J. Baird Callicott's evolutionary altruism and inherent value of nature, Holmes Rolston III's natural value of projective (evolutionary) nature, and Paul W. Taylor's respect for nature. Pluralistic approaches include Christopher D. Stone's mapping of moral planes, Eugene C. Hargrove's natural aesthetics, and Jim Cheney's postmodern bioregionalism. Arne Naess's deep ecology is treated as a borderline case.

I claim that Stuart Hampshire's notion of a way of life, the holistic and interdependent complex of personal commitments and practices which define and make meaningful an individual's existence, provides a grounding for moral intuitions that nonsentient nature is itself morally considerable. If one values a way of life, one will want it to be sustainable for future generations; this requires a recognition of one's dependence on nature and how nature both limits and gives positive definition to one's way of life. The position is exemplified by the works of Wendell Berry and his analogy between marriage and the farmer's relationship to the land.

Giving moral primacy to sustainable ways of life would allow Stone to counter criticisms that his pluralism (1) merely assumes nonsentient entities are morally significant, and (2) provides no way for deciding cases of moral conflict. The variety of gestalts valued in a sustainable way of life meets the first criticism. Stone's suggestions of lexically ordering and overlapping moral planes can be supplemented by Martin Benjamin's notion of integrity preserving compromise to meet the second.

For Floyd and Marty whom I love as parents

and respect as human beings.

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Environmental Philosophy

As an academic discipline environmental philosophy is scarcely two decades old. It grew out of the widespread concerns of the 1960s about pollution, exhaustion of nonrenewable resources, overpopulation, increasing rates of species extinctions, and threats of irreversible damage to the earth's life support capacity. The term 'environmental philosophy' is quite broad, ranging from studies in philosophy of biology to any ethical considerations dealing with the environment. I will use the term loosely and interchangeably with 'environmental ethics' which does not directly include philosophy of biology. In speaking generally, I will freely substitute 'moral' for 'ethical' and vice versa. On occasions when I use 'moral' with connotations of duties owed or owing, while reserving 'ethical' to refer to character development and style of life, the context will, I hope, make the usage clear.

Philosophers who have taken up environmental issues have sorted themselves into three main groups. The *traditional humanists* or *anthropocentrists* insist that only human beings count morally, have direct moral standing, or are ethically considerable. They see environmental ethics largely as an applied field where traditional concepts and distinctions are used to sift through new problems in which we have duties *regarding* the nonhuman world to other human beings, but no duties directly *to* nonhumans. According to this position, it would not be morally wrong to dump raw sewage into a river because it kills the fish or degrades a natural watercourse. Rather, it would be wrong because it ruins the sporting pleasures of the fisherman, creates aesthetically offensive conditions, or endangers the health of people downstream who drink the water. Nature, including other animals, has no *intrinsic value*, but only *instrumental*

value as a *resource* for human use. The most that disciplines like evolutionary biology, ecology, and sociobiology can contribute to traditional humanist ethics is to make us more factually sophisticated about how our decisions will affect other human beings.

The second group consists of the *humane moralists* (following Callicott 1980) *sentientists* or *animal extensionists* who extend the concepts used by the traditional humanists in order to give moral consideration to nonhuman animals (hereafter: animals) that share certain key ethical traits with humans.[1] Rather than claiming the moral concepts of the traditional humanists are flawed, the animal extensionists see the problem as one of application. They attack the anthropocentrism of the humanists for being arbitrary, inconsistent, and speciesist (on analogy with racist) in its refusal to apply the principles evenhandedly by extending them equally to all sentient creatures who possess the relevant ethical traits. The animal extensionists include both *utilitarians* and *deontologists*.[2] The utilitarians, who judge the rightness or wrongness of an act on the net goodness of its consequences, argue for animals' moral standing on the basis of their ability to feel some degree of pleasure and pain (or satisfaction and frustration); thus animal preferences must be included in calculations as to which action will produce the best consequences, i.e., the greatest overall preference satisfaction, happiness, or feeling of well-being. The deontologists argue that we have moral duties to animals apart from any utilitarian consequences. Usually this is discussed in terms of *moral* or *natural rights* which restrict what can be done to someone no matter how much utility might be increased. The most common method employed by deontologists is to argue from cases of marginal human beings and to insist that fairness or parity of reasoning requires the same treatment and protection for animals. For example, if it is not morally permissible to do away, however painlessly, with severely retarded humans because they have a right to life, then nonrational animals (many of whom demonstrate greater mental competence than severely retarded humans) must also have a right to life.

Whether for ease of parlance or from conceptual confusion, the utilitarian and deontological extensionists are sometimes lumped together as "animal rights" philosophers. Generally, animal extensionists will regard new scientific information in the same way as the traditional humanists.[3] Duties regarding the environment are extended to nonhumans, but nonsentient nature has no nonderivative moral standing. A prime example of how nonsentient nature might be treated is Joel Feinberg's suggestion that wildlife preserves be protected from human development as the rightful property of the animals who live there (Feinberg 1980, p. 198).

The third group of philosophers insist that nonsentient nature is, at least in some forms, ethically considerable in its own right; I will refer to them generically as *land ethic philosophers.*[4] Subgroups include *biocentric individualists* who assert individual plants, but not species, are *loci of value*; and *biocentric* or *ecocentric holists* who would insist that species or ecosystems are not reducible to individuals or component parts, and who would accept species or ecosystems themselves as loci of value. In this position, humans not only owe moral duties to each other, and to (some) animals, but they also owe moral duties directly to some form of nonsentient nature, whether individual trees, or species, or ecosystems, or inclusively "the land."[5] Most land ethic philosophers have an holistic bent; in their view the moral concepts of traditional humanism are fundamentally flawed or severely limited because they rely on an atomistic and reductionistic view of nature which ecology has shown to be false and practice has shown to be disastrous. They instead look to evolutionary biology and allied sciences (and sometimes even to subatomic physics) to critique traditional ethical concepts and to supply us with new conceptual models. They see as arbitrary traditional philosophical dichotomies of fact and value, is and ought, conceptual problems and empirical problems.

The Land Ethic

The term 'land ethic' was coined by forester and ecologist Aldo Leopold who spent his early days with the U.S. Forest Service exterminating predators to increase deer herds for sport hunting. The eventual result was habitat destruction and mass starvation as the herd increased beyond the carrying capacity of the land. Leopold's reflections are found in *A Sand County Almanac* where he espouses an holistic ethic based on the ecological web of life:

> The 'key-log' which must be moved to release the evolutionary process for an ethic is simply this: quit thinking about decent land-use solely as an economic problem. Examine each question in terms of what is ethically and esthetically right, as well as what is economically expedient. A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise (Leopold 1970, p. 262).

Leopold's holistic concern for the biotic community is at once understandable and disturbing, for it sometimes requires sacrificing the welfare or lives of sentient individuals (like the deer) for the well being of nonsentient nature.

The idea that nonsentient nature in certain cases should take moral precedence over sentient individuals often has led to bitter disputes between land ethic philosophers and animal extensionists.[6] The conceptual basis of these disputes is what Joel Feinberg calls the *interest principle.* Of the minimal qualifications to be a holder of rights Feinberg says:

> A mere thing, however valuable to others, has no good of its own. The explanation of that fact, I suspect, consists in the fact that mere things have no conative life: no conscious wishes, desires, and hopes; or urges and impulses; or unconscious drives, aims, and goals; or latent tendencies, direction of growth and natural fulfillments. Interests must be compounded somehow out of conations; hence mere things have no interests. *A fortiori*, they have no interests to be protected by legal or moral rules. Without interests a creature can have no "good" of its own, the achievement of which can be its due. Mere things are not loci of value in their own right, but rather their value consists entirely in their being objects of other beings' interests (Feinberg 1980, pp. 165-166).

Interests serve as the moral common denominator for both utilitarian and deontological defenses of animals. They also serve both traditional humanists and animal

extensionists as the boundary of moral conceptual coherence beyond which one is talking nonsense. In the case of Leopold's deer problem, both groups might advocate culling the herd, but it would be to save the habitat for human uses, or to minimize animal suffering with a relatively quick death by hunting (whether humans or reintroduced predators do the hunting) rather than a slow and agonizing death by starvation. To these philosophers, saving the nonsentient habitat for its own sake is nonsense because, having no interests, the habitat has no "sake of its own." Land ethic philosophers retort that conceptual terms like 'good' and 'sake' are defined arbitrarily and are narrowly legalistic in scope; one must consider actual situations, they claim, rather than excluding nonsentient nature from moral standing by a verbal game of stipulative definitions.

Monism, Pluralism, and Sustainable Ways of Life

The first order of business for a land ethic is to find a way to argue beyond the psychocentrism of the interest principle. In the last decade, major positions have been sketched for defending the moral significance of nonsentient nature, and a split has occurred between *ethical monists* and *pluralists*. The monists seek a single principle under which to subsume and integrate all ethics whether dealing with rational beings, sentient life, or nonsentient nature. The pluralists argue that no single principle can handle the task, especially since the concepts of traditional ethics were developed to relegate nonsentient nature to the status of instrumental value for rational or sentient individuals. J. Baird Callicott, Holmes Rolston, III, and Paul W. Taylor are pioneering figures who defend monistic positions. Representative advocates of a pluralistic view are Christopher D. Stone, Eugene C. Hargrove, and Jim Cheney.[7] Arne Naess occupies a middle ground in which his principle 'Self-realisation!' (the exclamation point being Naess's way of indicating an imperative) functions more like a Kantian regulative

concept guiding the individual toward--but not dictating--a coherent system of ethical decision making.

I begin by examining the comparative merits of the monistic positions on four key points:

1. The method of arguing for the moral significance of nonsentient nature.
2. The manner and degree to which the methodology depends conceptually on the sciences.
3. The degree of holism and the kinds of entities encompassed.
4. The way in which each is integrated with mainstream or conventional ethics.

The analysis reveals serious shortcomings of the monistic positions because of: (1) their speculative nature, (2) their attempts at a monolithic hierarchy for decision making (which seems to be a fantasy even within the limits of traditional humanistic ethics), and (3) their dependence on a gestalt switch or conceptual shift in which one comes to view nature in a new and morally significant way. I will refer to this last problem as the *problem of seeing*, and claim it is endemic to any land ethic because such an ethic requires crossing the barrier of the interest principle.

I turn then to pluralistic ways of arguing for the moral status of nonsentient nature. The chief objection to moral pluralism is that it provides no means to settle disputes between conflicting moral principles or values. Beyond that, each of the three versions of pluralism suffers from its own specific limitations. Stone suggests that we treat ethical principles as different kinds of moral maps depending on our purposes. Just as we use topographical maps for some situations and road maps for others, so we might invoke, for instance, utility to deal with animals but not to save rare plant species. Where there are disagreements about which maps to use, an overlay of maps will often reveal a common goal arrived at by different moral routes. Traditional humanists, animal extensionists, and land ethic philosophers frequently agree as to what should be done, though they justify it in radically different ways (as in the Leopold deer case cited

above). A major limitation of Stone's position is the pseudo-pragmatic ease with which differences can be papered over. A fundamental requirement for being a moral person is acting from the right motives which in turn requires each moral agent to know himself. Hargrove simply offers one reason for moral duties to nonsentient nature based on an argument from positive aesthetics. In addition to the difficulties associated with positive aesthetics, this provides little guidance in making hard choices between aesthetic preservation and critical human or animal interests. Cheney argues for "bioregional narrative" based on the "contextual languages" of whatever group is establishing some kind of moral relationship with nature. Here, mythmaking may preclude science and create two major problems: (1) the group's concerns may contort the moral and ontological status of nature, and (2) many environmental problems which have collective and cumulative effects--for instance, global warming--may remain invisible because they can only be perceived and understood with a combination of high level scientific theory, sophisticated models, and statistical analysis.

Arne Naess's view of deep ecology can be seen either as monistic in its attempt to create a pyramid of norms or pluralistic in the need for each individual work out such a pyramid based on his own experience. Naess's primary ontology of simultaneously cognitive and affective *gestalts* bridges the gap between facts and values; his relational view of self to *milieux* bridges the gap between the individual as ego-center and the world as something foreign. Both gestalts and the relational view of self will become important in understanding how a way of life may include nonsentient nature and give it direct moral standing. Naess's ultimate norm 'Self-realisation!' as an expression of the total unity of Self and Nature, however, is destructive of the delicate balance which must be maintained to avoid one extreme of total annihilation by absorption into the other and the opposite extreme of total alienation from the other.

I conclude that the goals of these various forms of pluralism can be better achieved by adding a sustainability factor to Stuart Hampshire's notion of a *way of life*, the

holistic and interdependent complex of personal commitments and practices that give definition and meaning to an individual's existence. Internally, a way of life is regulated by the requirement that an individual achieve as much overall coherence as possible in his commitments. He must have an integrated life that is "of a piece" rather than a fragmented existence. Externally, Hampshire safeguards a way of life from becoming degenerately ethnocentric through his side constraint of a thin concept of justice augmented by considerations of utility.

If one is committed to a way of life, I argue, then one will want it to continue. To have it continue requires that it be sustainable--and, observing Hampshire's notion of justice--without undue infringement on other ways of life. Sustainability requires knowledge of environmental limits, but the commitment to a way of life also suggests an appreciation for and dedication to the natural environment for the manner in which it makes one's particular way of life possible. The resultant position I call *sustainable ways of life pluralism.* It is explicated and fleshed in through the paradigm of the relationship of the farmer to his land and the mutually reinforcing relationships of people, land, and community which are found in the novels and essays of Wendell Berry.

I maintain that the chief objection against pluralism, namely that it cannot settle moral disputes between different ethical principles, may also be raised against monistic systems which employ tacit appeals to shared world views or a partisan vocabulary masquerading as an objective conceptual framework. If such charges can be made to stick against well established positions like utilitarianism, they can be made more easily against a land ethic with its wider and more diverse concerns. Though I share Rolston and Callicott's hopes that evolutionary biology can ground some universal moral claims (and would argue for my particular way of life on that basis), there is no conceptual Archimedean lever by which a land ethic philosopher can move the earth of a traditional

humanist or animal extensionist (Williams, 1985). Nonetheless, the case for a land ethic--or different land ethics--under sustainable ways of life pluralism is not as dismally fractious as it may first seem. There are many noncontroversial basic needs which humans (and animals) share: clean air and water, nontoxic places to live, global airsheds in the form of forests, a protective ozone umbrella. Here the disputes between traditional anthropocentrists and land ethic philosophers are less about what should be done than why. Concerted action for diverse reasons can be handled by Stone's pluralistic method of overlapping moral maps or planes. Personal integrity, however, still requires one to be clear about his reasons or motives for action. Where there is serious disagreement about what should be done, Martin Benjamin's notion of integrity preserving compromise can be employed (Benjamin, 1990). In cases in which individuals cannot compromise without losing their integrity, there is no solution, but that is as problematic for ethical monism as for pluralism. The only response is that we live imperfect lives in an imperfect world.

Sustainable ways of life pluralism has several advantages. It forces the individual to come to a ground level understanding of abstract and theoretical ethical principles by a living test of their implications. It builds character and mature judgment by requiring that each individual stand for something and live it. It provides the positive motivation of upholding a valued way of life in one's ethical regard for nonsentient nature rather than merely threatening what will happen if we don't restrain our actions. It emphasizes the continuity of the individual by linking him through his way of life to past and future generations and to a wider community in the present. This is a stabilizing factor against the vicissitudes of life as well as an antidote to nihilism and alienation. Because its holism deals with nonsentient nature in terms of experienced gestalts, its primary ontology is less speculative and its commitments are less sweeping than ethics which leap to high level complexes like ecosystems. It requires an individual to know himself

and thus prepares him to compromise with others by clarifying what is and is not crucial to his own way of life and self respect. It frees one to live an ethic of the real world in which each of us can choose to be only a few things to ourselves and others rather than impersonally being all things, or the same thing, to all people. And, for those who value a tradition of democratic liberalism, its egalitarian recognition of the *prima facie* right of each individual to pursue his own way of life maintains a respect for the autonomy of the individual in what Leopold called the biotic community.

CHAPTER 1:

MONISTIC APPROACHES TO A LAND ETHIC

INTRODUCTION

Monisitic Ethical Systems

Moral monists seek to bring all ethical decisions under the governance of one master moral principle or a single methodology which yields the best answer for every problem. A monist may idealize moral theory in such a way that its principles are understood as a set of axioms from which lower level principles can be deduced until from these principles, in combination with accurate definitions and empirical information, one can arrive, theoretically, at the proper solution to any moral problem. In practice moral monists readily admit that not all problems have a single clear solution. However, they claim, this is not due to the fault of ethical systems (notably their own) but to human frailty and limitations of knowledge. Monist R.M. Hare asks us to consider a thought experiment in which there is an "archangel" with "superhuman powers of thought, superhuman knowledge, and no human weaknesses." Of such a moral agent Hare claims:

> He will need to use only critical thinking. When presented with a novel situation, he will be able at once to scan all its properties, including the consequences of alternative actions, and frame a universal principle [i.e., binding on all moral agents] (perhaps a highly specific one) which he can accept for action in that situation, no matter what role he himself were to occupy in it (1981, p. 44).

The grand ambitions of moral monism are seldom overtly articulated with Hare's clarity, but they nonetheless remain as unstated goals and standards by which monists judge the adequacy of any ethical system. Christopher Stone (a recent convert to pluralism), commenting on competing ethical theories, says:

> ...[U]nderneath all the rivalry, there is a striking if ordinarily only implicit agreement on two tenets that together endow moral philosophy with what might

> be called its prevailing sense of mission. Each school is *monistic*, and as a sort of corollary, each is *determinate*. By monistic I mean that the enterprise is conceived as aiming to produce, and to defend against all rivals, a single coherent and complete set of principles capable of governing all moral quandaries. By determinate I mean that the ambition of that one framework is to yield for each quandary one right answer. I suspect that anyone who wavers between doctrines, or who shows second thoughts about the most ambitious powers of his selected orthodoxy to solve all problems, would arouse suspicion of "not taking morals seriously" (1987, p. 116).

Stone's acerbic comments are a warning about the potential for *hubris* in those who assume monistic moral positions. Generally speaking, land ethic monists are safeguarded from such insolence by their awareness that they are philosophic underdogs who must justify their opposition to the entrenched view that only beings with interests have direct moral considerability. Being on the defensive, land ethic philosophers are usually more hamstrung than presumptuous in their monism.

In this chapter, the positions of three monistic advocates of a land ethic are examined with special attention to their (1) method of arguing for direct moral standing of nonsentient nature, (2) conceptual dependence on the sciences, (3) degree of ontological holism, and (4) ways of integrating typical anthropocentric concerns of conventional ethics. Though each position is that of a particular author, it can be viewed more broadly as a type of response or way of arguing beyond the interest principle.

J. Baird Callicott argues that we are evolutionarily programmed for altruistic sentiments which allow us to value others for what they are in themselves, whether the other is a human individual or an holistic and nonsentient entity like an ecosystem. Value is subjective because it requires a sentient valuer, but what is valued needs neither itself to possess sentience nor to serve the instrumental purposes of a sentient being.

Holmes Rolston, III, claims that value is objective in that nature has the ability to excite nonarbitrary valuational responses in sentient beings, notably humans. Evolution has so fitted us to our natural environment, that, just as light striking the eye of an

attentive normal observer will cause a relatively standard response, so the unintentional, but nonetheless creative, projects of evolutionary nature will cause a relatively standard response in the attentive normal valuer.

Paul W. Taylor asserts that respect for nature is a fundamental attitudinal stance (like respect for persons) which occurs when our biological sophistication forces us to recognize that each living thing has a *good* of its own. Minimally, a *good* is a complex of needs which must be fulfilled for the organism to survive and flourish in its normal life cycle. Having a good, nonsentient living individuals like plants have direct moral standing, but holistic and/or nonliving entities do not.

A fourth way of arguing, the extension of the concept of self to include nonsentient nature, is deferred to Chapter 3 because its representative spokesperson, Arne Naess, straddles the boundary between monism and pluralism, and because Naess claims to be interested in ontology rather than ethics.

CALLICOTT'S LAND ETHIC

Ethics and Community

J. Baird Callicott has been the most devoted philosophic disciple of Aldo Leopold's seminal insight that ecology provides a new basis for expanding ethics to include all of terrestrial nature which Leopold alternately calls "the land" and "the biotic community." The disastrous results of his early attempts at predator extermination (discussed in the Introduction) convinced Leopold that symbiosis was the key to understanding the flourishing of animal and plant life. He found a counterpart to symbiosis in human ethics:

> An ethic, ecologically, is a limitation of freedom of action in the struggle for existence. An ethic, philosophically, is a differentiation of social from anti-social conduct. These are two definitions of one thing. The thing has its origin in the tendency of interdependent individuals or groups to evolve modes of co-operation. The ecologist calls these symbioses. Politics and economics are advanced symbioses in which the original free-for-all competition has been replaced, in part, by co-operative mechanisms with an ethical content (perhaps in order that there may be a place to compete for).
>
> All ethics so far evolved rest on a single premise: that the individual is a member of a community of interdependent parts. His instincts prompt him to compete for his place in the community, but his ethics prompt him also to co-operate....
>
> The land ethic simply enlarges the boundaries of the community to include soils, waters, plants, and animals, or collectively: the land (1970, pp. 238-239).

Three basic convictions are discernible in Leopold's definition of an ethic. The concept of community based on cooperation is fundamental to biological symbiosis and cultural ethics, and it bridges the supposed gap between them. An ethic is the product of an historically evolving conception of what constitutes the moral community. The intricate symbioses discovered by ecologists force the latest (and last?) widening of the moral community for those who have attained enlightenment.

Were Leopold of more volatile nature than his affable style and common sense comments indicate, one might describe his ecological conversion as a Eureka! experience: The awareness of our interdependencies in the ecological web of life

suddenly made sense of everything! In seeing that the predator was not the enemy of the hunter--or even, on balance, the enemy of the deer--Leopold was freed from unnecessary and unprofitable management struggles against nature. Simultaneously he was freed from the moral hostilities engendered by defining himself as a combatant. This amounted to a large scale paradigm shift in which (nonhuman) predation, once envisioned as inimical to the community (of hunters, ironically), becomes understood as vital and beneficial to the community. As vital to the community, the predator must be included at least minimally in the community. For Leopold, the predator becomes synechdochic for the rest of nature. The biological roles have expanded so that they can no longer be understood in polar absolutes of good (inside and for the community) versus bad (outside and against the community). The roles are assimilated on analogy with the limited competition which is a necessity--and, despite some dangers, in the long run of overall benefit--within a human community. Like Newtonian physics which opened up new images and ideas for Enlightenment intellectuals, ecology held promise for a new synthesis of humanity and nature. Leopold was among the earliest and most eloquent prophets of that new synthesis. Turning Leopold's views into a defensible philosophic ethic is the task assumed by Callicott.

Ethical Subjectivism and Evolutionary Altruism

Callicott points out two standard philosophic objections to enlarging the boundaries of the moral community in Leopoldian fashion. The first is that Leopold provides us only with *prudential* reasons, not *moral* ones. The hunter who accepts animal predators into his community does so, according to Leopold's critics, not because he values the predator for what it is in itself, but because the predator serves the hunter's purposes of maintaining overall a maximally healthy herd to hunt.

The second objection is that Leopold conflates facts and values and commits the naturalistic fallacy. David Hume complained of arguments in which philosophers

suddenly deduced an ought or moral imperative from premisses that only described what is the case. Unless 'is' and 'ought' mean the same thing (which is tantamount to asserting that there have never been any immoral acts), to conclude logically that something ought to be requires at least one ought-premiss among the factual premisses of an argument. G.E. Moore observed that whenever presented with some natural property such as intelligence or pleasure as a candidate for goodness, one could always sensibly ask whether intelligence or pleasure is (really) good? Goodness, thought Moore, must be some property other than the natural entity which was judged good. Moore concluded that goodness was a nonnatural quality which we intuited. To label anything other than goodness as 'good' is to commit the naturalistic fallacy. If Hume's and Moore's objections hold, then the most we can gain from sciences like ecology is greater sophistication in understanding how we are affected by the networks of relationships in nature. We might be provided with *prudential reasons* for *instrumentally valuing* nature, but no *moral reasons* for *intrinsically valuing* nature.

Callicott's defense of Leopold from the objections of Hume and Moore is based on a distinction between *intrinsic* and *inherent* value. Something possesses intrinsic value "if its value is objective and independent of all valuing consciousness." Something possesses inherent value if it "is not independent of all valuing consciousness [but] is valued for itself and not only and merely because it serves as a means to satisfy the desires, further the interests, or occasion the preferred experiences of the valuers" (Callicott 1989, p. 161). Callicott thinks that the intrinsic value position must be rejected, but the inherent value position can be defended rationally through an appeal to evolutionary altruism.

Anyone who asserts that value is objectively in nature apart from a sentient valuer, says Callicott, quickly runs into the naturalistic fallacy.

> A sincere skeptic is always entitled to ask why reason, pleasure, order, or whatever *is* good and/or why rational, sentient, organized, etc., beings should therefore be intrinsically valuable. In the end, all a naturalistic advocate can do

> is to commend a property to our evaluative faculty of judgment or evaluative sensibilities (1989, p. 158).

The result of such disputes over intrinsic value is a standoff in which each side can only assert its position and claim the other side is blind. Unfortunately for disciples of Moore, intuitionist claims that intrinsic value is due to "primitive or irreducible" nonnatural properties likewise come to grief whenever moral intuitions are not widely shared. There is no way to settle disputes over intuitions. Callicott thinks that the problems raised by intrinsic value positions can be avoided by turning to a subjectivist account of value based on Hume's theory of moral sentiments.

According to Callicott, the pattern of argumentation in conventional ethics has blocked a moral appreciation of nonsentient nature because it begins with a form of *egoism. I* claim moral status for *myself* based on a "psychological capacity" such as "rationality or sentiency" which is "arguably valuable in itself and which thus qualifies *me* for moral standing." But because I base my moral status on psychological characteristics not unique to me, I must "grudgingly" grant the same moral standing to others who share these traits. Having no such psychological capacities, nonsentient nature is excluded from the moral community at the outset. Callicott finds this methodology (typical of animal ethics) objectionable both in its exclusiveness and in its tacit assumption that human nature is basically selfish. The assumption has forced moral philosophers into accepting a false dichotomy: Either limit the scope of the moral community to some level of sentience which each of us values in himself, or be stuck with a shouting match whenever value disputes arise. Fortunately we need not be saddled with this dilemma.

Hume provided the beginnings of a solution in his theory of moral sentiments by rejecting the notion that humans were by nature selfish. Augmenting Hume's position with the idea that evolution has bred us for altruism, Callicott develops his argument for

the inherent value of nature:

> Hume, [Adam] Smith, and Darwin diverged from the prevailing theoretical model by recognizing that altruism is as fundamental and autochthonous in human nature as is egoism. According to their analysis, moral value is not identified with a natural quality objectively present in morally considerable beings--as reason and/or sentiency is objectively present in people and/or animals--it is, as it were, projected by human subjects.
>
> Hume and Darwin, furthermore, recognize inborn moral sentiments which have society as their natural object (1989, pp. 84-85).

Since moral sentiments attach to holistic and nonsentient entities (society) as well as individuals, the groundwork is laid for extending the sentiments to ecologically holistic and nonsentient nature.[1]

Callicott goes through a four step process of arguing in defense of Leopold's land ethic. The first step is the presupposition that Hume's theory of moral sentiments is basically correct. The remaining three steps (here identified by brackets for reference) are outlined as follows:

> ...Hume suggests that the values you project onto objects are not arbitrary, but arise spontaneously in you because of the "constitution of your nature." [Step two] The affective constitution of human nature, Darwin plausibly argued, is standardized by natural selection. *Homo sapiens* is an intensely social species and so certain sentiments were naturally selected in a social environment which permitted and facilitated growth in the size and complexity of society. [Step three] The social sentiments, however, though fixed by natural selection are open-ended. There is more than just a little room for the cultural determination of their objects. Thus, just what is of value, either instrumentally or inherently is partly determined by what Hume called "reason," but what might better be called "cultural representation." [Step four] Aldo Leopold masterfully played upon our open social and moral sentiments by representing plants and animals, soils and waters as "fellow members" of our maximally expanded "biotic community." [Conclusion] Hence, to those who are ecologically well-informed, nonhuman natural entities are inherently valuable--as putative members of one extended family or society. And nature as a whole is inherently valuable--as the one great family or society to which we belong as members or citizens (1989, pp. 162-163).

As Callicott notes, ethicists who first encounter Leopold are likely to be horrified at the prospect of subordinating the interests of sentient individuals to the well-being of the biotic community, a position Tom Regan refers to as "evironmental fascism" (1983, p. 362). Callicott claims the problem is defused, however, by paying careful attention to Leopold. Critics, especially those in the animal welfare camp, can only envision

horrific scenarios because they impute to Leopold their methodology of taking a single criterion (e.g., "rationality or sentiency") and imposing it across the board to provide a base line equality of moral standing. (Consider Singer's phrase "all animals are equal.") The Leopold-Callicott methodology has a built-in safeguard.

> From the biosocial evolutionary analysis of ethics upon which Leopold builds the land ethic, it (the land ethic) neither replaces nor overrides previous accretions. Prior moral sensibilities and obligations attendant upon and correlative to prior strata of social involvement remain operative and preemptive.

Callicott likens this to rings on a tree with those at the core taking precedence over those farther out.

> Family obligations in general come before nationalistic duties and humanitarian obligations in general come before environmental duties. The land ethic, therefore, is not draconian or fascist. It does not cancel human morality. The land ethic may, however, with any new accretion, demand choices which affect, in turn, the demands of the more interior social-ethical circles. Taxes and the military draft may conflict with family-level obligations. While the land ethic, certainly, does not cancel human morality, neither does it leave it unaffected (1989, pp. 93-94).

Difficulties for Callicott

The Humean/Darwinian altruism with which Callicott begins his argument (identified above as step one) is relatively uncontroversial as is the claim that natural selection has standardized the "sentiments" in us (step two).

Step three raises a cluster of questions about the "open-ended" nature of our sentiments: How much is genetic, how much due to early social imprinting, how much is under the governance of reason? If, as commonly accepted, what we ought to do ethically presupposes what we can do, then Callicott is right to regard sociobiology and allied sciences as a "tremendous resource" for ethics. His position is bold, speculative, and promissory with a willingness to risk yet-to-be-given scientific answers to some basic questions which could prove disastrous for his land ethic.

How widely do our "social" sentiments extend? It is true that people are capable of intense passion over anything, but are they so in Hume's "cool hour" of reflection? Holistic entities like ecosystems and the biosphere are, as wholes, far removed from the strong parent-child bonding and genetic kinship which serve as Callicott's model and reference point. Further, if, as sociobiologists suggest, we are genetically selected for "altruism" towards kin, are we concomitantly programmed for hostility towards outsiders, whether of the same or of other species? If so, the land ethic is undone by its very appeal to our biological sentiments.

Philip Kitcher (1985) has noted the difficulties of separating our genetic from our cultural heritage, difficulties which are inherent in any sociobiological account of human behavior.

> Our evolutionary heritage surely equips us with *something*. Perhaps humans have genes that predispose us, given the environments in which we typically live, to find certain situations desirable and to avoid others. Yet we also have extraordinary cognitive abilities which we use to represent to ourselves many subtle features of the world around us. Furthermore, each of us is reared in a culture that provides us with a mass of information and misinformation, that shapes our appreciation of what is desirable and what is not. So, in our maturity, we make decisions. Those decisions are the products of many factors: our basic predispositions, our representations and reasonings, our interactions with the society in which we live (p. 268).

Kitcher's comments are aimed at the laxity of sociobiological explanations of social phenomena as part of biological *inclusive fitness*, but there is a similar laxity in using sociobiology to support an ethic.

Callicott's substitution of 'cultural representation' for Hume's term 'reason' creates additional difficulties. Hume clearly meant reason to be selective and regulatory. 'Cultural representation'--if I understand it rightly--can refer to anything a group might value collectively, and it opens the door to socialization through propaganda as well as thoughtful reflection. Without qualification or side constraints, the bigot would have as much scientific ground to stand on as someone of Leopold's moral caliber.

Moving away from the biological basics, humans vary considerably in world views and practices. If we must rely on "cultural representation" it is likely that the land ethic will fragment into cultural relativism at the very abstract point (step four) where Callicott needs his strongest argument for adopting--cognitively and affectively--a common ecological perspective. I think Callicott's answer would be a typically Western, liberal, and secular common sense one: In this day and age no rational person can deny that the physical and social sciences are our best form of knowledge, and they demonstrate that we are all members of a common biotic community. This may be the most adequate answer one can give, but it is not nearly as foundationally secure as Callicott assumes in his espousal of ethical monism. Even granting (a presently lacking) universal cognitive assent to the sciences, human affective ties remain diverse and often in conflict with accepted scientific theories.[2]

The concept of community in step four is problematic. What does the biotic community of the ecologist have in common with the moral community of the philosopher, other than the name 'community'? Callicott claims the former becomes the latter when (1) one is ecologically well informed, and (2) one's open-ended sentiments are attached to both individuals and holistic entities (including the whole of nature). There is a fundamental problem with each part of Callicott's assertion.

First, why pick the family model rather than, say, the energy flow model of ecology? Is the family model better on any scientific grounds or can it be better defended with arguments from philosophy of biology? Obviously, the family model has great metaphoric power in constructing analogies: it not only fits biological accounts of strong kinship attachments, it also appeals to our dearest moral intuitions about family and friends. But can Leopold's masterful play "upon our open social and moral sentiments" be defended in a more foundationally absolute and exclusive way than as poetic insight? Poetic insight might provide good reasons for a pluralist to commit

herself morally to the biotic community. It might, for instance, make her life more meaningful and her value commitments more cohesive. As a pluralist, however, she might not claim that everyone else should employ the poetic insight in exactly the same way. If Callicott is going to hew to ethical monism, he needs to eliminate the conceptual competition in a way that a pluralist need not.

Second, how strong is the analogy between our ties and obligations to the human community and those of the biotic community? The tree ring image of ethical expansion suggests severely attenuated obligations and duties to the biotic community. As long as "moral sensibilities and obligations" to inner rings ("strata of social involvement") are "preemptive," duties to outer rings are likely to diminish progressively. In that case the duties *to* the biotic community based on *inherent* value may be so weak as to be ineffectual (though one may still argue for strong duties *regarding* the biotic community based on *instrumental* value).[3] Recently, Callicott (1990a, p. 123) has endorsed the notion of a "mixed community" in which the innermost tree rings already include interrelationships among humans, animals, plants, and the land.[4] This goes a long way toward resolving the problem of the disparity between moral duties to the human and to the biotic communities. For the bulk of humanity, the human community was never as exclusively human as the idealistic fictions of philosophers and the legalistic fictions of the courts would have it. But, the holistic understanding of the mixed community at the personal level also permits a range of moral choices and commitments which Callicott as a monist would probably regard as promiscuous.

ROLSTON AND NATURAL VALUE

Natural Value

Holmes Rolston, III, argues that the conventional wisdom that values are felt subjective preferences is an inadequate account of valuation. Though some values may be subjective preferences, that is not the whole story. The conventional account rests on an epistemology which draws a Lockean distinction between primary (objective, i.e., in the object itself) and secondary qualities (subjectively in the mind, but the same in all normal observers) with values being relegated to a tertiary status (subjective and relative, differing from individual to individual). This epistemology was used as a foundational basis for building up knowledge of the world from sensation; facts were ultimately reducible to sensory data. But modern science, especially since Einstein and Heisenberg, can no longer be epistemologically undergirded so simplistically. The micro-world of the physicist looks quite different from the middle-level world of daily experience, if it can be said to "look" at all. (What color is an electron?) The understanding of the sciences as paradigms of knowledge must include high levels of theory which are mind-dependent and cause us to interpret our observations differently, perhaps even to have different observations or see differently. Rolston says:

> World building does go on in the mind of the beholder, as we shape up theories over experience. But world building also takes place out there. We find the information or energy flow only by attending with deliberate focus of mind. But the mind does not contribute these features because it must model them by careful attention and decision. To the contrary, we discover richer qualities in nature (Rolston 1982, p. 131).

Rolston claims we go through this same process in valuation. The knower and valuer both play a role in the process, but the subject depends on what is already there in the world.

> The ownership feature in value judgments is important, but we need to think of value judgments as genuine, involved, if limited, claims about the world.... They do not attach to bare primary and secondary [quality] levels, but to high level constructions of matter with which we are in exchange--initially in

> common experience and afterwards in the sciences of natural history. Just as we are getting incoming commands from "out there" about length, color, hawks, and trees, so too we are getting some commands about value. We start with these as native range judgments, not as absolute ones.... This much makes them locally objective, although it leaves unresolved how deep they run (1982, p. 130).

Rolston proposes testing the theory that value is in part objective by using the hypothetical deductive method just as it might be used to test a scientific theory.

> ...[V]alue is not the sort of thing one would expect to know without excitement. If there is objective value in nature...then one would predict it to stir up experience.... But sometimes too that experience fails..., and we must presume a faulty registration and/or valueless parts of nature (1982, p. 144).

One may suspect the usefulness here of the hypothetical deductive model of reasoning. A positive consequent (i.e., the excitement) does not guarantee the truth of the antecedent (i.e., the theory predicting objective value); to claim otherwise is to commit the fallacy of affirming the consequent. Nor does a negative consequent automatically disconfirm the antecedent, since it is virtually impossible to specify all and only the jointly necessary and sufficient conditions in the antecedent. Still, given the indispensable need for induction to make claims about the world, one may allow Rolston some credibility from successful applications of the test.

The cards are not nearly stacked so much against Rolston as one steeped in value subjectivism might first assume. Rolston emphasizes the fact that valuing subjects are themselves objectively in nature and the products of a long evolutionary process.

> Some natural values are of the common-sense kind and nearly universal to cultures, as with the taste of an apple, the pleasant warmth of the spring sun, the striking colors of the fall. Even though these experiences come culturally bound, some natural impact here is shared by Iroquois and Nobel prize winner. Experience is required, but something is there which one is fitted for and fitting into; some good is transmitted and is productive of the experience (1982, p. 134).

Thus the "tertiary quality" characterization of value as subjective and relative appears to have counter examples at least as far as relativity goes. What can Rolston do in the case of one who does not so react, who, for instance, feels melancholia instead of pleasure in the spring sun? He can seek a reason just as one would for anomalies in conventional

accounts of sensation. If a reason can be found--perhaps the death of a loved one in a previous spring--one can fairly say that but for this event the person would be enjoying the pleasant warmth. A cultural overlay obscures the natural value.

One cannot as easily appeal to evolution to explain higher level value experiences, and disputes over these kinds of value are more difficult to adjudicate. Here Rolston would claim that the anomalous reaction is due to the valuer being uninformed or ill-informed. For instance, one gazing at a road cut through a hill may see only a rock embankment. But a little geological knowledge, i.e., awareness of what really happened according to our best estimates, might arouse valuational excitement at the sequence of events--seas and sediments and tectonic thrusts and struggles for life--that took place there. Rolston often presents his reader with the rich panoply which scientists have discovered in nature, and--on a simplistic reading--waits for him to be overwhelmed by the wonder of it all. The philosopher looking for a series of clean arguments and applications of conventional distinctions will be driven to distraction by Rolston's lyrical descriptions of the way nature functions and his multifarious uses of 'value'. But there is a method in Rolston's style.

Method and Style

As an empiricist claiming that there is objective natural value, Rolston is ultimately forced to presenting a picture of nature and then awaiting the reader's verdict. He points out the connections to things conventionally valued and how they are part of a larger processes in a way that only a naturalist intimately acquainted with his subject can.[5] Out of the many examples which permeate his writings, consider his generic case for projective nature. 'Projective nature' is Rolston's term for the organized way matter and life have evolved and continue to evolve in the universe. He chooses it deliberately for its etymological sense of "throwing forward," and it undergirds his many

discussions of natural value. In the extinction of species, for instance, Rolston sees a vast difference between natural extinction, which is part of the forward thrust of evolution, and human-caused extinction, which shuts down the generative process.[6] To fail to feel valuational excitement at the whole process is, for Rolston, either a failure of knowledge or a failure of moral character. As an empiricist testing his theory using the hypothetical deductive method, Rolston must first show us verbally what we cannot see literally by our stepping outside. He gives us a summary-with-commentary of scientific discoveries. Moving from the mundane to the less familiar, he quotes E.O. Wilson on the "richness of structure" in an ordinary clump of earth and gives a capsule characterization of stages of evolution of life on earth, concluding:

> The whole storied natural history is little short of a series of "miracles," wondrous, fortuitous events, unfolding of potential; and when Earth's most complex product, *Homo sapiens*, becomes intelligent enough to reflect over this cosmic wonderland, we are left stuttering about the mixtures of accident and necessity out of which we have come (1988, pp. 194-195).

He then cites astronomers and physicists on the fortuitous coincidences among physical constants which not only allowed, but seemingly guaranteed, the formation of life, the "anthropic principle." He qualifies this by setting it into an environmental context.

> For environmental ethics, "anthropic principle" is an unfortunately chosen term, one that no ecologist would have selected. We wish to avoid associating anthropocentrism with the process, especially any suggestion that everything in the universe is arranged to produce and serve humans. But what the anthropic principle points to is important--a rich, fertile nature that is energetic and creative, so much so that at length nature evolves life and mind. That may involve some accident, but it cannot be all accident; it is in some sense a property, a potential of systemic nature that it projects natural history (1988, p. 197).

One key point is that nature and its processes are not completely and chaotically accidental with no rhyme or reason on a micro, mid-level, or macro scale; it can thus be appreciated for what it is. Another key point is that our sciences have opened up the possibilities of appreciation far beyond the direct range of our senses over our short lives (even when our living experiences are pooled with those of the rest of the human

race). Modern natural science is critical for Rolston (as it is for Callicott) to get us to see nature in the proper way. The order of discussion is a technique for moving the reader from a narrow focus to a wider vision by going from the known (the clod of earth) to the less familiar (evolution of life) to the most theoretical and encompassing (the whole of projective nature).

> From a short-range, subjective perspective we can say that the value of nature lies in its generation and support of human life, and is therefore only instrumental. but from a longer-range, objective perspective systemic nature is valuable intrinsically as a projective system, with humans only one sort of its projects, though perhaps the highest. The system is of value for its capacity to throw forward (pro-ject) all the storied natural history. On that scale humans come late and it seems shortsighted and arrogant for such latecomers to say that the system is only of instrumental value for humans, who alone possess intrinsic value, or who "project" intrinsic value back to nature [e.g., Callicott and inherent value]. Both of these are inappropriate responses. The only fully responsible behavior is to seek an appreciative relationship to the parental environment, which is projecting all this display of value....
>
> Nature is not inert and passive until acted upon resourcefully by life and mind. Neither sentience nor consciousness are necessary for inventive processes to occur. The inventiveness of systemic nature is the root of all value, and all nature's created products have value so far as they are inventive achievements....
>
> A "mere thing" can...be something to be respected, the project of projective nature. Crystals, volcanoes, geysers, headlands, rivers, springs, moons, cirques, paternoster lakes, buttes, mesas, canyons--these are also among natural kinds. They do not have organic integrity or individuality; they are constantly being built, altered, their identity in flux. But they are recognizably different from their background and surroundings. They may have striking particularity, symmetry, harmony, grace, story, spatiotemporal unity and continuity, even though they are also diffuse, partial, broken. They do not have wills or interests, but rather headings, trajectories, traits, successions, beginnings, endings, cycles, which give them a tectonic integrity. They can be projects (products) of quality. The question now is not "Can they suffer?" or "Is it alive?" but "What deserves appreciation?" (1988, pp. 198-199.)

The final sentence is a parody of Bentham's summation of his argument for the moral standing of animals: "[T]he question is not, Can they *reason*? nor, Can they *talk*? but, Can they suffer?"[7] The quote is often cited by moral philosophers in defense of animals, and the parody is Rolston's way of chiding them for the narrow scope of their moral concerns. Rolston's conclusion may strike one as a breathtaking insight, or as a frustrating consequence of a confusing rhetorical appeal to emotion rather than an informative account of valuational excitement. The issue of Rolston's prose will be examined later.

One cannot argue the value subjectivist out of his position, Rolston admits, but one can supply several criticisms of what he is doing. First, one can accuse the value subjectivist of argument by stipulative definition: Values cannot be objective because values are felt subjective preferences. The alleged argument is simply a tautology.

A second criticism is that the value subjectivist's understanding of nature is naive, simplistic, shortsighted, and/or factually wrong. He suspects no intricacy and has no wonder because he isn't looking and is focused on other things, for instance, the use of nature to alleviate the suffering of humans or animals. Urban life with its dependency on others to take care of nearly all our survival needs can lead one to think of nature simplistically in the most vague and anthropocentric of ways, economically as a resource. Natural science can cut through the cultural overlay (often relativistic) and show us nature as it really is (or a good approximation thereof).

A third criticism comes in an observation by Thomas E. Hill discussing human excellence:

> A person who [intellectually] *understands* his place in nature but still views nonsentient nature merely as a resource takes the attitude that nothing is *important* but human beings and animals. Despite first appearances, he is not so much like the pre-copernican astronomers who made the intellectual error of treating the Earth as the "center of the universe" when they made their calculations. He is more like the racist who, though well aware of other races, treats all races but his own as insignificant (1983 p. 219).

Both Hill and Rolston would claim that a factually well informed person who is functioning on the level of someone considering the significance of what he knows--as opposed, say to someone loaded down by a bunch of facts--will have some kind of valuational response. An attitude of "So What?!" from the racist or natural resource ideologue indicates a lack of sympathy or ability to appreciate, something undeveloped or dead at the core of the person.

Nature and Culture

Integrating environmental ethics with conventional ethics is, for Rolston, largely a matter of constraining action so that ecosystems are not severely impaired or shut down. Much of ethics will be traditional duties humans have to each other, sometimes modified to accommodate the new moral insight the natural sciences have given us. Many of the values "carried by nature"--an ambiguous phrase deliberately chosen to cover the whole range of degrees of value subjectivity/objectivity--are highly subjective with some applying only to rational creatures (e.g., the American eagle as an example of "cultural-symbolization value"). In practice, a biologically well-informed ethical anthropocentrist might countenance pretty much the same decisions as Rolston, though justifying them on the basis of prudence and duties to other humans.

Animals fare worse in Rolston's scheme of things. They are pressed from both sides. Lacking the range and degree of human awareness, they do not value as fully as we do. Lacking rational self-control they threaten ecosystems when predation (animal or human) is disallowed. Rolston appeals to a strict nature/culture distinction and to a characterization of domestic animals as artifacts to justify his position.

> Domestic animals are breeds no longer natural kinds. They are "living artifacts," kept in culture for so long that it is often not known precisely what their natural progenitors were. They fit no environmental niche; the breeding of them for traits that humans desire has removed them from forces of natural selection (1988, p. 78).[8]

Against the vegetarian's Benthamite appeal to pain as an egalitarian moral criterion, Rolston says:

> [S]uch argument fails to distinguish between nature and culture, between environmental ethics and human ethics. We simply see ourselves in fur. But there are morally relevant differences that distinguish person in culture from food animals in agriculture, where quasi-ecosystemic processes remain. Whether or not there are differences in pain thresholds between sheep and humans, the value destruction when a sheep is eaten is far less, especially since the sheep have been bred for this purpose and would not otherwise exist. Because animals cannot enter culture, they do not suffer the *affliction* (a heightened, cognitively based pain, distinct from physical pain) that humans would if bred to be eaten....

> [E]ating is omnipresent in spontaneous nature; humans eat because they are in nature, not because they are in culture. Eating animals is not an event between persons but a human-to-animal event, and the rules for it come from the ecosystems in which humans evolved and which they have no duty to remake (1988, pp. 80-81).[9]

Rolston would allow the killing both of domestic animals in agriculture and wild ones in hunting, though he would agree that animals should be spared unnecessary pain. Beyond that, being artifacts domestic animals play no role in projective nature and we are not obligated to them. Rolston speaks almost as if domestic animals, had they the awareness, should be grateful that we bring them into the world at all, even if our purpose is to slaughter them. The attitude verges on contempt. In contrast, he often speaks admiringly of wild animals which have adapted and survived on their own. As part of a functioning ecosystem, they should not be hunted to extinction.

Species endangered as a result of human interference (rather than natural processes) deserve more protection than plentiful species regardless of sentience. Rolston would have no moral qualms about shooting deer to save the rare Furbish lousewort.

> Subjects count, but they do not count so much that they can degrade or shut down the system, though they count enough to have the right to flourish within the system. Subjective self-satisfactions are, and ought to be, sufficiently contained within the objectively satisfactory system. The system creates life, selects for adaptive fit, constructs increasingly richer life in quantity and quality, supports myriads of species, escalates individuality, autonomy, and even subjectivity within the limits of decentralized community. If such land is not an admirable, satisfactory biotic community, why not (1988, p.190)?

Rolston's position may be rejected as panglossian because it ignores the amoral lack of intention and awareness in nature and the vast amount of pain and death which drive evolution. Rolston's answer would be that the pain is not gratuitous and that it takes a mature person to accept it. There is a gently worded dare implicit in Rolston's rhetorical question: Given that sentience, rationality, and autonomy are all products of evolution, could you accept the consequences if there were no pain for sentient creatures (or "affliction" for humans)? Considering what we know of possible worlds given the

constraints of biological evolution, is this pain-filled world a better one than a world on which no sentient life has evolved? Logically possible worlds and biologically possible worlds are very different. A moral theory not fitted to the latter is built on metaphysical fancy rather than solid ground. It is not he, Rolston may claim, but his critic, who is panglossian.

Difficulties for Rolston

The most fundamental problem for Rolston is whether he can make the case for objective intrinsic value. Can value stand on its own as something which a sentient valuer merely discovers? Rolston rejects a purely conceptual analysis of 'value' because it boils down to stipulative definitions worked out by scientifically myopic anthropocentrists. His case rests on an empirical test: Does the scientifically informed person feel "excitement" in the presence of the alleged value? How and how well one is informed scientifically are crucial. Consider Rolston's lengthy case for the objectivity of projective nature, the long natural history and evolutionary process in which nonsentient nature "throws forward" diverse and complex projects. Buried in the seemingly neutral descriptivist language is a strong subjective component. Why does nature throw *forward*? The projects develop in nature, or are caused by nature, or are thrown off by previous stages of complexity. But where does the directional language come from? It seems to come from a subject or mind supplying Cartesian valuational coordinates for what is happening in natural history. There is a tendency to see more complex projects of evolution as better or richer or more interesting, and it may be perfectly natural for us to do so.[10] But while these projects are complex, to consider them better is the subjective valuation of the mind interacting with the complexity it meets. Rolston speaks freely of situations like a predator devouring its prey as an example of values being captured and recycled in the ecosystem. A simple answer is

that such cases can be handled by descriptive language: nutrients are captured and recycled. To speak of nutritional values (apart from a sentient valuer) is to mistake properties for values; the term 'values' does no useful work and adds nothing but linguistic confusion to the situation.[11]

Weaknesses in the hypothetical deductive method of reasoning as a value litmus test have already been mentioned above. The case for it would be strengthened if there were near universal value agreement. In the absence of such consensus, however, it allows us to account for any number of anomalies, and nothing like any moderately strong case of confirmation or disconfirmation can be made (above immediate physiological reactions such as enjoying the pleasant warmth of the spring sun). Anthropocentrist critics can charge Rolston with confusion; Rolston can charge them with failing to see. There is no way to settle the issue between them.

Rolston's heavy reliance on the biological sciences is both conceptual and empirical. But the sciences are not objective in the sense of being free of the interests and values of scientists themselves. He claims above that sentient beings "do not count so much that they can degrade or shut down the system...." What counts as an ecosystem, and how would we know it was shut down? What counts as an ecosystem will depend on the focus of interest of the person making the judgement. Whether one speaks of the entire biosphere as an ecosystem, or the Great Lakes Basin, or Lake Superior, or a stretch of shoreline will be determined by the problem(s) at hand, problems selected as important or significant by a sentient--to say nothing of a rational--observer. Rolston admits that hard boundaries are difficult to draw, but generally takes (naturally adapted) species diversity and species complexity as a sign of ecological health. Is there any way to make this judgment without a presupposition that diversity and complexity are better? If not, then he must tacitly rely on a subject/evaluator to talk about the health of ecosystems.

The absolute nature/culture distinction with which Rolston draws an almost Kantian boundary between *homo sapiens* and other animals is yet another problem. This is an attempt to justify the saving of species (whether sentient or not) at the expense of individual sentient animals. To avoid sacrificing individual humans, Rolston uses the nature/culture distinction to set off our special moral duties to, and only to, other human beings. Given our evolutionary kinship with other animals, the many interdependencies we have with them, the fact that although we have altered species in domestication we have not rendered all of them helpless without us, and the fact that they are subjects-of-a-life, Rolston's distinction seems more than a little severe and simplistic. Bernard Rollin (1989), for instance, argues that (some) animals are capable of thought and points out that the value of certain animals, notably primates, in psychological research is because they are so much like us *psychologically*. Mary Midgley (1983) comments on the importance of animal play as a learning device and the resultant cross species emotional bonding. Rolston's nature/culture distinction is not as fully grounded empirically as our many similarities and relationships with animals suggest.

There is a more deep-seated issue here characteristic of ethical monism. Where Rolston as an environmentalist may be faulted in this is not in his acceptance of the whole consequences of evolution with its omnipresent pain and death. Nor is it in his wanting to ascribe some intrinsic value to projective nature as opposed to relegating it to instrumental value status as a necessary evil. Rather, it is his acceptance of what Stuart Hampshire calls "the doctrine of moral harmony," the position that "a morally competent and clear-headed person has in principle the means to resolve all moral problems as they present themselves, and that he need not encounter irresoluble problems..."(1983, p. 144). The resolution of all problems eliminates a moral tension which is essential to prevent philosophical systems from degenerating into doctrinaire

justifications. All things considered, one may accept the pain of sentient creatures (and the affliction or suffering of humans) as an unavoidable consequence of one's ethical position, but the biological necessity of pain does not make pain something laudable or ethically irrelevant. In an imperfect world with limited knowledge and power, one is forced to be a meliorist and to try to balance conflicting claims, whether in theory or practice. Not to acknowledge this, along with awful doubts about one's own choices, is to court callousness and risk dogmatism.

TAYLOR AND RESPECT FOR NATURE

Goods and Inherent Worth

Paul W. Taylor claims that his ethics of Respect for Nature (hereafter RFN) is the only ethical system that (1) meets the formal requirements for an ethic, and (2) is consistent with a biocentric outlook on nature. Taylor is at pains to make clear that RFN is respectable as an ethic because it is parallel to, but more widely informed than, traditional anthropocentric ethical systems. The first aspect of this parallelism is in the formal criteria any ethic must meet. Taylor lists five: It must be general in form, universally applicable to all moral agents, applied disinterestedly, have normative principles for all to adopt, and override all nonmoral norms (1986, p. 27). The impartiality required by the formal criteria means that there must be a common factor which gives all things which are morally considerable this special standing.

A second point of parallelism between RFN and traditional ethics is Taylor's acceptance of the fact/value distinction. The common factor which makes anything morally considerable thus must have both a factual and an valuational component. For Taylor, the former is found in the concept of a *good* of a thing while the latter is characterized by *inherent worth.*

The commonly assumed baseline criterion for moral standing of a thing's having *interests* is too narrow to fit a biocentric outlook on life for it excludes life forms which do not have (so far as we know) any subjective experiences such as plants.

> There are some entities that have a good of their own but cannot, strictly speaking, be described as having interests. They have a good of their own because it makes sense to speak of their being benefitted or harmed. Things that happen to them can be judged, from their standpoint, to be favorable or unfavorable to them. Yet they are not beings that consciously aim at ends or take means to achieve such ends. They do not have interests because they are not interested in, do not care about, what happens to them (1986, p. 63).

Here some may want to draw the line in terms of moral vocabulary and claim that, by definition, things which do not have interests cannot be harmed (Cf. Feinberg 1974).

Taylor's phrase about judging benefits and harms to nonsentient things "from their standpoint" is unfortunate because 'standpoint' implies conscious perspective. That is not what he means, however, nor is it necessary to so phrase it. Unless one wishes to make the problem purely one of definition, it seems clear that some non-subjects-of-a-life can be harmed and benefitted with regard to their biological functioning. Why else would one fertilize a lawn or refrain from pouring salt on it? Even one who thought the grass had only instrumental value for its human owner has to recognize that the grass can be benefitted and harmed in order to get instrumental value from it. For Taylor the notion of "entity-having-a-good-of-its-own" is purely an objective, factual matter.

This means that unless is-statements about objective goods with objective benefits and harms are coupled to ought-statements about promoting or protecting those goods, no moral conclusions follow. Taylor's notion of inherent worth supplies the ought: If anything X has inherent worth, then:

> A state of affairs in which the good of X is realized is better than an otherwise similar state of affairs in which it is not realized (or not realized to the same degree), (a) independently of X's being valued, either intrinsically or instrumentally, by some human valuer, and (b) independently of X's being in fact useful in furthering the realization of some other being's good, human or non human, conscious or nonconscious.

This generates prima facie duties for all moral agents to "promote or preserve the entity's good as an end in itself and for the sake of the entity whose good it is" (1986, p. 75).

Taylor contrasts inherent worth with intrinsic value and inherent value. Intrinsic value is the value conscious beings place on "an event or condition in their lives which they directly experience to be enjoyable in and of itself, and when they value the experience (consider it to be good) *because* of its enjoyableness...." Intrinsic value thus requires a conscious valuer who appreciates not the *good* of the object (whether sentient or not) of experience, but his own experience. Inherent value is

> the value we place on an object or a place (such as a work of art, a historical building, a battlefield, a "wonder of nature," or an archaeological site) that we

> believe should be preserved, not because of its usefulness or its commercial value, but simply because of its beauty, or historical importance, or cultural significance (1986, p. 73).

The inherent valuer is not focused on his own subjective pleasure as the intrinsic valuer is, but rather on some property of the object valued. Like the intrinsic valuer, however, the inherent valuer fails to appreciate the *good* of the object valued.

These distinctions mark some great differences between Taylor and ethicists like Rolston and Callicott. First, by focusing on an animal or plant's *good* as objectively understood in the biocentric outlook, Taylor denies *inherent worth* and thus--in his system--moral standing to nonliving nature. One may *intrinsically value* the thrill of watching Yosemite Falls, or *inherently value* the beauty or power of Yosemite Falls, but Yosemite Falls itself (having no good of its own) is not a proper moral patient/recipient. It is either a means to a purely subjective experience or an entity which has aesthetic, rather than moral, standing.

Second, only individuals can have goods and hence inherent worth and hence moral standing. Rolston and Callicott (with qualification) consider the proper moral focus in the case of wild animals and plants to be on the species rather than the individual. Instead of the term 'species', which Taylor sees as a classificatory abstraction, he uses the term 'species-populations' to denote groups of similar individuals.

> Just as it makes sense to speak of the good of a whole species-population, so it makes sense to talk about the good of a whole biotic community. It should be emphasized that there is no individual physical entity referred to by the term " a whole biotic community." There is only a set of organisms, each a physical reality, related to one another and to their nonliving environment in various ways. The good of a biotic community can only be realized in the good lives of its individual members. When they fare well, so does the community. Nevertheless, what promotes or protects the good of an individual organism may not promote or protect the good of the community as a whole, and what harms an individual may not harm but actually benefit the community. Consider, for example, the predator-prey relationship in a well-functioning ecosystem. The fact that individual members of the prey species are killed and consumed by individual predators is consistent with the good of the whole life community in the given ecosystem (1986, p. 70).

The familiar litany of uncontrolled prey species destroying habitat not only imperils the existence and well being of the prey species-populations, but that of other animals and plants, each of which has a good of its own which is to be respected morally.

Respect for Nature

What can cause us to have Respect For Nature? For Taylor it is a fundamental stance (analogous to respect for humans in traditional anthropocentric ethics) which is informed by a more sophisticated biocentric outlook that has replaced the naive anthropocentric outlook. There is no higher level (set of) moral principle(s) from which RFN can be derived. RFN is a fundamental attitude.

> The only way [to justify RFN] is to set forth the *belief system* that underlies and supports the attitude and show that it is acceptable to all who are rational, factually informed, and have a developed capacity of reality-awareness (1986, p. 98).

By reality-awareness Taylor means "a moral agent's capacity for heightened awareness of the reality of individual organisms' lives" (1986, p. 164). A reality-aware person would not only be vaguely aware that animals and plants are alive, but that each (kind of) animal or plant has its own biological-teleological program with its own *good* (which defines its needs, benefits, and harms). The reality-unaware person presumably would see, for example, mosquitoes as pests and quackgrass as weeds, and use his biological knowledge to exterminate them. The more sophisticated the reality-unaware person's biological knowledge, the more effective the extermination. The reality-aware person would be acutely cognizant of destroying these teleological centers of life (a factual awareness), and, not being able to gloss the destruction, is then faced with claiming that the destruction is morally insignificant or adopting something like RFN. Just as Kant's whole ethical system depends on an individual's willingness to respect persons because they are autonomous rational agents who can act out of duty rather than inclination, so Taylor's system depends on a willingness to respect centers of life.

Integrating RFN and Human Ethics

Although Taylor does not think it conceptually incoherent to claim that animals and plants have moral rights, he thinks that everything such rights can do can be accomplished by RFN. He draws a conventional distinction between moral and legal rights.

> Generally speaking, to have a right is to have a legitimate claim or entitlement to something, the recognition of the legitimacy of that claim or entitlement being (morally or legally) required of others. For a moral right, the requirement of recognition is imposed by valid moral principles on all moral agents. For a legal right, it is imposed by a given system of law on all members of the legal community in question (1986, p. 219).

Though plants and animals can--and in Taylor's view should--have legal rights, he prefers a conservative interpretation of moral rights which restricts the moral rights-holder to rational moral agency, a capacity for self-respect, ability to choose to exercise the right, and "second-order entitlements" like the ability to seek redress (1986, p. 246). The "equality among rights-holders...does not imply any [moral] *inequality* between rights-holders and other living things," for moral equality is based on the common concept of having a good (1986, p. 261).

The integration of the human rights-based ethic with RFN is accomplished by five principles for settling claims: self-defense, proportionality, minimum wrong, distributive justice, and restitutive justice. Since only humans are moral agents, the principles are binding only on humans. Self-defense is handled pretty much as it is in conventional law with stipulations authorizing only minimum necessary use of force after reasonable precautions to avoid conflict have been taken.

> The principles of proportionality and minimum wrong apply to cases in which there is a conflict between the *basic* interests of animals or plants and the *nonbasic* interests of humans. The principle of distributive justice...covers conflicts where the interests of all parties involved are *basic*. Finally, the principle of restitutive justice applies only where, in the past, either the principle of minimum wrong or that of distributive justice has been used. Each of those principles creates situations where some form of compensation or reparation must be made to nonhuman organisms, and thus the idea of restitution becomes applicable.

> ...[T]he term "interests" [refers] to whatever objects or events serve to preserve or protect to some degree or other the good of a living thing (1986, pp. 270-271).

Taylor goes to some length discussing the practical implications of these principles. He acknowledges that they will not settle all disputes and they "do not function as premisses in a deductive argument." That does not make them deficient as ethical principles, however, for the principles of any exclusively anthropocentric ethic can do no better.

Difficulties for Taylor

A basic problem arises from Taylor's claim that a fundamental attitude of respect for nature rests on showing that it is acceptable to anyone with reality-awareness, a "heightened awareness of the reality of individual organisms' lives." Why should this help produce an attitude of respect given Taylor's maintenance of the fact/value distinction? Rolston claims that being factually informed will also give rise to values, and the many examples in his prose are not intended as mere descriptions of natural phenomena but as prods to a valuational excitement. Often, he does not so much argue as bombard the reader with nature's intricacies in hope of triggering a valuational response. But this method is closed to Taylor. So long as he maintains the fact/value distinction, his reality-awareness will simply remain detailed factual knowledge. The alternative is to admit a valuational component, but then his distinction between inherent value and inherent worth collapses while his argument becomes trivial: reality-awareness includes valuing/respecting nature, and therefore once one has reality awareness one will have respect for nature.

Taylor's bottom line criteria for moral standing, his concepts of goods and needs, are also problematic. Critics have pointed out that cars also have "goods" and "needs." To prevent respect for nature from degenerating into respect for everything, Taylor

draws a distinction between 'goods' and 'needs' of organisms as opposed to artifacts:

> All organisms, whether conscious or not, are teleological centers of life in the sense that each is a unified, coherently ordered system of goal-oriented activities that has a constant tendency to protect and maintain the organism's existence....
>
> The goal-oriented operations of machines are not inherent to them as the goal-oriented behavior of organisms is to *them*. To put it another way, the goals of a machine are derivative, whereas the goals of a living thing are original.... Although they manifest goal-oriented activities, the machines do not, as independent entities, have a good of their own. Their "good" is "furthered" only insofar as they are treated in such a way as to be an effective means to human ends (1986, pp. 122, 124).

Partisans of the interest criterion will detect subjective language creeping into the distinction with a tacit appeal to the interest principle: How can an entity be "independent"--in any sense other than "separate"--without having at least a will of its own? How can it have "goal-oriented activities" in any sense other than "genetically programmed processes," and how can they be "original" in any sense other than "not assigned" by humans? The problem is exacerbated when Taylor talks about judging from the "standpoint" of a nonsentient entity, all the while denying that consciousness is necessary for moral consideration. If one grants Taylor latitude to speak metaphorically, there's trouble from the other side. In the case of nonconscious life forms, Taylor's claims about "teleological centers of life" with "goal-oriented activities" are an updated version Aristotelian *telos* genetically explicated. Rolston has noted how easily genetic sets become normative, but this way of making sense of Taylor's terminology is blocked by his adherence to the fact/value distinction. If we allow "originality" and "independence" some valuational force, why then exclude the law-governed processes of Rolston's "projective nature" which function without human instruction or intervention? The answer for Taylor presumably is that they are not living individuals with goods of their own, but the criteria to which he makes appeal do not require individuality. The criteria might require life if there is something special about having genes or about having what Aristotle called nutritive soul. One answer Taylor could give would be that nature is not "teleological" in the same way as an

individual plant. Biological evolution and natural history shaped by geological processes have no goals, they just change. But the same can be said of an individual plant. We can discover its biological blueprint from its genetic code and thereby characterize it intellectually. We can, in principle, do the same kind of thing by discovering the "natural laws" that govern geological change. Taylor might claim that in this sense we understand the *telos* of individual organisms because we can grasp the whole of their life cycles, but we are largely ignorant of the *telos* of nature on a wider scale (despite much speculation on the route from "big bang" to a universal entropic "heat death"). This is not his claim, however, and if it were it would undermine his position. The only remaining criterion to which Taylor can appeal is that of entities having goods of their own. Granted that nonsentient entities can be harmed in the sense of interfering with them or diminishing them or destroying them, how do these criteria fail to fit, say, a river which has been dammed or whose waters have been siphoned off for irrigation to the point of reducing the flow entirely?

A conceptual problem of the relationship of *telos* to an entity's good comes to the fore in the integration of RFN into human ethics. Aristotle, reasonably enough, identified the *telos* of biological organisms with an idealized version of the appropriate adult form for each type of organism. But what would Taylor do in severely marginal cases like that of an anencephalic infant or an individual in a persistent vegetative state (PVS)? Not having anything approaching a functioning human brain, would the infant or PVS victim still have a good based on a degenerative form of human *telos*? Would it have a good despite lack of a *telos*? Would it have neither a good nor a *telos*? What sort of respect--if any--should we have for it? Are we bound out of respect for what the infant should have become, or what the PVS victim was, to maintain--or, for that matter, to terminate--the (non)person's remaining life processes?[12] The questions are not idle or mischievous, because in Taylor's system the notion of a good must bear the entire moral weight of RFN.

The underlying problem--and not just for Taylor--is not that moral distinctions cannot be drawn, but that Taylor's hard-line interpretation of 'goods' is metaphysically and morally dogmatic. Environmental philosophers can gain more ground by taking a Wittgensteinian tack of pointing out "family resemblances" between entities traditionally granted moral standing and those traditionally excluded, and by showing the arbitrary nature of the criteria employed. A bottom-line single criterion--whether ability to reason, sentience, or having a good--is convenient for legal decision making and preventing courts from being overwhelmed by case loads. No responsible moral philosopher would identify what is moral with what is legal, yet many are willing to adopt the legalistic methodology. Single criteria work well only in closed conceptual systems where there is little change and where the group under consideration is arbitrarily limited either by consent or by fiat. The weakness of the methodology is exemplified in Peter Singer's *Animal Liberation* (1975) where we are informed that "all animals are equal" (in having interests) only to have further distinctions (the fact that all animals do not have the same interests) so erode the "equality" as to render some animals usable for virtually any human whim. It is one thing to use a conventional moral criterion to demonstrate the arbitrariness of its application in order to awaken morally those grown soporifically comfortable with it. It is something quite different to adopt the criterion oneself or to be bewitched into thinking the problems are solved by substituting a different one.

Taylor's exclusive individualism is a problem for his ethic being environmental in the sense that he wants it to be. There are both ontological and moral reasons for Taylor's individualism. Ontologically, he claims that species are really collections of individuals and better labelled 'species-populations'. The issue of ontological holism, whether (in this case) species are more than or different from the sum of the individuals who make them up, is a complex one on which biologists disagree. It cannot be settled

here. However, it is possible to sketch some factors which demonstrate the simplicity of Taylor's view.

It should be noted that calling species 'species-populations' is something with which environmental holists could agree since no one is peddling a Platonic position that there are species without individuals that make them up. What is at issue is whether the individuals can stand alone, in what ways, and to what degree. Biologist Ernst Mayr draws a distinction between species as taxa and species as categories. The species category is an abstraction or class or set.

> A taxon is a concrete zoological or botanical object. Groups of individuals like wolves, bluebirds, or houseflies are species taxa....
>
> Are the animals that belong to a species members of a class or are they not? Ghiselin...has come out quite emphatically in favor of the interpretation...to consider all the products of the gene pool of a species as *parts* of the species (not as members of a class!) and to consider the species as a whole as an individual, ontologically speaking.... Species taxa are individuals in the sense that each species has spatiotemporal unity and historical continuity.... Each species has reasonably discrete boundaries, internal coherence at any one time, and, with limits, continuity through time. Any aggregate of populations that satisfies the definition of the species category is a species taxon (1982, p. 253).

An appeal to Mayr as a legitimate authority does not, in the absence of further technical argument, settle the issue. Other legitimate authorities disagree. However, the ease with which Mayr applies common criteria of individual identity to species taxa demonstrates the superficiality of dismissing species as sets of morphologically similar individuals. There are many complicating factors such as asexual reproduction, polymorphic and sibling species--both of which are interbreeding populations--and the fact that commonality of traits within species is subservient to their relative status with other species and how these traits relate to reproductive isolation from such species. The safest thing to say is that some species seem to be more like individuals ontologically than others.

Taylor's moral individualism stems from the fact that only individuals have goods to be respected. If Taylor is to remain true to his system of RFN, he must treat the

maximizing of goods via protection of their basic interests (in his unconventional sense) as Bentham does the maximizing of interests with each individual counting for one and only one. Taylor finds predation in nature morally acceptable because individual deaths are "consistent with the good of the whole life community" (in a lapse into collectivist language) and because animals (and plants) are not moral agents. But nature is far more destructive of individual goods and basic interests than Taylor seems to acknowledge. In a rebuff to Peter Singer who argues that caring for individual animals is the way to preserve wild species, Mark Sagoff says:

> The ways in which creatures in nature die are typically violent: predation, starvation, disease, parasitism, cold. The dying animal in the wild does not understand the vast ocean of misery into which it and billions of other animals are born only to drown. If the wild animal understood the conditions into which it is born, what would it think? It might reasonably prefer to be raised on a farm, where the chances of survival for a year or more would be good, and to escape from the wild where they are negligible (Sagoff 1984, p. 303).

If one considers the goods and basic interests of plants in addition to those of animals, the destruction is staggering. How many *teloi* come to naught at germination? Does predation destroy more goods than it serves? Consider the simple problem of an ungulate grazing on grasses with each individual plant having a good of its own. Is there any reliable indication that the existence of "higher level" organisms like mammals, consumptive as they are, reduces the total number of goods destroyed in an ecosystem? Or, more likely--even if all mammals were herbivores and consuming at the lowest possible trophic level--do individual mammalian goods require destruction of other goods many orders of magnitude greater than the mammalian population? To what extent and how are we as moral agents to act on this?

Taylor seemingly wants to distinguish between wild and domestic situations, and he frequently mentions wild nature, but his ethical system is not set up to handle it. Rolston draws conceptual distinctions between wild nature (flourishing on its own *in situ*) and domestic animals and plants (artifacts); he also claims a moral distinction

between individuals (which in nature are expendable) and species (which we have duties to preserve). Such biologically based distinctions are precluded in RFN because of Taylor's egalitarianism of goods. Having dedicated his book "To the Earth's Wild Living Things," it is ironic that Taylor's insistence on impartiality threatens to undermine what he so clearly respects and wants to protect.

CONCLUSION

Burdens of a Land Ethic

None of the ethical systems we have examined is powerful enough to force someone into giving up a strongly held belief that having interests is the *sine qua non* for direct moral standing. This is because the holder of the interest principle can always isolate his ethical position from new scientific information by drawing the fact/value distinction. Taylor's upholding of the fact/value distinction causes his whole system to founder because he depends on an attitudinal change in "reality-awareness" which the fact/value distinction prohibits. What Callicott and Rolston accomplish in different ways is to cast doubt on the fact/value distinction as anything more than a pragmatic tool. Epistemologically, facts are not, like Hume's *impressions*, the absolute foundation stones on which we build a house of knowledge. The modern paradigms of knowledge, our sciences, are neither conceptually absolute nor value free. Evolutionary biology provides overwhelming evidence that we are creatures who by our very nature make strong emotional and valuational attachments, in Rolston's words, "fitted for and fitting into" our environment.

Where Callicott and Rolston are most venturesome, and argumentatively weakest, is in moving from our emotional and valuational attachments to our immediate surroundings (which do include nonsentient entities) to high-level ontological complexes like ecosystems. Callicott goes further than Rolston by putting great moral stock in future developments in biological science and related fields, suggesting, in promissory and hyperbolic fashion, "the rigorous derivation of an environmental ethic from contemporary sociobiology and ecology" (Callicott 1989, p. 11). A major factor which impedes the acceptance of a land ethic is not so much a rigid clinging to an outdated notion of fact/value, but fears that a land ethic is too ambitious, that it goes too

far too fast and will cost us morally too much. Some environmental philosophers who share this reservation have scaled down their claims for a land ethic by turning from moral monism to moral pluralism. In Chapter 2 we will consider how some major pluralists argue for a land ethic.

CHAPTER 2:
PLURALISTIC APPROACHES TO A LAND ETHIC

INTRODUCTION

Pluralistic Ethical Systems

Succinctly defined by Gary E. Varner, "a pluralist ethical theory [is] one which acknowledges distinct, theoretically incommensurable bases for direct moral consideration." Varner's definition is of *theoretical pluralism* as opposed to *pragmatic pluralism* which is a "strategy for theory construction in ethics rather than a characteristic of completed ethical theories" (Varner 1991, p. 177). Unlike the theoretical pluralist, the pragmatic pluralist might hope ultimately to find some single base for direct moral consideration, but, given practical difficulties, s/he prefers to start out with several seemingly incommensurate bases and/or sort out different types of moral quandaries using different criteria for considerability. The most basic monistic criticism of theoretical pluralists is that they have no theory at all, and hence no rational way of reaching moral decisions when a conflict arises among two or more different bases for moral considerability. Whether one accords pluralism the appellation 'theory'--and whether withholding the term is of serious consequence--depends on how logically tight a notion of theory one has, and on whether one thinks that theories can be applied--if at all--with equal rigor to all areas of human endeavor.

The criticism that pluralism cannot resolve all moral quandaries rests on a further distinction between theories that are *determinate* and those that are *indeterminate*. A determinate theory can, in principle, provide a best answer for any problem. Generally, monists are assumed to have theories which are determinate (see comments of monist R. M. Hare and pluralist Christopher Stone in the introduction to Chapter 1) while

pluralists are committed to indeterminate theories. However, indeterminism is certainly possible in monistic ethics. A hedonistic utilitarian, for instance, might try a computer calculation of all the pleasures and pains of all the sentient creatures affected by the logging of old growth forests. It is conceivable, whether the forests are logged and the spotted owl is lost, or the owl and forest are saved and the loggers' jobs are lost, that the computer spews out exactly the same number of pleasure units for both scenarios (and any compromise scenarios in between). Pluralism, however, by its very nature must be indeterminate. Were there some theoretical way of resolving all conflicts among different bases of direct moral consideration, pluralism would collapse into monism.

A related point is whether pluralists may be charged fairly with *moral relativism.* Certainly the charge is not legitimate given the contrast Stone draws between his position and that of a "rank relativist." The rank relativist asserts that there are no objective standards for right or wrong, good or bad, that there is at most a majority opinion, relative to the society in question, which differs from majority opinions in other societies. On the contrary, the pluralist claims that there are nonarbitrary standards or criteria, but that there is more than one of them, and, in principle, they cannot always be reconciled with each other or placed in a hierarchy to settle disputes definitively. Whether one then equates pluralism with relativism will depend either the form of pluralism used and/or how successful it is at supplying answers even if it is indeterminate.[1]

Chapter 1 examined some monistic attempts at a land ethic and the difficulties that arose. In this chapter, three pluralistic approaches to a land ethic are examined with regard to (1) their arguments for the direct moral standing of nonsentient nature, (2) conceptual dependence on the sciences, (3) degree of ontological holism, and (4) ways of ameliorating conflict. The fourth point of comparison differs from that in Chapter 1 (ways of integrating a land ethic with the typical concerns of anthropocentric ethics),

because pluralists accept indeterminism and the resulting moral conflict as inherent in ethics. The conflict, however, need not be vicious or debilitating.

Christopher D. Stone claims that we have many different types of ontological commitments (e.g., persons, animals, corporate bodies) each of which has its own special morally significant features which call for different kinds of moral relationships with us. Mapping these features for each separate domain or moral plane gives us a truer picture of the moral texture of our relationships. When more than one plane is involved in a moral decision, we can usually arrive a good moral decision--or at least avoid the worst decisions--by overlapping the moral maps.

Eugene C. Hargrove utilizes a thought experiment by G.E. Moore to argue that we have a moral duty to promote beauty in the universe, whether the beauty is perceivable or not. He then turns to positive aesthetics to make the case that pristine nature is (almost) always beautiful, and we therefore have a *prima facie* moral obligation to preserve nature apart from any instrumental enjoyment of the aesthetic experience. Hargrove's pluralism is due partly to his view that moral rules are analogous to the nonconstitutive or strategy rules in chess. One learns them as "rules of thumb," but the chess master (or moral sophisticate) also knows when they should be overridden.

Jim Cheney accepts postmodernist criticism of philosophical searches for a "privileged discourse" that would give us the true picture of reality, but finds Rorty's insistence that all we have is language is an assertion that embodies the same illusion. A case can be made for the moral significance of nonsentient nature by using a Heideggerian understanding of language to ground discourse and Being in the context of place. Cheney's pluralism takes the form of "contextual languages" within different bioregions.

STONE AND MORAL PLANES

From Monism to Pluralism

Christopher D. Stone adopted moral pluralism after rethinking his earlier work *Should Trees Have Standing?* In *Trees* Stone used a legal extensionist methodology parallel to the moral argumentation of the animal extensionists (see Introduction). Both accept traditional standards and criteria for direct consideration in human ethics, and then use marginal cases to establish a "floor" which supports the moral or legal standing of disenfranchised entities. The courts, claimed Stone, have recognized three criteria for being a holder of legal rights and therefore having direct *legal standing* rather than being treated indirectly by law as, say, a right holder's property.

> They are, first, that the thing can institute legal actions *at its behest*; second, that in determining the granting of legal relief, the court must take *injury to it* into account; and, third, that relief must run to the *benefit of it* (Stone 1974, p. 11).

Despite the paradigm of the right holder being a sentient individual, namely an adult human being, Stone argued there were no insuperable legal barriers to extending legal rights to nonsentient and/or collective entities such as wilderness areas; there were ample precedents of well established marginal cases in British and American law. Corporations, which are neither sentient nor individuals *per se*, and severely retarded humans (sentient individuals, but rationally incapable of meeting the first requirement for a right holder) have long been accorded direct legal standing in the courts through appropriately designated spokespersons or guardians. On analogy, a wilderness area could be accorded legal rights with an environmental organization like the Sierra Club appointed as its legal guardian to exercise these rights.[2]

Stone's legal colleagues were disturbed by the practical matter of environmental suits clogging the courts and immensely complicating the already tangled web of law. Both legal and moral objectors pointed out that Stone's legal precedents ignored significant differences. Corporations are under the control of rational individuals who

have official duties for which they can be held legally and morally accountable. Who would take responsibility for an earthquake, a volcanic eruption, or other "acts of God"?[3] For ethical humanists and animal extensionists hewing to the interest principle, that was the end of the matter. The disanalogies between corporations and "natural objects" were regarded as too great to include nonsentient nature in the moral or legal communities.

There was, however, another faction which admitted the disanalogies but drew a different conclusion: The very methodology of the extensionists was morally and ontologically corrupt because it tried to force the entire nonhuman world into a human mold. In a combined review of Stone's *Trees* and Peter Singer's *Animal Liberation* John Rodman attacked the extensionists for their smugness in assuming that all entities must be judged morally by the same criteria and in seeking a moral bottom line in marginal cases of severely defective human beings:

> Is this, then, the new enlightenment--to see nonhuman animals as imbeciles, wilderness as a human vegetable? As a general characterization of nonhuman nature it seems patronizing and perverse. It is not so much that natural entities are degraded by being represented in human legal actions, or by not having us attribute to them moral obligations. They are degraded rather by our failure to respect them for having their own existence, their own character and potentialities, their own forms of excellence, their own integrity, their own grandeur--and by our tendency to relate to them by 'giving them' rights by assimilating them to the status of inferior human beings. It is perhaps analogous to regard women as defective men who lack penises, or humans as defective sea mammals who lack sonar capability and have to be rescued by dolphins (Rodman 1977, p. 94).

Though Rodman is not cited in *Earth and Other Ethics*, Stone spends the first half of the book criticizing the methodological assumptions which so incensed him. In *Earth* Stone abandons the legal extensionism of *Trees* while retaining his moral concern for nonsentient nature. The result is an elaborate structure for moral pluralism.

Maps and Moral Planes

The opening section of *Earth and Other Ethics* contains a synopsis of the controversy over oil exploration in the Beaufort Sea which serves as a paradigm case for

the kind moral decision making that the growth of technology and environmental awareness increasingly demands.

> The lands over which the U.S. government has dominion include the submerged bed of the Alaskan Beaufort Sea. The Department of Interior has proposed to lease the acreage to oil corporations for purposes of exploiting oil and gas that may underlie the region. To carry out exploratory drilling...drilling platforms will have to be constructed in the path that the bowhead whale, an endangered species, uses to reach its sole known spawning ground. Oil spills could have disastrous effects on their survival. Also, early-stage oil exploration often involves dynamiting (the explosions' echoes are used to map geophysical structures), and there is evidence that the procedures could destroy the whales' hearing, and thus their ability to navigate and survive. To make the matter more complex, if the whales successfully avoid these hazards by adjusting to a course that takes them somewhat to the north of their present route, they will be out of the range of a native tribe, the Inupiat Indians, who have long hunted the bowhead, a custom they claim to be integral to the maintenance of their culture (Stone 1987, pp. 36-37).

The kind of moral analysis that merely sums utilitarian preferences, or extends rights as Stone did in *Trees*, obscures the vast and multifaceted range of ethical concerns. The insensitivity estranges "moral thought from considered moral intuitions" and the gross simplification results in rules which carry no conviction. Stone thinks these problems are endemic to moral monism.

Stone's pluralistic solution is to divide ethics into different *moral planes* or domains, each with its own *ontological commitment* and *governance* (set of rules). Mapping offers an analogy by which to understand the planes and their uses. Different maps emphasize different features and are chosen according to the concerns and needs of the user whether it be to find out information on topology, political boundaries, roads, weather patterns, or whatever.

> There is no one map that is right for all the things we want to do with maps, nor is one map, the topology map, more valid than another, the demographic. Indeed we do not regard them, because of their variances, as inconsistent. We may in fact choose to overlay maps, that is, combine salient features (p. 137).

The analogy for moral pluralism is that most significant decisions are not single factor ones, and an "overlay" of moral planes may be necessary to arrive at an appropriate decision reflecting the moral richness of the situation.

Unlike an axiomatic model of ethics in which moral rules are deduced from general principles, maps (and moral planes) make ethical complexity perspicuous showing "relations and degrees" rather than dictating a binary right/wrong, standing/no standing conclusion. As Stone says, "morally salient qualities of the world, including rationality, sentience, and autonomy, are not qualities that humans, dolphins, or pigs either possess or do not possess" (p. 140). The provisional nature of maps or planes encourages an openmindedness to revisions in a way that ethical principles conceived as axioms do not. Planar maps, especially when overlaid, also can change the basic objective because one sees simultaneously many features. One might, for example, restrict methods of oil exploration after information that dynamiting destroys the bowhead's ability to navigate, or, one may decide that, given bowhead pain and the potential loss of species, oil exploration in the Beaufort Sea should be forbidden altogether.

The sorts of maps Stone sees as relevant to making a well informed and morally sensitive decision in the Beaufort Sea drilling case can be presented in outline form:

I. Empirical Maps

A. Natural Features (e.g., whale migration routes)

B. Action-Influence (e.g., drilling alternatives)

II. Utility Plane Maps

A. Person Preferences

B. Extended Utilitarianism (all sentient beings)

C. Temporally and Spatially Remote (whose preferences are not easily known and who cannot reciprocate actions)

III. Nonutility Plane Maps

A. Persons (appropriate holders of rights)

B. Persons Remote in Time and Space (to whom we have duties even though they have no binding right claims)

C. Nonhuman Animals

D. Preferenceless and Nonsentient Entities

E. Membership Entities (e.g., species, corporations, cultures)

F. Qualities

Not all moral decisions would require every map, and the list is open-ended. Other maps would be a refinement of the system.

The order of listing follows Stone's order of discussion and is not supposed to suggest a preordained hierarchy of moral importance. It nonetheless reflects Stone's preference for those entities about which we know most and for which we already have extensive moral and legal conceptual machinery. Consider his distinction between Persons and everything else conveniently lumped under the term 'Nonpersons':

> By definition, I have reserved the term Persons for normal adult *homo sapiens* living in a common community. Persons therefore not only have, along with sentience and intelligence and life plans, a good grasp of one another's tastes and preferences. They have the capacity to understand what is happening to them, to consent, to raise, waive, and trade entitlements; they have some shared ideas of the Good. The fabric of inter-Person relationships is a product of these many fine threads: of expectations of reciprocity, of rights that can be waived, of claims that can be forfeited, or risks that can be accepted, of obligations that can be earned and discharged. When we move beyond the domain of Persons, some of these threads simply are not available. If there is to be some moral fabric between us and them, it has to be woven of another cloth. Any claims we give animals, future persons, and natural objects will have to be of a sort that they cannot waive or trade with us. If these are "rights," they are not identical with most human rights, which are waivable. Nor can Nonpersons earn obligations or reciprocate our good acts. They cannot consent to our risky maneuvers, as we are sometimes wont to do among ourselves...(pp. 143-147).

The imagery of fewer and fewer threads from which to weave moral relationships as we move away from humans phylogenetically (and beyond) suggests that the strongest fabric of moral relationships is among Persons. Aside from examples involving animals and a commentary on Inupiat society, Stone provides few illustrations of what these particular threads might be, and almost nothing in the way of how they are to be woven. For the vast majority of Nonpersons our moral relations will simply be "woven of another cloth."

Textural Variables

Stone is a little more helpful at higher meta-ethical levels. The fabric woven for each moral plane will have a different "texture" dependent on *prescriptive variables* and *variables of character and other attributes.*

Prescriptive variables, so called because they determine the moral prescriptions which tell us what we ought to do, are divided into *grain* and *mood.* The grain is the descriptive level of ontological focus, for instance, whether we take into consideration the welfare of individual animals, species, or ecosystems.

> Each focus brings along an allied stock of concepts. Focusing upon the individual animal, one scans for such properties as its capacity to feel pain, its intelligence, its understanding of the situation, and its suffering....the ecosystem version brings out stability, resilience, uniqueness, and energy flow. An analysis that emphasizes species favors concepts such as endangered and adaptive fitness (relative to a habitat), and requires portrayal of uniqueness, breeding boundaries, population size, and genetic variability (p. 157).

Mood variables indicate the prescription's degree of moral obligation. Stone suggests the use of three logical operators to replace the binary do/don't logic of traditional ethics: '*!*' for what is morally mandatory, '*O*' for what one ought to do but would not be harshly judged for not doing, and '*P*' for what is permitted.

Within the stated purview of any conventional ethic, one may question (in practice, if not in theory) how binary moral decisions really are. Supererogation is a concept well established in philosophical ethics. Stone is correct, however, to attribute much unwillingness to extend direct moral considerability beyond humans--or beyond sentient beings--to a binary sort of thinking: Either X shares salient human features or it has no moral status of its own. This stance downplays a sharing of features in degree and precludes moral status based on totally different features. Stone also notes that moral decisions in practice are seldom taken to promote the best alternative, but rather to avoid the worst ones. A failure to maximize the good might be seen as grounds for criticism in situations which are thoroughly familiar to, and under the control of, the

moral agent. But, increasingly we are asked to make moral decisions where our knowledge is scanty, our control is tenuous, and factors are numerous. This is particularly true of any ethic which includes Nonpersons and considers long range consequences of technological change for which we have neither adequate intuitive models from past experience nor adequate theoretical models from which we can specify a reliable probability.

Different variables come into play when assessing character (in the case of Persons) and other attributes (of Nonpersons). Character may be treated as a "dependent variable" totally determined by whether the moral agent follows the appropriate prescriptions by performing the right actions. Or, it may be treated as an "independent variable" still centered on right action but in addition partly determined "either generally desirable traits or special qualities of the particular actor." Stone's preference, however, is to treat character a third way, as an "intrinsic good." To assess character as an intrinsic good (one separable from action in a moral plane) requires taking into account (1) life plan information like "the agent's history [and] ambitions," (2) the "intent, motive, and attitude with which something is done," (3) considering actions "neither good nor bad in themselves" according to the "way the conduct disappointingly conflicts with or marvelously reinforces the life the person has chosen for himself within permissible boundaries," and (4) "tolerance, even appreciation for, qualities that may be uniquely good about the particular person being evaluated" (pp. 191-192). An analysis of character as an intrinsic good serves as a model for moral treatment of "other attributes" as intrinsic goods. Once any attribute from a moral plane has been established as intrinsically good, the case has been made for direct moral consideration of the type of entity in that moral plane. Because a diverse moral ontology and a modal logic require many fine gradations of distinctions, Stone sees aesthetics providing a model for ethics, "particularly in this area of grading, where our

ability to provide criteria wanes and trained intuition dominates" (p. 198). In the case of nonsentient nature, Stone's "trained intuition" serves the same function as Taylor's "reality awareness" and Rolston's "value excitement."

> What makes a person or a lake "good" or whatever else may be significant? Indeed, the analysis suggests that our final appeal may lie, unabashedly, in apprehension, rather than in anything like formal deduction from general principles. With the right training we apprehend that a person who cares about nature is a better person, other things being equal, than one who does not. To so hold is no more mysterious or doubtful than our apprehension that, other things being equal, knowledge is better than ignorance, and that a simple explanation of natural phenomena is to be preferred to one that is complex (p. 199).

One might ask if one is better person "who cares about nature, other things being equal, than one who does not," why the same conclusion doesn't apply to persons who care about music, books, etc. The best answer open to Stone is that he is focused primarily on arguing nature's case, and that other valued things/activities can be handled under Person Preference maps. Nor does relegating such things to preferences skew the moral ontology by treating them all equally since the rules/governance of each moral plane can establish criteria for hierarchies. Stone's major concern in discussing types of moral maps, however, is comprehensiveness and ontological sensitivity; he would object to reductions but not necessarily to expansions or different kinds of divisions. The required ontological sensitivity in the case of Rolston and Taylor is very closely tied to an understanding of nature supplied by the natural sciences. Stone's emphasis on aesthetics rather than evolutionary biology and ecology may be due to his presenting a comprehensive pluralistic theory of ethics rather than one to be appended to human ethics (e.g., Rolston and Taylor). But, it may also be that multi-plane judgments by their very nature must be "more aesthetic" and less guided by insight from biology or natural history.

Decision Making and Conflict Resolution

Moral decision making requires (1) a selection of planes and (2) resolving conflicts among planes. There is no formal procedure for selecting planes; it requires consulting

both moral intuitions, which Stone calls "hard-to-trace emotions," and imagination, and, in turn, it also requires the reasoned examination of intuitions.

> [T]he plane must have moral perspicacity; the elements of a situation to which it turns our attention must "feel right." It must carry our thought along lines that feel right to a judgment that feels right--perhaps not so much right to each of us as individuals but (so far as we can grasp it) right to the collective conscience of mankind. I do not consider it paradoxical to suggest that the moral feelings should themselves feel right: consistent, coherent, rational, correct, satisfying (p. 244).

On a personal level one must strive for affective as well as cognitive coherence. The potential for vicious forms of coherence--ethnocentric bigotry, religious zealotry, ideological "purity"--is circumscribed by several factors. Stone's position is morally inclusive, not exclusive, and the number of planes one must take into consideration to "feel right" provides a system of checks and balances. The ultimate appeal to feeling right is to "the collective conscience of mankind," not to an individual or group with partisan axes to grind. The system is open to continual refinement through new information and correction by others. And, one must understand that the very act of moral judgment is not a laying down of absolutes, but an ongoing interplay of reason, intuition and imagination.

> Moral thinking (and perhaps all vital and creative thinking) seeks an image, even to the point of conjuring the object of our *imag*ination as a metaphor. Moral planes can be conceived, like novels, as providing a sort of "literature" for the development and play of this image-conjuring imagination. Some such sort of literature is particularly valuable when we are considering our relations with Nonpersons and Things (p. 245).

Like maps, moral planes *show* us what is involved in the actions we are contemplating. Unlike algorithms which require only mechanical obedience, moral maps require diligence, intelligence, and imagination on the part of the moral agent who reads them.[4]

The simplest cases of moral decision making involve no planar conflict, either because only one plane is involved or because multiple planes indicate the same action/s as morally appropriate.

When planes do conflict, one might "construct a master rule" such as "weighing divergent judgments by reference to their respective firmness of mood." Or, one might "work toward some sort of lexical ordering of planes in accordance with general moral importance."

> Under such a rule, actions indicated on plane B would be suspended until actions indicated on plane A had been fulfilled up to some point. For example, our mandatory obligations to Persons might claim priority up to the point where all Persons had achieved a certain level of life-style, something above subsistence. But when that level of comfort has been reached, considerations of animals or of future generations, as per other planes, would be brought into play, as required by the priority rule (251).

Many conflicts can be adjudicated successfully in ways which are not completely arbitrary even if there is some arbitrariness in the rules by which we seek to order planes.

In the insoluble cases of planar conflict, at least it is likely that some alternatives will be eliminated. Given Stone's view that ethics often is concerned with eliminating the worst courses of action rather than selecting the best--a view which seems utterly reasonable in an imperfect world--this is more of an ethical achievement than it might first appear.

Under Stone's form of pluralism an individual cannot always--though s/he can sometimes--arrive at moral decision in a nonarbitrary way. Still less in all cases will there be theoretical universal agreement. That does not reduce his pluralism to a "rank relativism" which claims that the rightness or wrongness of an action is determined by the general approval or disapproval of the members of the society judging it. Clearly, Stone thinks that there are, if not ethical universals, at least in some cases a convergence of moral/aesthetic judgments which "feel right" to the "collective conscience of mankind." If that is nebulous, it is so, Stone could insist, because precision in our judgments is no virtue when it is accomplished at the price of moral insensitivity.

Difficulties for Stone

Deferring criticisms of pluralism until later, the most basic charge that can be levelled against Stone is similar to a difficulty encountered by Rolston: The direct moral standing of nonsentient nature depends on a kind of "seeing" which carries no argumentative weight with those who do not "see." One's choice of moral planes is determined by the ontology one takes to be morally significant. Planes have to exhibit "moral perspicacity" and to "feel right" to "the collective conscience of mankind." As with literature, we intuitively see or apprehend; the planar map makes the moral standing manifest. Rolston assumes one will feel "value excitement" once natural processes are properly, i.e., scientifically, understood. Stone considers the "trained intuition" of moral apprehension to be more like that in aesthetics where there is less agreement than in science for mankind's collective conscience to fall back on. Stone depends on his criticism of moral extensionist methodology to convince the reader that traditional ethics has been too narrow and rigid in its criteria for direct moral consideration. Stone's criticism could, however, just as well reinforce the notion that nonsentient nature is so vastly different from humans and animals that it is futile--and invites moral chaos--to extend consideration beyond the interest principle.

Stone's treatment of nontraditional entities often conflates argumentation for their moral standing with the exposition of the meta-ethical structure of his system. The foundational claim is not of itself objectionable: Many different types of entities ought to have direct moral standing based on their own special properties rather than being ethically assimilated as marginal cases (of defective humans). Stone then cites significant differences between Persons and a generally accepted anomaly with entrenched moral or legal standing. This ploy creates a dilemma: We can either (1) retain traditional criteria for moral/legal standing and give up the direct consideration of the anomalous case, or we can (2) quit "marginalizing" the entity, appreciate it for what

it is, and expand and diversify our criteria for direct standing to accommodate it. The problem occurs when Stone concludes with some generalities about how other Nonpersons might be so accommodated. The conclusion relies psychologically on a carry-over of sympathy from the traditionally accepted marginal case to cases which are not at all marginal and which involve vastly different special properties. These are the real points of contention and ought to be argued for. Since he cannot argue every case, Stone should at least provide an extended analysis of a few cases beyond the range of marginal acceptance. He does not, and the result is a kind of philosophical shell game played with moral standing. It takes several forms.

One form begins by dividing candidates for direct moral standing into Persons and Nonpersons. Reasonably enough, Stone assumes we accept traditional characteristics of Persons, such as rationality, as grounds for such standing. Next he cites significant differences between Persons and sample Nonpersons, for example, a bison. He counts on our common sense beliefs that animals are sentient and that pain and pleasure are criteria for direct moral consideration (or he trusts an acceptance of the literature which argues the point). But even if we agree that criteria for direct moral standing should be expanded to include the sample type of Nonperson on its own merits, that does not justify the inclusion of other types of Nonpersons on theirs. 'Nonperson' is simply a label of convenience for sorting out types of planes, not the moral counterpart of a natural kind where key features are shared across the board. Yet Stone tends to treat the set of Nonpersons as if there were something morally relevant and essentially common to all its members so that proving the case for one settled the matter for others.

The moral legerdemain takes a second form in Stone's discussion of character as an intrinsic good. Allowing that character is an intrinsic good, Stone's claim that it serves as a model for analyzing "other attributes" as intrinsic goods is dubious. Stone's overt point is that "loosely logical" aspects of prescriptions are different from those of

attributes (including character), but his use of character goes far beyond that. Because character is commonly accepted as being morally important, it is easy to assume that the "other attributes" are also reasonable candidates for intrinsic goods. Character, however, is part of Person ethics involving issues of choice, responsibility, intent, and so forth. These "inner" aspects of Persons are thoroughly compatible with strong anti-environmental positions such as Cartesian dualism, Descartes' skepticism about the physical world, and his pernicious belief that animals were merely machines. An analysis of character used as a paradigm for handling intrinsic goods hardly makes the case for "other attributes" as intrinsic goods, particularly attributes of nonsentient nature.

A third form of the shell game involves a movement from what is legal to what is moral. Noting that individual lawsuits to hunt endangered species have not been successful, Stone suggests the Inupiat Indians' claims to hunt the bowhead might gain legal and moral legitimacy by showing how whale hunting is vital to the integrity of their culture based on "attributes of tribal existence such as tribal rituals, customs, location, and laws" (p. 236). Indeed, the Inupiat might win their case as a tribe based on treaties between membership entities, namely the Inupiat and the United States. The legal status as tribe, however, says nothing *per se* about moral status. I happen to agree with Stone that Inupiat society should be a candidate for moral standing, but I think that requires more arguing than *de jure* recognition by the courts.

Problems of argumentation aside, there is a question of just how environmentally sensitive Stone's comprehensive pluralism can be. The shift towards aesthetics and away from close adherence to the biological sciences could diminish the importance of species, at least as functioning units within ecosystems. The problem arises because an entity in its own right in one moral plane can become incidental in another plane. Consider the difference between planar maps of things and qualities. Stone finds it

"more reasonable for considerateness to attach to the *class* of all objects that conserve or carry forward the quality." If this is so, one would not need to preserve all mountains to maintain the desired quality of grandeur or all species to maintain the desired quality of variety. Stone himself voices concern over the ease with which on moral plane can be assimilated by another.

> One wonders, too, how strong an argument we can wring out of the derivative views, which do not value natural objects and so on as ends in themselves, but only as instruments to human virtue or worthy lives. Confined by that limited rationale, the preservationist's argument could not go beyond preserving enough members of the class to assure that the favored virtue or form of flourishing life will be a viable prospect for humanity. One might conclude that there ought to be enough Xs to go around, so that each person will have the opportunity to develop the right tastes and activities; but that is not the same as to conclude that each X has a right to endure, or even that the preservation of each X is morally welcome (p. 239).

One can imagine other nonutility planes being reduced to quality planes and Stone's system diminishing to a reliance chiefly on anthropocentric considerations of humanly perceived aesthetic qualities. Or, an emphasis on quality planes could result in a kind of evisceration of the natural world by reducing it to a series of museum pieces which no longer function on their own or retain significant roles in ecosystems.[5]

The objections to Stone's pluralism can be split into two groups: generic objections to pluralism and system specific objections applying only to Stone. The most important generic objection is that pluralists have no decision procedure to decide conflicts between basic incommensurate principles. The simplest response is that monistic theories of ethics provide only the illusion of a decision procedure. Stone notes that any moral theory is hampered by lack of empirical knowledge, inability to anticipate new situations, failure to foresee consequences of concepts and rules, and physiological and psychological limitations which prevent us from knowing what psychic states of other animals are like (pp. 142ff). Given the practical constraints, there is no empirical way to substantiate the claim that a moral theory could in principle decide every case. Those who make such claims do so on a dogmatic basis. Moral

monists are increasingly willing to admit, in response to critics like Bernard Williams (1985), that ethical theories sometimes underdetermine the proper response. That leaves the monist to argue either (or any) side(s) of a case. The opportunity for what Hare calls "cooking," tailoring an ethical decision to our benefit or to fit our prejudices, is possible in monism as well as pluralism. There is a trade-off between the monist's claims to decidability and the pluralist's claims to intuitive sensitivity. Moreover, it is a reasonable claim that the appropriate focus of ethics should be on the actual and probable, not on the possible or conceivable.[6] Given these concessions, the theoretic decidability claimed by monists does not seem to be much of an asset. The force of the charge that pluralists cannot decide between incommensurate principles can be maintained only by a straw man caricature of pluralism where there are no decision procedures at all and pluralists are left to wring their hands at every conflict. Clearly, Stone has decision procedures and he thinks there are some ethical universals. If the burden of proof is on the challenger of traditional ethics, Stone's claims for the greater moral and ontological sensitivity of pluralism at least make a *prima facie* case for reconsidering moral considerability.

There are, however, at least two major system specific objections to Stone's pluralism. The first is Gary Varner's charge that Stone "wavers between a robust theoretical pluralism and a pragmatic pluralism " (Varner 1991, p. 177). Recall from the introduction to this chapter that the latter is a "strategy for theory construction" which may mean only dividing up types of problems to cope with them more successfully. The emphasis is on problem solving in applied philosophy. Whether or not the different planes with their respective ontological commitments and governances can be knit into a super-theory is left open.[7] What supposedly makes theoretical pluralism "robust" is that it concentrates on meta-ethical structure stating and defending the incommensurability of its basic principles. In the latter case there may or may not

be much in the way of applied ethics. Ideally one would want a healthy interaction where application tested and forced refinement of the meta-ethical structure, and where the meta-ethical structure provided the most coherent and comprehensive system possible given the constraints of incommensurate principles or planes. Stone intends that his pluralism should work in the ideal way described, but sometimes confuses the two.

The second system specific criticism is that Stone does not make full use of his own system. Stone acknowledges that an individual might have nonarbitrary grounds based in his character that would make us judge him differently than another person performing the same acts in the same situation. The way of life to which an individual is committed might provide him with the "lexical ordering" requisite to deciding cases of inter-planar conflict. In decisions involving more than one individual, a keen self knowledge would make each moral agent aware of what s/he could compromise on, and the manner and extent of the compromise. Stone rightly asserts that in many cases planar conflicts will still allow one to eliminate the worst decisions. The claim is impartial because it is based on an impersonal view of ethics. But the idiosyncracies of character and ways of life also make ethics personal. What that might involve will be taken up in Chapters 4 and 5.

HARGROVE AND POSITIVE AESTHETICS

Anthropocentric Intrinsic Value

Eugene C. Hargrove argues for a form of moral pluralism in which nonsentient nature has direct moral standing because of its *intrinsic value* as an object of beauty. Hargrove defines 'intrinsically valuable' as "valuable for its own sake or...without regard to its use," and locates intrinsic value

> in both the experience and the object itself....[as] the [alternative] that best fits our basic aesthetic intuitions and practice. Anthropocentrically, it seems correct to say that the value is in the object as long as we do not make a metaphysical claim that the value exists as a property of the object itself. Such an attribution of value to an object does not rule out the possibility that it may also possess intrinsic value nonanthropocentrically. It only means that humans aesthetically consider the object to be valuable without regard to its use or instrumental value.... It is also possible for humans to consider the aesthetic contemplation of an art object to be intrinsically valuable. There is nothing wrong with this position...unless it requires...that we conclude that the art object is merely instrumentally valuable as a trigger for the aesthetic experience (Hargrove 1989, pp. 124, 126).

The characterization of intrinsic value is very close to Callicott's definition of inherent value. But, unlike Callicott who denies that any object could possess value "as a property" apart from a sentient valuer (the position Callicott calls "intrinsic value"), Hargrove remains agnostic on this point. To emphasize the distinction, Hargrove calls his own position "anthropocentric intrinsic value."

If Hargrove is more willing than Callicott to entertain the possibility of objective intrinsic value apart from a sentient valuer, he is less tolerant of the type of sentient being his own system requires. To have an aesthetic experience of nature requires judging the aesthetic object according to appropriate categories, which, so far as we know, is an ability restricted to rational human agents. By way of contrast, Callicott must include among valuers at least other mammals which are capable of altruistic feelings. Rolston would claim that even plants have certain types of value relationships, since plants "have," but do not "take," an interest in nutritive value.

Hargrove defends his claim that the preservation of (some) untrammeled nature is a moral duty by coupling a thought experiment proposed by G.E. Moore with positive aesthetics which asserts that pristine nature is (nearly) always beautiful. Hargrove outlines Moore's thought experiment this way:

> In responding to a claim by Sidgwick that it is not rational to aim at the creation of beauty in external nature apart from any possible contemplation of it by humans, Moore asks his readers to imagine two worlds, neither of which can be visited by human beings: an exceedingly beautiful world and the ugliest world that can possibly be conceived. He then argues that simply on the grounds that beauty is in itself a greater good than ugliness, the beautiful world is preferable to the ugly one and that in cases where our actions can affect the unperceived and unperceivable beauty in such worlds, we have a duty to make such worlds more beautiful insofar as we can. If we admit such a duty, Moore concludes, we also admit that the existence of aesthetic value alone, independent of any knowledge of its existence, contributes to the goodness of the whole in our own world (pp. 171-172).

This position can be made into a moral argument for the preservation of nature if it can be shown that nature is beautiful, for if beauty is intrinsically good, then we have a moral duty to preserve natural beauty where we can. The proof for natural beauty comes from Alan Carlson.

Positive Aesthetics

Allen Carlson is a major proponent of positive aesthetics which he characterizes as the view that

> ...the natural environment, insofar as it is untouched by man, has mainly positive aesthetic qualities; it is, for example, graceful, delicate, intense, unified, and orderly, rather than bland, dull, insipid, incoherent, and chaotic. All virgin nature, in short, is essentially aesthetically good. The appropriate or correct aesthetic appreciation of the natural world is basically positive and negative aesthetic judgments have little or no place (Carlson 1984, p. 5).

Carlson thinks that positive aesthetics is defensible when judging nature whereas it obviously is not so in cases of human produced art. His argument in brief is this. (1) Aesthetic qualities depend on how objects (human created or natural) are perceived. (2) To perceive appropriately depends on using the correct categories. (3) Categories of

man-made art are determined partly by art history, artist intent, etc. (4) Categories of natural beauty are determined by the empirical sciences. (5) The empirical sciences have built in aesthetic qualities like balance, harmony, etc. as part of the scientific theories which make the world intelligible to us. (6) Therefore, in our scientific findings we simultaneously discover order and beauty in the natural world.

To flesh in the argument, Carlson invites us to consider how we use certain categories to classify what sort of work we are aesthetically judging in cases of human produced art.

> Categories of art are established in light of certain facts about works of art and their origins, such as their times and places of creation, their artists' intentions, and their societies' traditions. The determinations of the correct categories for particular works are also a function of such facts. However, the determinations of the aesthetic qualities that particular works or kinds of works have, and thus whether they are aesthetically good or bad, are in part a function of what categories are correct for them. For example, since it is a post-impressionist painting, *The Starry Night* is aesthetically better than it would be were it an expressionist work. Thus, in the case of art, determinations of categories and of their correctness are in general prior to and independent of considerations of aesthetic goodness (pp. 28-29).

Natural objects, on the other hand, are not created, but discovered. The categories by which we perceive them come from the natural sciences such as botany, geology, and ecology. There are indeed criteria which make natural beauty intelligible to us and by which we can judge it.

> Perhaps this relationship is somewhat like the following: a more correct categorization in science is one that over time makes the natural world seem more intelligible, more comprehensible to those whose science it is. Our science appeals to certain kinds of qualities to accomplish this. These qualities are ones such as order, regularity, harmony, balance, tension, conflict, resolution, and so forth. If our science did not discover, uncover, or create such qualities in the natural world and explain that world in terms of them, it would not accomplish its task of making it seem more intelligible to us; rather it would leave the world incomprehensible.... Moreover, these qualities which make the world seem comprehensible to us are also those which we find aesthetically good (pp. 30-31).

Although he does not claim an exact correspondence between scientific discovery and aesthetic discovery, Carlson thinks that their common guiding qualities will allow the

claims of positive aesthetics to be unpacked in a way which does not result in begging the question. If Carlson is basically right, then positive aesthetics can supply the argument that pristine nature is beautiful. Carlson's argument appended to Moore's argument gives Hargrove his ontological argument for duties to preserve untrammeled nature.

Hargrove notes that there are additional considerations strengthening the case for preservation of natural aesthetic objects. Unlike man-made art, natural objects cannot be as easily copied, repaired, or replaced. Once the beauty is lost, it is lost (totally, or in significant degree) forever. As an illustration and test case of his position Hargrove asks us to imagine an alligator in a swamp, one on an alligator farm, and a plastic alligator at Walt Disney World.

> The alligator in the swamp has both a contemporary and historical reality. It is, first of all, a part of wild nature as it exists today; it is a representative of a species and an element of a natural ecosystem. Second, it is a direct and recognizable descendant of a creature that was both a contemporary and perhaps even a predecessor of the dinosaurs. A glimpse of that period of natural history is stored in that alligator. As a reference to that period, it and other such animals provide a depth, temporal unity, and an enlarged sense of reality to nature, aesthetically and ontologically, just as reference to past events in human history provides, depth, temporal unity, and a sense of reality in a work of literature. The alligator on the alligator farm is physically identical to the wild alligator and to this extent is still a "real" alligator. It retains some of the natural history of its wild counterpart. Robbed of its natural surroundings and deprived of the opportunity to learn and carry out much of its natural behavior, however, it is a creature in transition, waiting for its transformation into a consumer product...and ultimately into a biologically restructured human artifact, like the domestic cow, that can more efficiently and inexpensively yield up its instrumental value to humankind. With the plastic alligator, the connection with nature and natural history is completely severed, and no trace of the "real" alligator remains, even aesthetically. When one sees the alligator open its mouth as the safari boat turns a corner on the ride, no images of contemporary wild nature or of the dinosaurs of natural history come to mind. These have been replaced by another history, evolutionary...but not natural, beginning with the first experimental Mickey Mouse cartoons.... Like the medieval Christian looking at a picture of a fish and thinking about the Bible, the amusement park visitor has dropped the "real" alligator out of his or her aesthetic experience (1989, pp. 197-198).

Is it aesthetically wrong, then, to indulge in what Rolston calls "cultural-symbolization value" in his example of the "bald eagle [which] symbolizes American self-images and

aspirations (freedom, strength, beauty..." (Rolston 1988, p. 15)? Only when we confuse the eagle (or alligator) as a cultural artifact with the eagle in nature. The two must be judged by different categories, the former by categories of human produced art, the latter by categories of biological science. For both Rolston and Hargrove the eagle's (or alligator's) cultural-symbolization value is parasitic on the bird's (or reptile's) *telos* in its natural environment.

Pluralism

His minimal focus for the direct moral consideration of nature, its intrinsic beauty, not only differentiates Hargrove from the monists, but also from pluralists like Stone who claims there are many different kinds of entities deserving direct moral standing, and for which Stone tries to map different moral planes. Stone's comprehensiveness as opposed to Hargrove's parsimony in moral ontology is also reflective of differing attitudes towards moral conflict.

Hargrove's pluralism is grounded on his analogy between moral rules and the nonconstitutive rules of chess. Constitutive rules are rules that define the game of chess; they govern the way in which pieces can be moved, what checkmate is, and so forth. Nonconstitutive rules are strategies learned for effective play such as the best way to counter an opponent's move. According to Hargrove, the

> most important implications of the chess analogy...concern the nature, status, and value of ethical rules in decision making. Chess theorists over the last 130 years have put together a rather large body of strategic and tactical rules which seem to improve chess play when studied and which function well in explanations and justifications of particular moves. This body of rules, nevertheless, has no ultimate unifying principle, and the principles themselves are not logically related to one another (the omission of one or the addition of another in no way effects the group as a whole), they are not organized in any meaningful hierarchy, they are probably too general to be useful without the kind of study beginners engage in, and there are innumerable cases which can be brought forward with regard to each of them in which following the proper rule leads to disaster in a board situation (1985, p. 22).

David Wiggins makes a similar point in emphasizing the range of interests and the finite knowledge which any moral agent brings to a situation:

> No theory, if it is to recapitulate or reconstruct practical reasoning even as well as mathematical logic recapitulates or reconstructs the actual experience of conducting or exploring a deductive argument, can treat the concerns which an agent brings to any situation as forming a closed, complete, consistent system. For it is of the essence of these concerns to make competing an inconsistent claims. (This is a mark not of irrationality but of *rationality* in the face of the plurality of ends and the plurality of human goods.) The weight of the claims represented by these concerns is not necessarily fixed in advance. Nor need the concerns be hierarchically ordered. Indeed, a man's reflection on a new situation that confronts him may disrupt such order and fixity as had previously existed and bring a change in his evolving conceptions of the point, or the several many points of living and acting (Wiggins 1980, p. 233).[8]

Whereas Stone allows the possibility of resolving all moral conflict within a single moral plane, and offers strategies for coping with inter-planar conflicts, Hargrove sees only heuristic guidelines "not logically related to one another" and in no "meaningful hierarchy" which the chess master, and presumably his moral counterpart, frequently abandons or ignores. As Callicott wryly says, "Hargrove...is simply willing to live with more of a mess than Stone" (1990a, p. 112).

Difficulties for Hargrove

So long as it does not commit one to buying into G.E. Moore's notion that goodness is a non-natural intuited property, there is nothing objectionable in Hargrove's use of Moore's thought experiment. Those of positivistic bent may object that beauty is merely the inner aesthetic experience of the beholder and that "unperceived and unperceivable" beauty is a contradiction in terms. In the example, the beauty is "unperceivable" because of the technological impossibility of travel to the distant planets; neither Moore nor Hargrove is talking about a logically impossible perception of beauty. With that qualification, the positivistic objection becomes another case of truth by stipulation (as in the discussion of the definition of 'interest' in Chapter 1).

More serious objections can be raised against positive aesthetics. Carlson's claim that the empirical sciences supply the proper categories for the aesthetic judgment of nature involves many assumptions about the sciences. Do all empirical sciences have built in aesthetic qualities like "regularity, harmony, balance," or only some, and how are we justified in picking one science over another? Carlson seems to have in mind a paradigmatic view of the sciences as axiomatic systems in which simplicity and logical elegance play an important role. He ignores the immense difficulties posed by anomalies and the heated arguments among philosophers of science over how they are to be handled in theory construction (Newton-Smith 1981). Or, perhaps his assertion is that aesthetic considerations allow us to simplify in theory construction by trading off empirical accuracy for ease of generalization and intellectual intelligibility. If so, then positive aesthetics is more about an idealized model of nature than it is about nature.

Aldo Leopold's ecological claims about the "integrity, stability, and beauty" of biotic communities do invoke concepts like harmony, balance, and order. But, given the ubiquity of predation in nature and its importance in driving evolution, one could just as well characterize the ecological equilibrium as a kind of homeostatic war. The aesthetic harmony and balance are perceived because of what Stone would call the grain of focus, the ecosystem rather than the individuals. Callicott, Rolston, and Stone would agree that different levels of focus are appropriate in different situations. Rolston and Callicott try to work out decision procedures for which grain is appropriate and when. Stone does not think that a thorough systematization of procedures is possible, but he offers strategies for ameliorating conflict between different planes (which have different grains of focus). Hargrove has no system at all. His pluralism provides no guidance for which level of focus will produce the experience of beauty, and the result is deadly for positive aesthetics.

Biologically, the concept of *telos* raises special problems as it did for Taylor's system of RFN, but for Hargrove and Carlson the immediate question is one of beauty.

If there are any biological norms for beauty, one of the most promising candidates would be on the species level using something like Bernard Rollin's definition of *telos* as "the unique, evolutionarily determined, genetically encoded, environmentally shaped set of needs and interests which characterize the [type of] animal in question" (Rollin 1989, p. 146). What does positive aesthetics have to say about a parasite infested animal? Pristine nature is full of starvation, disease, malformation, violence, and death, things we normally consider productive of ugliness, not beauty. Is there perhaps not only a *telos* for healthy animals (and plants), but also a *telos* for scrofulous ones, mangled ones, dead ones?[9] To save pristine nature from charges of ugliness, the natural sciences will have to supply much more in the way of categories of aesthetic judgment than either Carlson or Hargrove offer. The proponent of positive aesthetics must either deny the obvious or justify it by reference to some larger, more harmonious and beautiful whole. To do the latter still requires an admission of ugliness in our concrete experience of the world. Perhaps, like viewing a painting, a certain amount of aesthetic distance is required to appreciate the beauty. If so, however, one must disregard much of empirical science (to the degree that it is empirical), and in so doing, give up the very categories that supposedly make the world concomitantly intelligible and beautiful in positive aesthetics.

CHENEY AND POSTMODERN BIOREGIONALISM

Postmodernism and Privileged Discourse

Jim Cheney endorses a form of pluralism in which *bioregional narratives* incorporate the direct moral consideration of nature. Relying on postmodernist criticisms of foundational epistemology, Cheney argues that claims to a "privileged discourse," one which assumes there is a single correct viewpoint from which all other standpoints can be judged, must give way to many "voices" each of which is an articulation of unique and historical circumstances embedded in a particular landscape. Bioregional narratives integrate self, community, and place so that one can function and grow in a healthy and satisfying manner.

Cheney accepts Richard Rorty's (1979) case against foundationalist epistemology in which the "glassy essence" mind mirrors nature, and on which metaphysical commitments the correspondence theory of truth depends. Rorty goes wrong, according to Cheney, in sharing with other postmodernists the belief that language is only "a set of tools created for various human purposes or...the free creation of conscious persons or communities," that we "should practice ontological abstinence in our beliefs about the relation of language and the world," and that "'truth' is simply the result of social *negotiation*, agreement achieved by participants in a particular conversation" (Cheney 1989, p. 118). Cheney agrees with Rorty in (1) rejecting the notion that there can be a foundationalist epistemology which provides criteria for judging the legitimacy of all other cultural activities, (2) emphasizing the desirability and need for many points of view, and (3) wanting to keep Rorty's "continuing conversation of mankind" going. Cheney differs from Rorty in (1) asserting a limited form of objectivity, and in rejecting both (2) Rorty's severance of language from the world and (3) his view of knowledge as propositional.[10]

Following feminist Sandra Harding, Cheney argues that although there is no foundational and objective privileged discourse, there is a limited form of objectivity

> defined negatively in relation to those views which oppositional consciousness deconstructs. A voice is privileged to the extent that it is constructed from a position that enables it to spot distortions, mystifications, and colonizing and totalizing tendencies within other discourses (p. 118).

Whenever a concept or theory is abstracted from its paradigm setting, there is a danger of colonizing.

> [A]bstractions can achieve a life of their own; they can be articulated in accordance with canons of coherence and made into apparently self-contained wholes ready for export and application to a variety of situations.... The danger is that the theory when applied to a situation specified *by* the theory will serve not to *articulate* that new situation, that is, bring it to experiential and moral coherence, but rather will serve as a mechanism of *de facto* repression of at least some of the experiential dimensions of the situation and lead to confusion and bafflement at the level of action and conscious attempts to understand one's situation and what one is about (p. 120).

A "voice" of "oppositional consciousness" has limited privilege and objectivity to the extent that it can discern when concepts or theories do not fit a situation. In Rorty's view partisans of one discourse can only negotiate with partisans of a different discourse. For Cheney, contextually rooted voices have a kind of veto power over those exporting abstractions to other situations. This is justifiable because, contra Rorty, language is rooted in the world even though there is no absolute and single foundation of "facts" which the mind mirrors.

Language and World

According to Cheney, Rorty's fundamental error is that he has deconstructed foundationalist epistemology only to retain its "transcendental subject." Rorty dodges a mind-body dualism by linguistic talk. Gone is the glassy essence mind; gone also is the world. The net result is "conversations sustained only by the criteria of self-coherence and adequacy to the purposes for which they were constructed" by human beings severed from any world but their own talk.

> Rorty dismantles the correspondence theory of truth, with its hope of finding a way for the transcendental subject to touch the world with its words, only to leave the transcendental subject in place, freely creating world upon world of words--finally not taking responsibility for its words, but merely pouring them forth in conversation after conversation.

Transcendental subjects talk, but their talk is only words because they cannot talk "about" an externalized world of foundational epistemology to which they are transcendent. Rorty ignores the possibility that a nontranscendent speaker can speak "of" an encompassing world in which s/he directly participates.

> When this transcendental subject is also deconstructed, we are left with the world and words in it, emergent from it. Heidegger...opts for a new relation to language altogether, one which results from a "meditative openness" to the world. The world speaks through us when we let go of the metaphysical voice.... The difference in the languages Heidegger describes is said to be a difference between "primordial" language, as a way in which the world discloses itself by our being rooted in the world, and "fallen" language, which constructs itself as a mirror of nature and uproots itself from the world by employing the criteria of adequacy to human purposes and internal coherence...at the expense of faithfulness to experiential embedment in the world...(pp. 118-119).

Cheney credits John D. Caputo for the distinction between Heideggerian and Rortyan views of language. Because the Heideggerian view is crucial to Cheney's position, it is worth turning to Caputo's own discussion of Heidegger:

> [F]or Heidegger thought belongs essentially to Being...we belong to language and...our belonging to language is essentially a way of being bound to Being and world. These are one and the same for Heidegger, not because Being reduces to language, but because the event of Being occurs in and through language, because the world in which we already have our pre-ontological bearings is always and already linguistic. Language is the house of Being for Heidegger not in the sense that we are confined to words--he does not have in mind Rorty's linguistic house-arrest--but in the sense that language houses, shelters, and protects Being. More straightforwardly, language is the way the world is experienced, disclosed, encountered (Caputo 1983, p. 672).

Caputo admits the "mystifying effect" of Heidegger's use of the word 'Being', preferring his use of "*physis*, *aletheia*, event (*Ereignis*), or world." Nonetheless, Caputo insists, Heidegger is not really mystical:

> Being for him means the world in which mortals...dwell. World is the place of birth and death, growth and decline, joy and pain, the movement of the seasons, of the mysterious rhythm of human time.

What Heidegger and other "edifying philosophers" are saying

> is a call, or better a recall, back to the human setting of our lives, back to a sense of finitude and mortality, to the joy and the tragedy of the human condition, to an understanding of ourselves in which we can *recognize* ourselves (pp. 683-684).

If one considers Caputo's interpretation of Heidegger in light of objections by MacIntyre (1981), Williams (1985), Hampshire (1983, 1989), and other "anti-theorists" to the impersonal and ahistorical theorizing of traditional ethics, there seems to be a considerable convergence--however differently stated--between continental and Anglo voices.

At the risk of using "fallen" language, the problem might be described in terms of epistemological distinctions between *propositional knowledge*, *knowledge how*, and *knowledge by acquaintance*. *Propositional knowledge* is "about" something, distancing the knower from knowledge, and knowledge from the known; knowledge itself is linguistic. *Knowledge how* is a skill or ability which is "part" of the knower. While one can use language to expand *knowledge by acquaintance*, *knowledge by acquaintance* is an immediate and pre-linguistic recognition. The latter two kinds of knowledge depend on a participation or living through of experience; this is where the fact/value distinction is most artificial. The positivistic heritage of British and American philosophers has channeled their thinking along the lines of reducing *knowledge how* and *knowledge by acquaintance* to *propositional knowledge* which then becomes separated from its generative context and takes on its own significance.[11] Continental philosophers have objected that this reductive epistemology makes of the knower a bystander who is alienated from the process of living. As Caputo says, "For Heidegger epistemology is a kind of *hubris* according to which human subjectivity presumes to hold court over Being itself" (p. 664).

The Anglo-American antipathy toward continental philosophy is in large part due to the primacy it assigns to *knowledge by acquaintance*. Knowledge which does not

reduce to propositions seems uncomfortably mystical and intuitive, it cannot be checked by an objective and external correspondence to data nor by its coherence with other propositions. It might, however, be checked by agreement or disagreement--especially within a community--over how one "feels about" an issue or "sees" a situation. This kind of checking by putting oneself into another's shoes is basic to maintaining any community and for civilized relationships among different communities. It has been denigrated in modern philosophy because it is too protean too handle the admired epistemological paradigm of theoretical physics, and it has too much primitive raw feel about it for those intent on exorcising the ghost of mind. Anglo-American empiricism has striven for clarity by keeping language separated from the world (and thereby, in Heideggerian terms, reducing *Dasein* to *das Man*).

Bioregions and Mythic Narrative

The Heideggerian point which Cheney and Caputo elaborate is that each person lives a unique life which s/he is constantly transforming. Descriptions in natural and social science--to say nothing of other cultural institutions--tend to be generic, universalistic, and static in the sense that they may admit change, but they lay down the pattern for that change. To understand oneself (*Dasein*) and the world (Being) only through such descriptions is to become "essentialized" as a thing and to immerse oneself in an agenda-ridden, artificial construction rather than the reality of one's experience. For Heidegger the awareness of death as one's "ownmost possibility" forces a person out of the trivializing mode of *das Man* (just anyone) to an authentic life of realizing unique circumstances and potential. For Cheney, bioregional narrative in the form of myth serves a similar--but more communal and less anguish-ridden--function.

> Narrative is the key then, but it is narrative grounded in geography rather than in a linear, essentialized narrative self. The narrative style required for situating ourselves without making essentializing or totalizing moves is an elaboration of relations which forgoes the coherence, continuity, and consistency insisted on by

> totalizing discourse. Our position, our *location*, is understood in the elaboration of relations in a nonessentializing narrative achieved through a grounding in the geography of our lives. Self and geography are bound together in a narrative which locates us in the moral space of defining relations (Cheney 1989, p. 126).

The kind of nonessentializing narrative needed is exemplified in Native American myths which were tied to a particular place (the tribal land) and therefore did not become colonizing as did myths which severed their geographic roots such as those of Christianity. Quoting Paula Gunn Allen, Cheney says:

> She notes that "myth" is synonymous with "fable," not "belief," and that it has the connotation of "moral story." Myth, she says, "is an expression of the tendency to make stories of power out of the life we live in imagination." Here she is noting the intimate connection between myth and ritual--myth as "a language construct that contains the power to transform.... Of course it reflects belief...but it is at base a vehicle...." Myth, then, is knowledge shaped by transformative intent: "Myth may be seen as a teleological statement, a shaped system of reference that allows us to order and thus comprehend perception and knowledge..." (p. 123).[12]

Cheney sees this type of mythmaking as serving two basic functions. One is to integrate the understanding and activities of a people. As defined, myth and ritual are two aspects of the same thing; on a very basic level, knowing becomes living. Myths cannot be reduced to a set of beliefs, propositions, or sentences (whether they are judged on the basis of correspondence to an external world or coherence with other beliefs/propositions/sentences). The other basic function is to serve as a tether and orientation point for the constant "recontextualization" which is necessary to prevent "essentializing" oneself. Rorty's cultural "voice" cannot float free of the world, but must always return to the particular geography which it inhabits.

The result is an ethic considerably different from both the monistic and the pluralistic positions previously examined. There was in each an attempt to lay claim to some kind of value or worth on behalf of nonsentient nature. Cheney sees such a move as wrongly directed and alienating; bioregional narrative has a more comprehensive and immediate focus.

> The reality that is knit together as story and parable carries not the "intrinsic value" so much discussed in the literature in environmental ethics, but rather

> actual moral *instruction.* An important aspect of the construction or evolution of mythic images is their ability to articulate such moral imperatives and to carry them in such a way that they actually *do* instruct; that they *locate* us in a *moral* space which is at the same time the space we live in physically; that they locate us in such a way that these moral imperatives have the lived reality of fact.... For a genuinely contextualist ethic to include the land, the land must *speak* to us; we must stand in *relation* to it; it must *define* us, and we it (p. 129).

Cheney thinks that myths can only perform this active integrative moral instruction if we give up the pretense of universally applying them or "meta-myths" from ecology or other sciences.

> The integrity of the objective scientific model must, for [select purposes]..., give way to the requirement of the health and well-being of individual, community, and land in the construction of an image of nature (with us in it) which effectively instructs. If value is implicit in our descriptions of the world and our place in it, then the narratives we construct will embody value and orient us (p. 132).

Here again, Cheney is at odds with previous positions, all of which have insisted on some foundational role for the natural sciences. Neither Rolston nor Callicott would object to a particular bioregion as a starting point, but only as a starting point, which must then use natural history, evolutionary biology, and ecology as the correct form of understanding to expand one's moral consciousness to include nonsentient nature. Rolston uses personal history and narrative to move us away from our concrete setting to value excitement with the vast sweep and drama of geological and biological evolution. Callicott admits that our strongest moral obligations are at the innermost "rings" of community, but advocates an expansion of community to include the entire terrestrial ecosystem. Cheney treats land as the place in which we are "at home" precisely because it is the home of our community and not that of another.

Difficulties for Cheney

Assuming that his interpretation of Rorty and Heidegger is viable, the kind of oppositional consciousness to which Cheney grants a limited objectivity creates several problems. First among them is how such consciousness can spot distortions in other positions while remaining immune to the charge that the distortion is a projection

resulting from distortions in the oppositional view. The degree to which a theory or concept is abstracted from its paradigm setting, including both local history and local geography, is a warning flag of colonizing and totalizing. That alone is insufficient to sort out cases of illicit special pleading from genuine cases of distorting and colonizing. High level concepts like justice and utility are not discussed by Cheney (though he readily utilizes high level psychological concepts in criticizing Mother Earth imagery). Even though they are insufficient to "articulate" local experience and to "instruct" us in what we should do, justice and utility could (1) serve an important refereeing function among the various local mythologies and (2) set limits to actions within local mythologies in the same manner that rights can function as side constraints.

The situation is aggravated by the murky role which biological science would play in Cheney's environmental ethic or plurality of ethics. The myth-sharing community needs "a coherent model of health to draw on."

> A Western scientific description of the specifics of the ecosystem within which one lives is not adequate. It provides the wrong kind of myth. It can and ought to *inform* our construction of appropriate mythical images, but it cannot function as the centerpiece of a viable environmental ethic, much less a *mythos* for our times (p.132).

He criticizes the *mythos* of ecology as "organicism, the 'dream of natural (unforced) community.'" It would be helpful to know whom Cheney is criticizing here. A desire to return to a primal paradise is quite rightly rejected as a basis for an environmental ethic, but to insist that ecology leads to "organicism" is a very naive view of ecology and treats the previously examined positions as straw men. Rolston and Callicott, for instance, would agree to the inadequacy of a "scientific description" because they both reject the fact/value distinction, though they would not single out "Western" science because neither thinks it has to be construed in the positivistic fashion to which Cheney is reacting. Rolston and Callicott are well aware of the death and destruction, growth and decay, in maintaining the stability and integrity of ecological communities. That

they try to come to an accommodation with it makes them neither Cheney's "organicists" nor its polar opposite, Regan's "fascists."

Cheney's repeated appeals to the "health" of the individual, community, and land as the goal of bioregional narratives and the proper moral measure of actions earns him a certain amount of intuitive sympathy. Unfortunately, he gives only hints as to how this might be done: mythmaking must be local, integrative, and "informed" by ecology. Clearly the community will have to be satisfying to the individual and give direction and meaning to personal action. It will also have to be biologically responsible in its treatment of land so that the land-culture symbiosis can be sustained. Beyond that the community and individual will have a history and identity uniquely shaped by "their" land. If setting criteria is too formal a methodology to develop Cheney's concept of health, he at least needs to offer an extended analysis of an example which could be used as a paradigm case.

Cheney's shift from ethics as principles and critique to bioregional narrative as *mythos* is understandable in light of the power of myths to integrate cognitive and affective functions which direct actions and make of life a meaningful whole. Though Cheney utilizes only snippets of Native American mythmaking, his models have a certain appeal, even allowing for overgeneralizations about cultures which differed widely. The myths are rooted in a particular area understood as sacred land beyond the borders of which they do not apply and cannot colonize. Nonetheless, there are several unexplored questions which are crucial to Cheney's position. To what extent are Native American bioregional narratives altered by Western European culture and artificial confinement on reservations? The old narratives may have functionally integrated the lives of the people when they occupied their original homelands and pursued a way of life possible only when there was no overwhelmingly invasive culture. Can they so function now, or be modified to so function? If not, they provide a seductive model for

the illusion of a return to paradise. Though they may lack the proselytizing of Christianity, were Native American myths any less repressive internally? Warrior cults tend to create great disparities in the status of men and women; women's role is primarily to produce a new generation of warriors on whom the community's survival depends (Tyrrell and Brown 1991). What moral instruction did the myths provide--if any--for insider treatment of those outside the culture, those who are "not-people"? The Hopi, for instance, called the invading Navajo "headpounders" for the way they killed captives. Exterminating is not a morally satisfactory alternative to colonizing. Somewhere between possibility and probability one may fairly guess that our views of Native American myths have been molded by the constraining forces of an alien culture, including its theoretical emphasis--conveniently neglected in practice--on transcultural moral universals. Native Americans and their cultures have been "made safe" first by military conquest, then by governmentally mandated programs of cultural genocide, and now by economic onslaught threatening any communal form of life. Conquered or threatened peoples have good reason to interpret--or reinterpret--their narratives in light of notions of tolerance which may have been originally lacking. Whether Native American myths and rituals would, in their original cultural setting, have the paradigmatic appeal they now do for Cheney is uncertain.

Finally, there is a danger inherent in "oppositional consciousness" which, following the Uncle Remus stories, I will call the *Tar Baby effect*. To catch Br'er Rabbit for dinner, Br'er Bear and Br'er Fox make a tar figure. When Tar Baby doesn't respond to Br'er Rabbit's greeting, Br'er Rabbit teaches him manners by punching him. When Tar Baby won't let go, Br'er Rabbit hits him with the other fist...and so on until Br'er Rabbit is thoroughly stuck. So long as oppositional consciousness is focused on a positive integration of its own experience, the Tar Baby effect is avoided. Once oppositional consciousness begins to define itself mainly by what it is not, it becomes enmeshed in the very thing it opposes and is as thoroughly stuck as Br'er Rabbit--more

thoroughly stuck, in fact, because Br'er Rabbit never defined himself by the opposition. One must live *primarily for* what one comes to understand as important in one's life. As a matter of logical negation, to be against oppression is to be for non-oppression. As a matter of life, that tells one nothing about what non-oppression is. The ultimate test of Cheney's position is whether oppositional consciousness can sustain a positive form of mythmaking or whether the myths will be flawed by a defensiveness which overrides or diverts their articulation of the fullness of a way of life.

CONCLUSION

Alienation and Integration

The major difficulty with the monistic cases for the moral considerability of nonsentient nature was the argumentative leap from immediate personal land valuation to high level consideration of ecosystems. The pluralists give up the hope of a single principle bridging the gap, yet they are in their own ways plagued by the same disparity. Stone lays out a comprehensive pluralism on the assumption that we do, should, or will come to value ethically the ontological commitments of each moral plane. Hargrove offers one argument for the direct moral consideration of natural beauty with no advice about how we are to juggle this value commitment with others. Cheney's proposal of bioregional narratives morally integrates an individual and community with the land, but leaves us with unresolved questions about the potential for mythic repression of the individual, and in the dark as to how a mythic emphasis could handle intercommunal, much less global, environmental problems.

It may be that the best that one can do is to try to strike a balance between the intuitive value commitment to nonsentient nature at the level of *knowledge by acquaintance* and the high level propositional descriptions of it in modern science. To understand the notion of balance requires both a clear understanding of one's unique, historical commitments and an appreciation for disparate views. Two factors become important in a balancing view of environmental ethics. One is a shift from understanding ethical principles as strict rules to that of moral guidelines or "rules of thumb." The other is an appreciation for compromise as something that does not destroy one's integrity. In succeeding chapters we will see how these factors come into play when experiential gestalts are woven into a way of life.

CHAPTER 3:
DEEP ECOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

Ecology and Moral Philosophy

The complex networks of relationships that define life in the study of ecology prompted Paul Shepard to dub ecology "the subversive science" (Shepard and McKinley 1969). Just as the relational field view of Einsteinian physics replaced the Newtonian atomistic description of nature as bits of matter in motion, so ecology substituted a web-of-life system for conventional biology's focus on living individuals or, in the case of species, groups of individuals. The shift to an holistic ontology was considered by some philosophers to have broad implications for moral philosophy. The Enlightenment paradigm of the isolated individual who is to be respected for her autonomy, or who is to be allowed the rational maximization of his interests, was seen as a holdover from an atomistic ontology which was no longer tenable either at the subatomic level or at the level of living things.[1]

In the infancy of environmental philosophy Arne Naess identified two ways of responding to the information supplied by the new science of ecology. The shallow ecology movement was a "[f]ight against pollution and resource depletion. Central objective: the health and affluence of people in the developed countries" (Naess 1973, p. 95). The deep ecology movement required an understanding of self relationally integrated with nature, and had a far-reaching set of high level goals, the deep ecology platform. The aim of deep ecology is both understanding and moral action on the widest scale. Naess's view of deep ecology involves several major components: (1) a relational field-view ontology, (2) careful attention to the content of experience as a

gestalt of secondary and tertiary qualities inclusive of feelings, (3) a pyramidal view of norms from low levels based on personal experience to the high levels of the deep ecology platform and Naess's ultimate norm "Self-realisation!", (4) a rigorous methodology for bridging the mid-level gap between low and high level norms, and (5) a sense of humility that comes from the awareness that all our knowledge systems are fragmentary.

Superficially, Naess's basic argument is that once one understands that one is part of a larger whole, the small (lower case) *self* of the isolated individual expands to include all of nature in a larger (upper case) *Self*. Self understanding and Self love then become understanding and love of nature as a whole. The ultimate norm, Self-realisation!, is an imperative requiring the non-separate "individual" to act on behalf of all nature. Deep ecology remains a *movement* for Naess because the complete articulation of the direct experience of nature and its logical links to the highest level norm(s) are always a practical impossibility. Each moral individual must continually work on the articulation and linking process, and always operates from a somewhat different experiential base than any other individual. Naess calls this effort *ecosophy*, philosophy transformed by ecology, and his own system of understanding *Ecosophy T* (named for his hut in the Norwegian mountains).

Naess straddles the line between moral monism and moral pluralism. The methodology of *precisation*, refining verbal statements and norms, suggests that in principle a single comprehensive, logically consistent set of norms might be possible. Although he claims that norms are rarely derived purely from other norms but include hypotheses in combination with norms, the pyramidal structure with a master norm and the common high-level goals of deep ecology suggest that lower level norms might be derived from high level norms by logical implication. This would not be surprising as Naess is a Spinoza scholar and the *Deus sive Natura* (God or Nature) of Spinoza's *Ethics* is an acknowledged forerunner of Naess's "Meus sive Natura" ontology.

Favoring a pluralist categorization of Naess are his humility about human knowledge, his talk of norms as guidelines subject to continuing refinement, and his egalitarian insistence that each person must develop his own ecosophy. Perhaps he could best be called a pragmatist on this issue since our *de facto* lack of perfect knowledge prevents the monist-pluralist debate from ever being put to the test which could yield decisive consequences. Naess would, I think, prefer to dodge such labels altogether as there is something of a Buddhist master in him with his pointing the way and go-figure-out-your-own-ecosophy attitude. The real point of ecosophy--as it once allegedly was and sometimes still is with philosophy--is to be lived, not to be admired or debated merely as an intellectual construction.

NAESS AND ECOSOPHY

The Primacy of Ontology

The first of seven characteristics which Naess cited as separating deep ecology from the shallow ecology movement was deep ecology's

> [r]ejection of the man-in-environment image in favour of *the relational, total-field image*. Organisms as knots in the biospherical net or field of relations. An intrinsic relation between two things *A* and *B* is such that the relation belongs to the definitions or basic constitutions of *A* and *B*, so that without the relation, *A* and *B* are no longer the same things. The total-field model dissolves not only the man-in-environment concept, but every compact thing-in-milieu concept--except when talking at a superficial or preliminary level of communication (Naess 1973, p. 95).

As the deep ecologist refines his descriptions of himself, he will more and more be forced to see the arbitrariness of himself as an individual separated from or standing above nature. This has two major effects: (1) the bridging of the epistemological gulf between subjectivity and objectivity, and (2) the expansion of the (valued) potential of an individual human being to (valuing) the realization of Self inclusive of nature.[2] The second effect will be considered in discussing the deep ecology platform. The first effect we consider now.

Naess thinks that much of our environmental malaise can be traced to a faulty notion of objectivity based on misconceptions about our sciences.

> A strong philosophical tradition goes from Newton to Kant and his *Ding an sich* about which *nothing* positive can be said. Our textbooks, with impermissible inconsistency, usually stop half-way: form, weight, and certain other qualities are objective whereas colour and smell are said to be subjective.
> However, if we take characteristics like 'oblong' and 'square', for example, they cannot objectively be qualities of a table, as the quality cannot be separated from the concepts of time and velocity in the theory of relativity. The mentioned characteristics are not subjective, but, like smell, *bound in an interdependent relationship* to our conception of the world.... It is justifiable to refer to them as objective in the sense of being independent of a person's likes or dislikes. We arrive, not at the things themselves, but at networks or fields of relations in which things participate and from which they cannot be isolated (Naess and Rothenberg 1989, pp. 48-49.)

Naess has basically the same objection as Rolston (see Chapter 1) to the traditional

Lockean distinction between primary and secondary qualities which still permeates our understanding of the physical world: shape and movement, we tend to assume, are objectively in things themselves, whereas color and taste are subjectively located in the observer. Thus do we create a gulf between the objective and subjective.

To this is added the problem of tertiary qualities, "the perceptually complex qualities such as the quality of strength expressed by powerful orchestral chords associated with the visual impressions of an attacking bull, and qualities such as sorrowful, beautiful, threatening, pathetic" (p. 52). While secondary qualities may be supposed the same for all normal observers under standard conditions, and therefore in that sense be objective, the tertiary qualities are usually seen as hopelessly affective and idiosyncratic. These distinctions support a bias against naturalism in ethics.

> Viewpoints hostile to nature and the environment are commonly presented as descriptions of the factual/objective conditions, while the opposing points of view are referred to, analogous to the teachings of secondary qualities, as manifestations of more or less incidental subjective evaluations, 'mere' feelings and sentiments. The tertiary qualities such as melancholic are not accepted as qualities in nature or the environment, but are placed within the person, for example, as an experience or feeling of melancholy which is then projected out in nature. A landscape may in itself be 40 km [square] but not melancholic. But is it possible to stop half-way? It is difficult to understand why it is not also necessary to 'project' length, and all other qualities from within the human subject. If we do, we arrive at 'the thing in itself' as an *x* about which nothing can be said, while everything is ascribed to a subject who 'creates' the world as it is actually experienced. A very flattering, albeit uninformative conception (p. 53).

The point is the same as Rolston's complaint that "subjectivity has eaten up everything."

A relational interpretation of qualities, claims Naess, removes their seeming arbitrariness. Consider the "highly subjective" secondary qualities of hot and cold. While it may be contradictory to say the water in a bowl is both hot and cold, to say that it is hot to an individual in physiological state *x* and cold to an individual in physiological state *y* is not contradictory. Tertiary qualities simply require more refinement of specification of the conditions and networks of relations to remove their "arbitrary and subjective" epistemological/ontological status.[3]

Indeed, the autonomous subject/observer status of the rational knower in epistemology is an impossibility since s/he cannot understand or be understood apart from the *milieux*, the surrounding conditions and relational networks. Far from being less reliable than primary qualities, secondary and tertiary qualities are the only ones at hand for a phenomenal description--primary qualities are "*entia rationis* characteristic of abstract structures, but not the contents of reality. The geometry of the world is not in the world" (p. 55). As knowers and as moral agents Naess claims we must ultimately rely on our concrete experiences which are *gestalts* that are simultaneously cognitive, conative, and affective.

> When one's attention is not deliberately focused upon perceptual gestalts, all experience is apperceptive. Its units are apperceptive gestalts, not sensory elements, not intellectual elements. *The distinction between 'facts' and 'values' only emerges from gestalts through the activity of abstract thinking.* The distinction is useful, but not when the intention is to describe the immediate world in which we live, the world of gestalts, the living reality, the only reality known to us (p. 60).

Reason is misapplied when we try to reduce the gestalts to their ultimate constituents and analyze these components as if they were more real than the gestalt of which they are a part.

The gestalts of one's experience, however, are not simple recordings of complexes of secondary and tertiary qualities, like so much videotape footage stored in the mind. Gestalts have what Naess calls a "symbol value" or "symbol function" that plays an important role in moral and intellectual growth.

> In non-nomadic cultures, especially agrarian ones, a geographical sense of belonging is crucial. More specifically: rooms, interiors, stairs, farmyards, gardens, nearby trees, bushes--all these things become, on the whole unconsciously, a part of that which is ours, a powerful kind of gestalt....
> When a child grows up, the higher order gestalts of the home change gradually. Certain things which were threatening cease to be so as one becomes larger and stronger. Some things which were more distant or mystical move nearer because of the improved ability to cross distances. The essence which remains constitutes the character of belonging, of being at home, an interwoven gestalt diversity with extremely potent symbolic value: A has symbolic value B when A *stands for* B in conceptual experience. (The ancient formula goes '*aliquid stat pro aliquo*'.) Symbolic function must be distinguished from signal function,

> as A can very well be a signal for B without combining in a gestalt. On the other hand, A has symbolic function in relation to B only if a gestalt is created which includes both A and B. A red light makes us stop, and we *can* develop a gestalt which makes it a symbol for stopping, but more likely, it will continue to be an external association, a *signal* for stopping. In the symbolisation of B through A, A and B are bound together in an internal and not merely external relation (pp. 61-62).

To speak of the house in which one grew up, then, is not merely a physical description but an attitudinal/affective one about *home* as well. Since the house stands for these feelings in an "internal" relationship, it is not something that can be replaced as the red stoplight can in its "external" relationship to stopping where any color or shape will do.

The symbol function of gestalts allows us to make high-level value generalizations: One may, like Naess, love mountains because one grew up in a particular mountainous area. An initial reaction to a new mountain range may be one of nostalgia or terror or delight. "Of course," says Naess, "outbreaks of feeling are not [moral] arguments, but evidence that something is felt to be crucial."

> Spontaneous positive or negative reactions often do little more than express what a person likes or dislikes. Value standpoints are reflections in relation to such reactions: 'Do I like *that* I like it?' We get a four-way division: positive evaluation--one likes that one likes, or likes that one dislikes; negative evaluation--one dislikes that one likes, or dislikes that one dislikes (p. 64).

High level norms like those which constitute the deep ecology platform are rooted in personal gestalt experiences, but these experiences have to be understood, refined, and perhaps even transformed by reflection.

The process of building up a comprehensive system of norms in ecosophy is much the same as hypothesis building in science where evidence underdetermines theory. The difference is that gestalts supply both cognitive and affective empirical content. We do this through a process of interpretation and *precisation*. While we may share a common language inculcated by a community, our personal gestalt experiences only partly overlap and the words we use are general and imprecise. The common terms we use as speakers require "mutually interpreting what the other has said based on prior understanding of what words and phrases mean"--especially in the case of the emotional

subtleties associated with symbol function (p. 5). Naess is not suggesting that language works only by being confined to phenomenal ties, but rather countering views in which "inner" and "personal" and "emotive" aspects of experience are deemed irrelevant or illusory.[4] By becoming aware of the emotive and cognitive differences in the gestalts of others through precisation, we widen our experiential network beyond our own gestalts and refine our experientially underdetermined--vastly underdetermined--hypotheses and norms.

Naess depicts the network of norms (and hypotheses) in ecosophy as a pyramid. On the bottom are low level norms highly supported by our gestalt experiences. On top are a few wide ranging principles like the deep ecology platform. At the very pinnacle in Ecosophy T, Naess's personal system, is Self-realisation! The chief moral and intellectual task of ecosophy is to link the high and low level norms by filling in the middle level of the pyramid, so that the deep ecology platform does not degenerate into a creedal dogma or sloganeering. The deep ecology platform is nonetheless necessary as a guiding set of principles for which Naess and other deep ecologists would claim as support, not only their overlapping experiences rooted in gestalts, but also considerable reflection and the (perceived) biases and failings of the half-way measures of shallow ecology positions.

The Deep Ecology Platform

The deep ecology platform put forward by Naess and philosopher George Sessions is not meant to be definitive in any absolute sense (as Naess's insistence on the importance of precisation shows), but a useful and compact set of guidelines to which most deep ecologists would assent. It is here quoted in entirety:

> (1) The flourishing of human and non-human life on Earth has intrinsic value. The value of non-human life forms is independent of the usefulness these may have for narrow human purposes.
> (2) Richness and diversity of life forms are values in themselves and contribute to the flourishing of human and non-human life on Earth.

(3) Humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy vital needs.
(4) Present human interference with the non-human world is excessive, and the situation is rapidly worsening.
(5) The flourishing of human life and cultures is compatible with a substantial decrease of the human population. The flourishing of non-human life requires such a decrease.
(6) Significant change of life conditions for the better requires change in policies. These affect basic economic, technological, and ideological structures.
(7) The ideological change is mainly that of appreciating *life quality* (dwelling in situations of intrinsic value) rather than adhering to a high standard of living. There will be a profound awareness of the difference between big and great.
(8) Those who subscribe to the foregoing points have an obligation directly or indirectly to participate in the attempt to implement the necessary changes (Naess and Rothenberg 1989, p. 29).

The position is easily parodied by ignoring Naess's insistence on the need for interpretation and refinement of the principles, and for an explicit linking of the deep ecology platform with the diverse experiential and situational base of other reflective moral agents. Rather than defend Naess against potential straw men--a hopeless task given the many lesser lights than Naess in the deep ecology movement, and a general social failing to employ the principle of charity in interpretation--it is better to make two general observations, one about the claims of intrinsic value and the other about the radically utopian appearance of the platform.

Intrinsic value in Naess's system is derived from the emotional content of gestalts through the process of reflection. Since the relational field-view ontology breaks down barriers between the individual self and the "external world," debates about whether value is subjective or objective is a moot point for Naess. The expansion from the egoistic self to the (potentially) world-inclusive Self is a simultaneous process of understanding and valuing. 'Self-realisation!' is a command to realize, make actual in one's own awareness, knowledge and value. To try to ground this process further is to enter the noumenal realm and indulge in speculation that deteriorates into what Kant called "rotten dogmatism."

As to the seeming outrageously utopian nature of the deep ecology platform, to see how far Naess intends these principles to go, it is worth quoting two more lengthy

norms from his early characterization of deep ecology:

> (2) *Biospheric egalitarianism*--in principle. The 'in principle' clause is inserted because any realistic praxis necessitates some killing, exploitation, and suppression.... To the ecological field-worker, *the equal right to live and blossom* is an intuitively clear and obvious value axiom. Its restriction to humans is an anthropocentrism with detrimental effects upon the life quality of humans themselves. This quality depends in part upon the deep pleasure and satisfaction we receive from close partnership with other forms of life. The attempt to ignore our dependence and to establish a master-slave role has contributed to the alienation of man from himself.
>
> Ecological egalitarianism implies the reinterpretation of the future-research variable, 'level of crowding', so that *general* mammalian crowding and loss of life-equality is taken seriously, not only human crowding....
>
> (3) *Principles of diversity and of symbiosis*. Diversity enhances the potentialities of survival, the chances of new modes of life, the richness of forms. And the so-called struggle of life, and survival of the fittest, should be interpreted in the sense of ability to coexist and cooperate in complex relationships, rather than ability to kill, exploit, and suppress...(Naess 1973, pp. 95-96).

If one accepts the relational field-view of Self, the biospheric egalitarianism does follow argumentatively--'follow logically' is too strong given the tentative nature of all our underdetermined hypotheses and Naess's insistence on the need for reflective interpretation, refinement, and a systematic development of an entire pyramid of norms--as otherwise one is treating oneself as the egocentric self set apart from nature. At issue is whether Naess's view of deep ecology is too ludicrously utopian and outrageously demanding to qualify as anything but supererogative fantasy. One would have to reduce significantly the present human population of the planet as well as significantly reducing present levels and rates of consumption in the industrialized nations. For what? So condors can nest and buffalo roam?! Don't we owe more to people?! Naess's answer would be 'yes' to both questions, that it's a matter of both/and not either/or, and that's exactly why the human population and consumption must be reduced. He is not proposing a Khmer Rouge system of mass executions and forced slavery to turn us all into environmentally virtuous peasants. We have the ability to reduce human population gradually over generations to bring it into line with flourishing of other species, even without resorting to controversial measures such as abortion.

One reason the deep ecologist platform appears so radically utopian is because the conventional wisdom about resource use and moral intuitions based solely on personal experience have generally encouraged more use, more production, and more population for expanding markets. Garrett Hardin outlines the reasoning of a contemporary brand of moral and political "conservative":

> He sees the effects of a high birth rate as this cascade of consequences: more babies [creates] more customers[,] more customers [creates] more business[,] more business [creates] more profits[,] more profits [creates] more prosperity for all[.]
>
> What is not figured into this calculus are other consequences of the second in the series: more customers [creates] greater demands on the environment, causing an earlier exhaustion of nonrenewable resources and a higher production cost for other resources, thus decreasing real income per capita (Hardin 1985, p. 119).

Hardin's "conservative" also fails to take into account the fact that the growth of the human population is increasing exponentially, that the frontiers which absorbed the excess population of the Old World are all but closed, that technological change has made individuals increasingly dependent on others even for basic necessities like drinking water, and that the kinds of technological development necessary to support the increasing population even in the short run requires large-scale capital investment concentrating vast economic and political power in the hands of a few corporate board members who do not represent anything like a cross-section of society, that it creates the sorts of jobs that are highly dependent on expanding markets and greater resource use, and increases pollution and toxic wastes.[5] This, of course, is only from a narrow homocentric perspective and raises no concern about the increasing rate at which animal and plant species are being exterminated as habitat becomes resources to fuel the economy. As I write this chapter (February, 1992) proposals are being made to end the current recession by increasing auto sales and housing starts, both of which are prime examples of the resource intensive demands of a life style we take as "normal." The stance and expectations of the good life from which Naess's critics judge him as utopian--particularly those critics who envision a moral goal of increasing Third World

consumption to the profligate and unsustainable levels of the average United States citizen--are a holdover from the days in which we humans were too few and technologically too primitive to threaten a massive collapse of ecosystems as we are now doing...and with the ecosystems, of course, the collapse of the economy.[6] Those who would brand Naess's far-sighted vision as outlandish or ludicrous have an equal obligation to show how their own short-sighted vision is not literally utopian or worse.

Difficulties for Naess

It is difficult to make criticisms of Naess stick because of his care in pointing out the provisional nature of substantive claims in his own Ecosophy T, and because his deep ecology platform is only a set of guidelines for a movement. A few major questions may nonetheless be raised.

Most fundamental to Naess's view is his relational field-view of Self. Granted, we can see ourselves either as isolated individuals or as parts of a greater whole. But when is the former view appropriate, and when does it become an arrogant egocentrism (or homocentrism if we are engaged in joint projects with other humans)? Similarly, when is the view of holistic Self proper, and when does it degenerate into a form of quietism? Naess qualifies his bioegalitarianism with 'in principle' admitting that some killing and exploitation is necessary, but admitting that, "the equal right to live and blossom" does not seem intuitively obvious in any strong sense. It has to mean more than allowing killing to maintain one's own existence, since human "blossoming" involves more than staying alive. Most assuredly Naess would approve a "soft technology" like wind power over a "hard technology" like nuclear power, but even then what constitutes human "blossoming" will have a strong cultural component.

Like Callicott's attempt to extend family to include the ecospheric whole, Naess's attempt to extend the Self seems to suffer severe attenuation as we move outward in the

network of relations. How much like the nuclear family is the entire biosphere? How much like me is the biosphere...or the universe?

Like Cheney, Naess also has the problem of the potential conflict between local mythologies and ecological science. Reflection, precisation, and refinement all allow us to talk to each other, but there may be irreconcilable conflicts where one must decide between the mythological richness of conveying the experiential gestalts and the abstractions of carrying capacities and statistical likelihoods of dimly envisioned environmental consequences.

Jim Cheney (1989) raises the feminist criticism that Mother Earth imagery is an attempt to make over something which ought to be appreciated as an "other" in its own right into something which males, like children, can alternately exploit and blame. What happens when the "other" is absorbed into one's larger Self? Naess speaks of moments of "joy," and there does seem to be a kind of ecstasy in brief moments of being all-accepting. One finds it expressed in poetry like Whitman's "Song of Myself" where of all people of all walks of life--child, wife, husband, opium eater, patriarch, lunatic, prostitute--he says:

> And these tend inward to me, and I tend outward to them,/ And such as it is to be of these more or less I am,/ And of these one and all I weave the song of myself (Whitman 1955, p. 61).

But this is an ecstasy which cannot be sustained. We cannot be all people, much less all the world. The joy or ecstasy of the brief moment of identification may be--if not the crowning glory of our human powers, as I think it is in some way for Naess and Spinoza--extremely important in moral development as a full openness to life where one accepts without fear and without judging. Our powers and condition, however, are not the powers and condition of the gods. Always we must anchor ourselves in a humbler identity. This, perhaps, is the most poignant criticism of all.

CONCLUSION

Deep Ecology and Ways of Life

Three major points from Naess's view of deep ecology will carry over into the arguments for sustainable ways of life in Chapter 4: His primary ontology of simultaneously cognitive and affective gestalts, his integration of nature and culture in a way of life, and the need to change unsustainable ways of life to bring them into balance with the ability of other life forms to renew themselves.

Naess's gestalts bridge the fact/value distinction and provide an empirical base for moral theorizing that is anchored in personal experience. At this level knowledge by acquaintance and knowledge how have both cognitive and affective aspects. The moral intuitions arising from the gestalts can be tested against the gestalt experiences of others, and then modified or transformed. This testing and adjusting process may involve either knowledge by acquaintance, as when the passion or earnestness of someone we admire causes us to re-examine our views, or it may be a more cool and distant propositional knowledge, as when a fuller awareness of complex conditions causes us to re-evaluate another's character because we now understand they were forced to act in extenuating circumstances. The primary ontology of gestalts is the world of our life experience, and to be defensible our moral theory must be squared with it. High level complexes like ecosystems are not something we experience directly as such. They are not the same as the gestalts of a friend, a farm, or a forest area we have visited. Granting ecosystems direct moral standing requires more abstract scientific propositional knowledge, and addressing the problem of which theory or model of an ecosystem one will morally acknowledge. Callicott's choice of a family model rather than an energy flow model of ecosystems, for instance, is a deliberate attempt to extend sentiments on the basis of our more immediate gestalts of our human families and to

create what Naess would call symbolic value. The sustainable ways of life position stresses nonsentient nature as it is experienced directly in gestalts. It does not deny the micro and macro worlds of modern science which tell us that we are made of star stuff and are part of ecosystems in ongoing evolution. It does emphasize, however, that moral imagination be tethered in the world of our experience. Some, like Rolston and Callicott, will boldly go the limits in granting direct moral standing to "superorganisms" or Stone's more bureaucratic term 'membership entities'. Others will grant nonsentient nature direct standing in less ambitious forms. So long as evolutionary and ecological science is not denied as a significant form of knowledge, it matters less that a land ethic morally embraces ecosystems directly than that it acknowledges them to be real and instrumentally valuable in the large scale functioning that sustains planetary life.

Naess argues that each person should work out his own ecosophy to fill in the intermediate level of norms which link low level gestalts with the high level deep ecology platform. This makes ecosophy a way of articulating the coherence of one's life while recognizing that many other coherent lives can be lived under the umbrella norms of deep ecology. Naess is sensitive to the idiosyncrasies that make lives different and unique. His insistence on rigorous methodology is a way of forcing each individual to an acute awareness of the implications of his words and deeds. Naess's claim to be interested in ontology rather than ethics is in part due to his view that ethics as rules and regulations mean little when blindly followed as legalistic rules. Sustainable ways of life will also focus on the need for personal coherence, but it will reject Naess's pyramidal view of norms for three reasons. First, sustainable ways of life's pluralism is based on the view that the self is heterogeneous in its aims and that what is valued cannot be subsumed under a single norm but must instead embrace a balancing view (Rawls 1971, Taylor 1989). Second, Naess's personal choice of Self-realisation! as the master norm too easily merges personal identity with nature and vice versa. Rather,

nature will be treated as an "other" like a spouse in Wendell Berry's marriage analogy. Third, as Stuart Hampshire points out, we cannot be all good things but must pick and choose among them fulfilling only some possibilities and letting go of others.

Finally, although sustainable ways of life does not require Naess's strong bioegalitarianism, it definitely requires considerable reduction and modification of our profligate consumption and most likely requires a reduction of the planetary human population. There are two facets of sustainability at work here. One is concerned with maintaining what in narrow homocentric terms can be called a "resource base" and the ability of the earth to renew its life support systems. The other is that it is not enough simply to live, not even to live in material comfort. The way of life that is to be sustained must be psychologically sustainable and worth passing on to others. This is explicated in Berry's view of meaningful work which binds human beings and nonsentient nature into a community that extends through generations. If future generations are to experience the richness of the life world we presently enjoy, then the continued ability of most other life forms to "live and blossom" can be accommodated by sustainable ways of life.

CHAPTER 4:
SUSTAINABLE WAYS OF LIFE PLURALISM

INTRODUCTION

Grounding a Land Ethic

A common difficulty for all land ethics has been the problem of seeing: that is, of going through a gestalt switch from a psychocentric position to one in which nonsentient nature also has direct moral consideration. We have seen in Chapter 1 that the monistic positions progressively weaken as they move outward from arguments about our genetically programed valuing of immediate experience (Rolston) or our altruism towards other humans (Callicott) to direct moral consideration for high level complexes like ecosystems. The monistic attachment to the doctrine of moral harmony, the notion that theoretically all ethical conflict can be resolved, also raised fears about a monistic land ethic sacrificing sentient individuals for nonsentient ecosystems. The pluralistic positions in Chapter 2 abandoned the doctrine of moral harmony at the price of opening themselves to criticisms that they have no decision procedure or hierarchy of value for resolving conflicts. Stone lays out a system of ontological mapping which simply assumes a moral grounding for a land ethic. Cheney argues for an explicit and local moral grounding of a land ethic in bioregional narrative with little guidance for handling conflict between narratives. In Chapter 3 Naess's ontology of gestalts simultaneously incorporates personal, cultural, and ecological factors opening up the possibility of some degree of synthesis of the concerns of both monists and pluralists who advocate a land ethic.

In this chapter I argue that sustainable ways of life pluralism can provide a stronger ground for a land ethic than the previous systems examined. Sustainable ways of life pluralism acknowledges multiple values with no completely decisive hierarchy in its

ontological gestalts. Although this often puts the individual at odds with himself by increasing moral conflict, it is a more accurate representation of the complexity of moral situations. A balancing of value commitments and an avoidance of the worst alternatives is much preferable to precision in ordering value hierarchies when we lack perfect knowledge of the circumstances prompting us to act and of the full consequences of our actions (Stone 1987). Through recognizing one's own internal conflict, one learns the simplistic nature of one-sided decisions--even when such decisions are forced by circumstances--and comes to have more tolerance for the views of others. Appreciation of sustainable ways of life pluralism also fosters a moral maturity that comes from realizing one must give up many things to preserve a valued way of life. To choose one way of life is to give up other possibilities, and becoming a responsible moral agent involves developing an awareness of what one is losing as well as what one is gaining. This understanding prepares an individual to make compromises that preserve moral integrity by knowing, sometimes painfully, what s/he stands for.

The basic argument for sustainable ways of life pluralism is simple. If one wants to be a particular person or have a certain identity, one must stand for some things and not others, and if one's life is to stand for anything, one must make a commitment to some particular way of life. If one values a way of life, one will want its value commitments to be shared by others and carried on beyond one's own lifetime. For a way of life to be sustainable in the long run, one must understand how it depends on nonsentient nature and--if necessary--modify the stress placed on it. This requires, at the very least, environmental responsibility and an instrumental valuing of nature. For someone who is thoroughly convinced (1) that only sentient beings have interests and (2) that interests are necessary for direct moral standing, no further moral argument is possible. However, when one begins to realize how one's way of life is fostered and

shaped both by nature's provisions and by nature's limitations, nonsentient nature can easily be valued directly as part of (and not just as a means for) a way of life. In this type of argument the direct moral standing of a way of life encompasses nonsentient nature in an holistic network with other elements of that way of life. At the same time, the holistic position does not rule out other arguments for granting direct moral standing to nonsentient nature separately.[1]

WAYS OF LIFE

Identity, Liminality, and Ways of Life

Arguing against the adequacy of ethical theories which specify a single principle or a definitive set of virtues, Stuart Hampshire points out the uniqueness of each individual as a fundamental fact of human existence. The capacity for self-reflection and criticism which makes us moral agents also, of necessity, makes each of us singular in his sense of identity. Hampshire refers to the individual's memory as "a kind of spiritual capital, and the income from it, in the form of reviewed experiences, is merged with the incoming experiences of...life in the present." Metaphorically, memory is a "compost heap" in which old ingredients are "modified, even transformed" by newer ones (Hampshire 1989, pp. 120-121).

The singularity of memory and the plasticity of the mind require that ethics at the ground level of personal decision making consider the individual's integrity as it is worked out in Hampshire's characterization of a way of life.

> A way of life...is not exactly a fact, or an assembly of facts, if only because it can obviously be adequately described and interpreted in different ways from different perspectives; also because any description of it will contain theories used to interpret behaviour and social relations, and therefore the 'hardness' and definiteness suggested by the word 'fact' is lacking. Alongside repeated patterns of behaviour, a way of life includes admired ideal types of men and women, standards of taste, family relations, styles of education and upbringing, religious practices and other dominant concerns.
>
> I describe to myself, or to another, the way of life which is mine and I specify the contribution to it made by the practice or activity that is in question. If I did not follow this practice, such-and-such other practices, which are elements in my way of life, would be undermined and lose their hold on me. The justification is in this sense holistic. I would need either to abandon the way of life to which I am now...committed, or I would find that many other activities and practices, to which I am at present committed, have lost their significance, and my activities have come to seem incoherent and confused (Hampshire 1983, pp. 5-6).

Three features of a way of life stand out immediately. (1) It may be described differently according to the theories used to interpret it, especially by those who share it

as opposed to those outside it. (2) It consists of *gestalts* encompassing a wide variety of ontological commitments: persons, activities, institutions, and so on. (3) The ***holistic justification*** means that a way of life cannot be understood intellectually or morally by assessing its components in isolation from one another.

To explain and defend a way of life philosophically, one must adopt a different methodology than the deduction of principles from agreed upon axioms. One cannot, like those who extend utility or rights to animals, simply insist on a more consistent and rigorous application of the interest principle as a moral bottom line. Instead, as Martha C. Nussbaum comments on defending intuitions, one must first lay out a case in detail and then demonstrate its connections with other valued aspects of life (Nussbaum 1986, p. 32). The use of literature provides considerable help--novels, plays, and poetry condense and concentrate key features in a "slice of life" or whole situation so that the features and their interconnections may be seen readily. This is the major point of biography as a literary genre: to trace the patterns that make an individual's life a coherent whole, and to mark events that mold and crises that threaten the person's integrity. The novels of Wendell Berry are especially instructive in making the case for a sustainable way of life as they model a way of life that is integrated both "horizontally" across the community and "vertically" through the generations. Their focus is the fictitious farming community of Port William, Kentucky. Though fictional, the novels have a strong autobiographical strain as they portray the country in which Berry grew up and to which--after an interlude as an urban academic--he returned to farm. As an author, Berry exhibits a wisdom that comes from an intimate knowledge of his subject and a kindness that comes from understanding human frailty. Berry's characters are unexceptional; they have a plainness which gives his novels the honesty of the author choosing to celebrate the life he lives rather than spin a better one out of fantasy.

In taking the farmer as a model for a sustainable way of life I have chosen an atypical paradigm, and in Wendell Berry an atypical farmer. The farmer, especially Berry's sort of farmer, is a *liminal* figure, one who stands on the threshold or margin of our society.[2] As such he is familiar enough to us so that we can understand and imaginatively identify with him, yet he is distant enough to be in touch with things about ourselves and our perspectives that we do not understand but need to understand. Berry's liminality is twofold. As a farmer he is in intense and protracted daily interaction with soil, plants, and animals in ways that the bulk of our urban population is not. This gives Berry a broader and more detailed understanding of the varied ontology which makes up our life world and the varied sorts of relationships we can have with it. Technological innovation, specialization of labor, and the demands of urban living have by and large focused our attention away from these relationships. Soil, plants, and animals have become mere things to be treated as one treats mass-manufactured artifacts: use, dispose, replace. The relationships the farmer has to nonhuman entities, sentient and nonsentient, nonetheless remain vital to human life. Berry recommends gardening as a practical exercise in consciousness raising, but if we cannot adopt the farmer's *knowledge by acquaintance* and *knowledge how*, we can at least acknowledge his *knowledge that* healthy soil is vital for human existence. From Berry's farmer we can learn or re-learn the richness of ontology, the intricacy of our relations with it, and the importance of nonhuman nature to meaningful work.

The second way in which Berry is liminal is in his historical perspective. Born into a farming community in 1934, Berry has seen the results both of traditional farming methods with their concomitant way of life and of the vast post World War II changes which have turned farming into agribusiness. He has observed in detail and over time the effects of these changes on land he has known from boyhood, on his own life, on his community, and on rural America generally. Berry's generation is one of two or three generations in the United States that has first-hand experience of the thorough-going

transformation from a predominantly rural and local culture to an overwhelmingly urban mass "culture." A major purpose of scientific record keeping is to serve as a benchmark by which to measure change and predict future events. Human memory serves that same benchmark function socially as Berry notes in arguing for the family farm as a way of lengthening memory through generations to avoid repeating the mistakes of the past. Human memory is important as a personal witnessing of what has transpired. The scientific records of production per acre, rate of topsoil loss, and demographic changes reveal little to those who have never had direct contact with the events they encapsulate. Like the Pentagon's daily Vietcong body counts during the Vietnam War, the statistics are just so many tedious numbers which can be given a narrow interpretation and manipulated to show that "progress" is being made...until one realizes in personal terms the "price" of that "progress." It is not until one has direct experience or imaginative identification via literary description and story telling (which rest on the author's experience or imagination to re-create experience) that one comes to have an integrated affective and cognitive grasp of what the changes mean, of what it means to lose a life or a way of life.

Through the coherence and wholeness of his way of life Berry shows us the possibility of the direct moral consideration of many types of entities which Stone includes in his moral planes. Through Berry's depiction of meaningful work within the "order of Creation" he shows us the kind of dedication that is necessary to make a land ethic function. Of course, Berry is only one of many liminal figures through whose way of life one might demonstrate the moral significance of the multifarious entities in Stone's ontology. John Rodman has observed that Aldo Leopold himself can be treated in such fashion:

> The land ethic emerges in the course of [Leopold's *Sand County Almanac*] as an integral part of a sensibility developed through observation, participatory experience, and reflection.... It is an 'ethic' in the almost forgotten sense of a 'way of life' (Rodman 1977, p. 110)

Given the entrenched place of the interest principle in philosophical ethics and the human need to use nature as well as to co-exist with it, Berry's analogy of marriage to describe the partnership between the farmer and his land is especially significant for those seeking to defend a land ethic. Berry's eloquence, insight, personal knowledge, and historical perspective make him and his writings accessible for non-farmers of our times, and they exhibit two key human virtues without which all ethical theory comes to naught: wisdom and kindness.

The life of the character Old Jack Beechum typifies Berry's concern for the mutually formative relationships among people, land, and community. In *A Place on Earth* Jack has become too old to live by himself and continue farming. His land is now sharecropped by a young couple. During an inspection visit, which is as much a chance to escape the confines of his rooming house in town and to be on the land again, Old Jack observes his tenants:

> Standing in front of the barn, he has already begun his exploration of the young man's ways, looking into the fence corners and into the open sheds and at the back porch of the house. All that he can see is orderly. The tools that are not in use have been put into the sheds out of the weather. The gates and doors are all closed and latched. Rows of young vegetables are growing in the garden.... These people are not the kind who will be running to the grocery store to buy all they eat. That means a great deal, to Old Jack's way of thinking.
>
> The young man's wife is carrying water from the well into the kitchen.... The first time she came out she waved to him and called, "Good morning!" And he waved to her. Since then she has gone on with her work, paying no attention to him...(Berry 1983a, pp. 203-204).

Jack's inspection of his property is only superficially part of a legal and financial transaction. His "exploration of the young man's ways," and the ways of the young man's wife, is a probing of character of those who have come to inhabit the land which defined his life.

The orderliness is a sign of people who know what they want and who are willing to work ungrudgingly for it. The care exhibited for the tools, the buildings, the animals, the crops, and the land bespeak a concern for these things themselves and the farm of

which they are a part. To them farming is not a means of making a living; it *is* living. They take pride and satisfaction in doing well what they are doing because it is way they want to live and the best way of being who and what they conceive themselves to be. The couple exhibit a self reliance which increases the significance of their daily activities. The noon meal, which Jack is invited to share, is simultaneously an exercise in the cook's skill of self expression, an act of love for her family and friends, a natural extension of her efforts in tending the garden (where there is further satisfaction in watching things grow), a willing division of meaningful labor shared and complemented by the work of her husband in the fields, an opportunity to socialize on an intimate level, a ritual in which the very basis of life is shared. It is all these mutually reinforcing things at once, and none of them can be neatly placed in an Aristotelian ordinal hierarchy, a that-for-the-sake-of-which each is done until we reach the final goal of *eudaimonia* (happiness/prosperity). *Eudaimonia*, or something like it in the satisfaction of a life well lived, there is indeed. But it is an holistic life in which (almost) every act is significant in itself while it simultaneously lends significance to, and receives significance from the conjointly enacted whole.[3]

The young couple's "ways" reveal to Jack that they are worthy of the land. In so doing they also restore a lost meaning to Jack's life. Jack is a widower estranged from his wife early in their marriage and from his only child, a daughter who has married and moved to the city. Watching the couple go about their tasks, he discovers a kinship that he never had with his own family.

> Old Jack stands and watches until the man and team reach the end of the field and make the turn and start back, and then he goes to the sled again and sits down. The terms of an unexpected happiness have begun to work themselves out in his mind, the possibility of an orderliness in his history that he has not dared to hope for, a clean transition from his life to the life of another man. It is as though he has come to a window looking out onto a lighted country where before there was only darkness (p. 206).

The couple have demonstrated, without knowing it, an appreciation for everything that Jack has done to care for the land and keep it. His life, all his efforts which went

unrecognized by his own family--and even by himself because of the bitterness that divided them--is suddenly affirmed by the young couple.

The situation Berry portrays is neither romantic nor self indulgent. It is based on the common love of a way of life which can only be fulfilled from the inside--by struggling with it on a daily basis in all its inextricably mingled satisfactions and frustrations. Jack is not a stereotypical image of the long suffering, clean living farmer. There are reasons for his estrangement from his wife, not the least of which are--or were in his youth--a hot temper, too high expectations of what he could achieve, and an inability to come to terms with his wife's needs which he then castigated as faults.

The decision Jack makes next is all the more poignant because the tenants are not his kin: He will sell the couple his farm at a price low enough so that they can afford to buy it. Though his act is one of self fulfillment, it is also one of generosity without strings attached. He feels he has no right to make any claims on their affections and he is scrupulous in respecting their emotional autonomy.

> His vision of the morning returns to him. He can see this place passing out of his own good keeping into that of the younger man--can see him at work and alive here long after he himself will be dead. He turns to the young man, intending to tell him that he can depend on his good will and can trust him--that he will help him to have what he wants. But he cannot speak. He looks out the window, getting hold of himself, and then he says: "Son, you're a fine boy. And you've married a fine girl. I'm going to stick to you" (pp. 210-211).

Old Jack never tells the couple how they have restored his past and given him--despite the fact that he is near the end of his days--a sense of outliving the biological limitations of self. The couple is informed immediately after Jack's funeral that his will stipulated they are to be offered the farm at half its market value.

> "He didn't want to leave it to you outright. He thought you ought to work for it the way he did. It was his opinion, you know, that there were some essential things he never learned until he got in debt." Wheeler [Jack's nephew and lawyer] laughs briefly, and then, as if to keep his mind strictly on its business, looks at the ground. "I was to tell you as soon as he was buried and not wait, so you could make your plans" (Berry 1974, p. 217).

Even in death, Jack is still setting a moral example and instructing the next generation by initiating them into the responsibilities of adulthood. Old Jack's help will require

further commitments of the young couple. Once they go into debt to buy the land, they cannot simply take jobs elsewhere because they are tired of farming. They will have to love the land and the life it generates strongly enough to spend their lives at it, to risk hardship and frustration, and to give up other possibilities. The demands are not unlike the kind of commitments a couple make to each other in taking wedding vows. For his part, Old Jack, by his generosity, example, and teaching, lives on in the couple's lives the way parents in traditional societies can hope to live on in the lives of their children.

Old Jack's story is a story of failing and forgiveness, of sacrifice and humility, and for Jack, a kind of resurrection through sharing his way of life. But there is nothing preachy or other-worldly in it. The failings are human failings and the redemption a human one. The virtues of steadfastness, hard work, loyalty, fidelity, tolerance, charity, and trust are exemplified in the ordinary activities of common people in everyday settings similar to those which confront us. The ideal types of men and women which Hampshire cites as part of a way of life are here, but they do not have the majestic and antiseptic aloofness of Dante's angels of the *Purgatorio* each of whom exhibits a cardinal virtue, nor the superhuman heroism of Sir Thomas More--morally sanitized through poetic license--going to his death in *A Man for All Seasons*. Like us, Berry's characters have scuff marks and mud on their shoes and on their psyches. Their decisions are nonetheless vital because they demonstrate how a life is typically spent or misspent; few of us will have the one golden moment of decision that is the stuff of high tragedy. Berry's gift as an author is to honor the good in all its flawed particularity, often by showing us how it develops out of human pettiness and error, later recognized and regretted. Berry steadfastly refuses to denigrate this very human goodness by invidious contrasts with an unreachable Olympian ideal or by relegating it to a prelude of a better life to come. That the good is found in something as mundane as a meal, that a meal can reflect the richness and coherence of an individual life which can in turn be mirrored in an entire community, focuses one on the here and now. Walt Whitman

made the point in "Song of Myself":

> I have heard what the talkers were talking, the talk of the beginning and the end,/ But I do not talk of the beginning or the end.
> There was never any more inception than there is now,/ Nor any more youth or age than there is now,/ And will never be any more perfection than there is now,/ Nor any more heaven or hell than there is now (Whitman 1955, p. 51).

Berry shows us the fullness that can come from a way of life, a fullness without which moral principles turn into a cold legalism that can only command or forbid, a damning idealism which we can never meet, or an irrelevant talk of talkers which has slipped its tether to our lives.

Marriage and Land

At first, the way of life Berry presents in his novels and essays might not seem to exemplify a land ethic as sought by Aldo Leopold's philosophical heirs because Berry's concept of stewardship seems to place the locus of value in humans (or God). In addition, his rural way of life seems to model an appreciation of nature based on its instrumental use in farming rather than nature valued in its own right. However, Berry's understanding of nature is ecologically and culturally holistic in that self and work are not separable from the natural order.

> [T]he question of the propriety of an action...cannot be answered, or even intelligently asked, except in terms of the question of propriety of place--not just of the immediate human and worldly context of the action, but of the place of the actor in the order of Creation. How you act *should* be determined, and the consequences of your acts *are* determined, by where you are. To know where you are (and whether or not that is where you should be) is at least as important as to know what you are doing, because in the moral (the ecological) sense you cannot know *what* until you have learned *where*. Not knowing where you are you can make mistakes of the utmost seriousness: you can lose your soul or your soil, your life or your way home (Berry 1983b, p. 117).

For Berry, morality is ecological in its etymological sense of the *logos* (rational order) of *oikos* (home). One needs to be aware of what is home in order to understand how to care for it so that one's actions produce (or preserve) *logos* instead of *chaos*. In the

example of Old Jack we have seen three aspects or manifestations of home: individual persons, community, and the farm itself inclusive of tools, buildings, animals, plants, and fields. Berry's other writings widen these manifestations to include wild nature such as woods and rivers as well. When the order of Creation is understood and respected, home can flourish; when it is flouted home is destroyed. As a Christian, Berry's capitalization of 'Creation' shows a respect for nature in its own right along the same lines as the capitalization of 'God'. (One need not share Berry's theism to assent to his views, 'creation' being a common secular reference to the planet or universe.)5 The person who understands nature only as resources--however carefully husbanded--misses the larger implications that the "limits" of nature also provide positive guidance for a worthwhile life.

Berry's analogy between farming and marriage makes the connection clearer. The initial attraction to land or lover is full of "possibilities irresistibly imaginable" which must change to make the farm or the marriage work.

> Truth begins to intrude with its matter-of-fact.... It invariably turns out, I think, that one's first vision of one's place was to some extent an imposition on it. But if one's sight is clear and if one stays on and works well, one's love gradually responds to the place as it really is, and one's visions gradually image possibilities that are really in it. Vision, possibility, work, and life--*all* have changed by mutual correction. Correct discipline, given enough time, gradually removes one's self from one's line of sight. One works to better purpose then and makes fewer mistakes, because at last one sees where one is. Two human possibilities of the highest order thus come within reach: what one wants can become the same as what one has, and one's knowledge can cause respect for what one knows (p. 70).

Berry's analogy between commitment to a sentient individual and commitment to nonsentient land is possible because he understands personhood in terms of networks of relations which can exist neither apart from the individual nor solely within a Cartesian *cogito*. Berry is fond of synechdoche and one must read carefully to unpack multiple meanings from his metaphors. "One's place" indicates both ownership of the farm and one's ecological niche in the order of Creation. There is a parallel development

between finding meaning and purpose in life, personally and culturally, and finding one's place in the ecospheric scheme of things.

Love of the land, like love of a person, can neither be totally separated from nor totally contingent upon what the other does for one. Land or spouse cannot become one's own possessively until one sees them for what they are. They otherwise remain fantasies and the relationship is dysfunctional. One is as much owned by the land as owning it. One can waste time and effort and joy trying to make some nonarable land "productive"--or pushing good farmland beyond its range of productivity--because one is stuck in a narrow understanding of productivity and is bent on a wholesale reordering of Creation. The penalty for not recognizing where one is--one's place in the scheme of things--is the destruction of one's place in the sense of land owned, and the waste of one's life. Instead, one must be willing to work in a patient and disciplined way, to make sacrifices in having one's fortunes limited by the other, and to subject oneself to "mutual correction." One's fortunes and identity are simultaneously defined by and grow with the other, whether spouse or land.

This is not a shotgun wedding or marriage of convenience. "Human possibilities of the highest order" are at stake. Wanting "what one has" is to take satisfaction and delight in one's possessions and activities rather than forever valuing them only instrumentally--if they are valued at all--as a means to get something else in an elusive future where someday one will finally be able to "really live." Valuing what one has in the broadest sense is requisite to valuing one's own life as one lives it. To respect "what one knows" can refer to many things including one's skills, propositional knowledge, knowledge by acquaintance, and the objects of knowledge as well. As a knower, it is also to respect oneself. From his examples it is clear that Berry means all these things simultaneously. What epitomizes knowledge for Berry is the awareness of an integrated personality, integrated with one's occupation, one's community, and with the order of Creation.

Work

Integrated knowledge is embedded in Berry's notion of "work," which itself is what Bernard Williams calls a "thick" ethical concept, one "express[ing] a union of fact and value" (Williams 1985, p. 129). Berry sees a loss of personal physical health and cultural vitality in the fragmentation that results from assuming that work which serves basic necessities is menial:

> We lose our health--and create profitable diseases and dependencies--by failing to see the direct connections between living and eating, eating and working, working and loving. In gardening, for instance, one works with the body to feed the body. The work, if it is knowledgeable, makes for excellent food. And it makes one hungry. The work thus makes eating both nourishing and joyful, not consumptive, and keeps the eater from getting fat and weak. This is health, wholeness, a source of delight....
>
> The "drudgery" of growing one's own food, then, is not drudgery at all. (If we make the growing of food a drudgery, which is what "agribusiness" does make of it, then we also make a drudgery of eating and of living.) It is--in addition to being the appropriate fulfillment of a practical need--a sacrament, as eating is also, by which we enact and understand our oneness with the Creation, the conviviality of one body with all bodies. This is what we learn from the hunting and farming rituals of tribal cultures.
>
> As the connections have been broken by the fragmentation and isolation of work, they can be restored by restoring the wholeness of work. There is work that is isolating, harsh, destructive, specialized or trivialized into meaninglessness. And there is work that is restorative, convivial, dignified and dignifying, and pleasing. Good work is not just the maintenance of connections--as one is now said to work "for a living" or "to support a family"--but the *enactment* of connections. It *is* living, and a way of living; it is not support for a family in the sense of an exterior brace or prop, but is one of the forms and acts of love (Berry 1977, pp. 138-139).

Berry here reiterates in different literary form the ideas encountered concretely in the persons like Old Jack in his novels.

The first point to be emphasized is the relationship between eating, working, and loving. "Work," says Berry, "is the health of love. To last, love must enflesh itself in the materiality of the world--produce food, shelter, warmth or shade, surround itself with careful acts, well-made things" (p. 132). We have already seen some of the materiality of love in the meal Jack shares with the young couple. Berry contrasts eating that is "nourishing and joyful" with eating that is "consumptive." The latter

occurs when the connections between eating, working, and loving are broken:

> By regarding it as merely a consumer of food, we reduce the function of the body to that of a conduit which channels the nutrients of the earth from the supermarket to the sewer. Or we make it a little factory which transforms fertility [of the earth] into pollution--to the enormous profit of "agribusiness" and to the impoverishment of the earth (p. 136).

The imagery of the body as a conduit is designed to shock us by its simplistic crudeness.

Berry's complaint about the reduction of the body--or person--solely to a "consumer" parallels Rolston's criticism of the reduction of the natural world to "resources":

> Use of the word "resource" gradually changes until nothing can be comprehended outside such a relationship, no matter if the paramount emotion becomes appreciating these realms for what they are in themselves. One ponders the pupfish, the Supai and Redwall strata in Marble Gorge, or spends a lonesome weekend amidst the glacier-cut scenery in the Indian Peaks, wondering if a grandchild might ever share such feelings on Alaskan slopes, steadily stretched out of local concerns to the age-long flows of life over time. But these are aesthetic, epistemological, and metaphysical resource relationships. Logically, the claim has become trivialized, redefining as resource whatever one "takes in," whether food, scenery, or information about natural history (Rolston 1988, pp. 30-31).

The terms 'consumer' and 'resource' have an adaptability that makes them epistemologically and morally virulent, especially in combination. Just as a virus can invade healthy cells and replicate itself to the detriment of an organism, so when people begin to think of themselves and to act primarily as "consumers of resources" they become the conduits of Berry's imagery. The orgy of consumption leads to demands for more "efficient" production of goods to be consumed by a growing market of consumers. But efficiency is not measured by individual or public health, happiness, or even by the quality of "goods." In the United States our "standard of living" is measured by per capita consumption, whether what we consume is needed or not, fairly distributed or not, enjoyed or not, wasted or not, good for us or not. The result, as Berry says, is a people destroying themselves and their culture along with the natural environment.[6] For Berry, there is a sense in which work becomes less meaningful as it

distances itself from basics like eating. The crucial factor, however, is not the stereotypical cleavage between basics and frills. Berry is not advocating an austerity like Plato in the *Republic*, albeit one championing the *helot* farmer rather than the Spartan warrior. The crucial factor is the connectedness of life. "Careful acts" must be done in consideration of their purposes and their long-term effects; "well-made things" require time and skill and an anticipation of satisfaction in their use.

The second major point is that Berry calls the work of growing food, as well as eating it, a "sacrament" wherein "we enact and understand our oneness with the Creation." From a secular point of view shaped by a long tradition of Western European transcendent monotheism in which God/divinity/the sacred is decreed to be totally "Other" than the created world, the notion of a sacrament may seem silly or superstitious. Christianity has become primarily *creedal* (especially after the Protestant Reformation's emphasis on salvation by faith alone) with the focus on *belief*, a sort of yet-to-be-verified "propositional knowledge." However, many religions are--or were--primarily *ritualistic* in that special sorts of *enactings* bind the community together. Once one has excluded the sacred from the material world, the purpose of ritual becomes that of bridging the gap to the "Other world" rather than renewing an awareness of our vital relationships with this one. Berry clearly does not buy this sort of sacred/profane cleavage of mainstream Christianity, and it is not lost on him as a farmer that God still comes in material, sharable, edible form in the Christian ritual of the Eucharist. For Berry eating and working in this world are in themselves sacred (whatever he may think in private of a "next world"). Theology and theistic metaphysics are not essential to Berry's position *vis a vis* the intergenerational shared communal work of farming, and for a very good reason. Berry knows the divisiveness religious disputes can bring to small, rural communities where economic and social survival depend on people's ability and willingness to work together and to aid each

other. Berry's Christian heritage has given him a rich stock of poetic images, an historical awareness, and a sensitivity to human capabilities and limitations. But this is no more than any intelligent person--theist or nontheist--familiar with the Western European civilization can claim. In Berry's novels one is hard pressed to discover a theological position, much less a denominational one, in either the author or his characters who at most make an oblique reference to "the Old Marster."

As a poet, Berry is also aware that the Latin *sacramentum* is related to *sacer* (sacred) and refers to what binds or obliges one, such as an oath. Unless the Roman soldier was bound by his *sacramentum*/oath, he would not be a Roman soldier but a man of powerful fighting skills without the loyalty to prevent those skills from destroying the community. If one is not bound by anything, then there are no limits to whatever one may do; if one is not bound to anything, then one's life has no definition, direction, purpose, or meaning. The work of the farmer like that of the soldier must be sacramental so that he does not destroy his own land. The sacrament of the Eucharist properly enacted is, from the viewpoint of those within the tradition, a sharing of the spiritual source of life which brings salvation. The sacrament of eating properly enacted is a sharing of the material source of life which brings health, camaraderie, physical and emotional satisfaction. What Berry emphatically denies is that the material world is less spiritual for being material.

A third point is the relationship of work and leisure. Berry says that there is work which is drudgery and work which is restorative. Work which is drudgery produces an escapist attitude which carries over into leisure.

> A man who does meaningless work does not have his meaning at hand. He must go anxiously in search of it--and thus fail to find it. The farmer's Sunday afternoon of sitting at home in the shade of a tree has been replaced by the "long weekend" of a thousand miles. The difference is that the farmer was where he wanted to be, understood the value of being there, and therefore when he had no work to do could sit still. How much have we spent to obscure so simple and obvious a possibility? The point is that there is an indissoluble connection and dependence between work and leisure. Meaningless work must produce meaningless leisure. The freedom from work must produce not leisure, but an ever more frantic search for something to do (Berry 1970, p. 119).

Work gives meaning to one's personal existence and provides foundations for social relationships. One can take pride in working well because it requires skill on the part of the worker, even if the skills are primarily those of strength and endurance. One can take satisfaction in work itself because one labors to a purpose. Berry constantly emphasizes how land determines and supports the range of farming activities of producing and socializing and creating. The knowledge required to work the land gives the farmer respect for the land and self respect for his own skills. Good work creates respect for the work of others forging elementary bonds of community. The love of the land is reinforced by the network of human relationships, which, without the love of the land, could not exist in the way that they do. The relationships among people, land, and community arise mutually.

It may be objected that Berry's farmer is not a typical paradigm, and therefore not a good one. There is some truth in the atypicality objection since farmers constitute only 2% of the US population. The objection can be met in two ways. First, Berry can rightly claim that the farmer's problems are typical of the problems suffered by workers generally because of the industrialization and corporate control of modern life. Second, Berry can claim that working intensely and directly with the land is an atypical ***but much needed*** paradigm to remind us of the important things we are losing--we individually, and as a nation--in the increasing rush to "urban nomadism." Does that make the farmer a bad paradigm? Only if one's claim is that paradigms ought always to be typical. But the typical, whether in science or in ethics, is not always what should be perpetuated. Some paradigms are selected for their atypical clarity, or their atypical presentation of a problematic situation, or their atypical illumination of a newly discovered *terra incognita.*

Berry's farmer is typical as a paradigm in showing us how work increasingly subject to impersonal industrializing and corporate pressures can be made meaningful again...and the "price" the worker will have to "pay" to lead and control *his own* life

again. The corporate industrial pressures that drive agribusiness are ubiquitous forces in modern life: Consider the industrial model of education where "teachers" can never be mentors because they do not know their students and can only present them with information and challenge them with a few questions before the term ends and the students depart to take new courses from new instructors in new time slots. Consider the executive who is expected to move his family every few years and whose children grow up having emotional investment in friends and communities rewarded with an inevitable sundering of relationships. Is any real community possible unless people evolve stable relationships based on an intimate knowledge of each other, knowledge that can only come from years of attentiveness to the details of another's life? Consider the factory or office worker who is now being told that s/he can expect to change the types of jobs s/he does six or seven times before retirement. Would one want to change jobs if one loved what one was doing? If one's work is a matter of resentment or indifference, does the work done suffer? And, if workers increasingly change types of jobs where they must learn new "professions" or "techniques," is there a point at which they cannot even evolve stable working relationships but must be more and more directed by an increasingly Byzantine corporate policy?

Not all technical, industrialized, or corporate work need be meaningless or soul grinding, but it is harder to maintain a community when labor becomes so specialized that people understand very little of what others do. It also is harder to identify with the work if one feels one has little say in what is being done or how it is being done. When work changes, particularly if it requires removal from family and friends, one's personal integrity can be threatened. As a fundamental part of life, work must not become alienating or destructive of identity. Poet Robert Bly (here concerned primarily with male socialization) comments on the confusion of personal identity, and the breakdown

of family and community, that result from the breakdown of an holistic sense work:

> When a father, absent during the day, returns home at six, his children receive only his temperament, and not his teaching. If the father is working for a corporation, what is there to teach? He is reluctant to tell his son what is really going on. The fragmentation of decision making in corporate life, the massive effort that produces the corporate willingness to destroy the environment for the sake of profit, the prudence, even cowardice, that one learns in bureaucracy--who wants to teach that...?
>
> What the father brings home today is usually a touchy mood, springing from powerlessness and despair mingled with longstanding shame and the numbness peculiar to those who hate their jobs. Fathers in earlier times could often break through their own humanly inadequate temperaments by teaching rope-making, fishing, posthole digging, grain cutting, drumming, harness making, animal care, even singing and storytelling. That teaching sweetened the effect of temperament (Bly 1990, pp. 96-97).

One can point out corporations which are exceptions to Bly's diatribe. One can also point out useful work that can still be done with family such as gardening and home repair. Bly's criticisms are nonetheless too uncomfortably familiar to be dismissed, and his central point still stands: Seeing the useful work of parents provides a model which the child can admire and emulate. The worker alienated from work is also alienated from a full socialization into his community. His children grow up to see social roles as odious burdens to be avoided as much as possible. Parents who occupy these roles are too easily seen alternatively as objects of pity, rage, and contempt. The land which the farmer grows to love in Berry's marriage analogy constrains the farmer's action but also provides him with a meaningful existence. Modern corporate life, if it sees any order of Creation at all, sees it mainly in terms of raw materials to be converted into commodities in an ever-expanding acquisitiveness.

Berry's farmer is an atypical paradigm in the immediacy of his reciprocal relationship with the land: he takes from the land, but he must do so in a way that safeguards the land's fertility so that the relationship can continue. He may use the land, but he may not use it up. Sara Ebenreck calls this a "partnership farmland ethic," one "which recognizes that the relationship is a complex, two-way, ongoing process, one in which both parties are recognized as having intrinsic, if differing values, and in

which both parties give and take from each other" (Ebenreck 1983, p. 40). Given the need for his constant care of the soil and his awareness that the soil is not itself inert, for farming to be a meaningful way of life it is almost a necessity that the farmer grant some sort of direct moral consideration to the land. Though more sedentary, the farmer is in this respect like many Native American hunting and gathering tribes often held up as models of environmental responsibility. The Lakotah whose survival depended on the buffalo could not afford to treat the animal casually or hunt it to extinction. Like the farmer who cannot survive without attending to the soil's "life of its own," the Lakotah had to know the buffalo intimately. Intimate knowledge of the vitality of soil or animal militates against easy classification of the farmer's or Lakotah's concern merely as prudential, not moral. There may be a strong element of prudential concern--Is that not so even in our ongoing human relationships which we praise as most "selfless" and devoted?--but the soil or animal cannot be so thoroughly transmogrified since one must still work *with* it.[8]

Neither the immediacy nor the ongoing nature of the farmer's relationship with the land is typical of most work today. The oil industry (and indirectly those of us who depend on it), for instance, takes without giving back. So far as work goes, there is little that can be characterized as a partnership between the worker and the land. When one oil field plays out, the drillers move on to take more elsewhere. The teaching industry depends on the paper industry, but--a smattering of biologists, environmentalists, and other fringe elements aside--few give a second thought to where the paper comes from. Even food comes neatly packaged in ways that isolate us from the sources of our lives and livelihoods. That is precisely why an atypical paradigm like Berry's farmer is necessary: to show us in an imaginatively accessible way the connection between land and meaningful work.[9]

SUSTAINABILITY

A Moral Argument

If one is dedicated to a way of life, one will want it to be appreciated and taken up by others so that it continues beyond one's own life or generation. That requires some minimal recognition of the negative limiting environmental factors of what can be sustained. But as we have seen in the example of Old Jack, the environment also positively shapes a way of life by being an other, as is a spouse, with which one works out one's own identity. One imagines that Old Jack might find environmental talk about bioregions and ecosystems a little highfalutin, but he certainly knew the consequences of his long term interactions with the land in the gestalt of his farm, and he loved the land enough to help those worthy of it to own it.

The idea of a sustainable way of life is common in arguments for obligations to future generations. Principles of fairness or rights require constraints: certain practices are morally wrong because they use more than one's fair share of resources or infringe rights of posterity. But there are also positive reasons for constraining one's activities: love of land, the satisfaction of meaningful work, the desire to provide for the well being of one's progeny or community. One wants something of what one *is*, as expressed in a way of life, to continue, not for purely selfish, egoistic reasons, but because it is a giving of self to others. One hopes for a transfer from oneself to another of a sense of devotion to what one loves, admires, or respects. There is a human need to share these things, there is joy or solace in the sharing and the terrible loneliness of isolation when one cannot. Psychologist John Kotre refers to this process as "generativity" and sees its technological and cultural manifestations as deeply engrained in the human psyche as the biological and parental functions of begetting and nurturing children (Kotre, 1984). Arguments for environmental preservation based on obligations to future generations have generally ignored these psychological and cultural factors in

favor of discussions of rights or high-level questions of justice.[10] Ways of life pluralism shifts the emphasis on questions regarding future generations in two ways. First, the dedication to a way of life need not depend on questions of whether not-yet-existing individuals can have rights (though a land ethic could be enhanced in this way). Second, the locus of value does not exclude nonsentient nature since it is part of a way of life.

To see what these differences in emphasis mean in a concrete setting, we can return to Old Jack's story. After Jack's death, his nephew and lawyer Wheeler Catlett is faced with an unanticipated problem: Jack's only child, Clara, who has married banker Glad Pettit, returns from the city to claim her inheritance. On the advice of her husband she puts the farm up for auction. Although this is contrary to Jack's dying wish, Clara is not swayed by something so insubstantial as the wishes of a father she never really knew. All Wheeler has is a note written by an old man whose memory was fading:

> Wheeler see the/ boy has his place/ 200 $ an acre be/ about right she/ ought to not/ complain Wheeler/ see to it
>
> The slow, crooked legend of that page fell upon Wheeler's conscience with a palpable gravity, as if the old man had reached out from beyond the grave and laid a hand on him. The letter, of course, was of no legal worth whatsoever. In the eyes of a court it would answer no pertinent question. Who was "the boy"? What was "his place"? Who was "Wheeler"? Who, for that matter, wrote the letter? But Wheeler, had he been the one to be held, would have been held tighter by that letter, that outcry, than by the will itself (Berry 1985, p. 48).

Wheeler's dilemma is caused by the conflict between what is technically legal and what he sees as moral. It is not clear, however, that, if the case were put to an ethicist rather than a judge, Wheeler's position would be any stronger.

It is not obvious that any moral injustice is being done. No one has intentionally deceived anyone; no promises were broken. Clara is Jack's closest living relative, and it is a common and defensible assumption that some moral duties apply more strongly to family. Jack never told the young couple, Elton and Mary Penn, that they would get the farm. Even Wheeler's conveyance of Jack's offer to sell the farm at half its market

value occurs after Jack's death, and Wheeler does so simply assuming Clara would approve without consulting her. Isn't she, as her banker husband insists is a matter of "principle," entitled to the "fair market value" of her property? As for Jack's wishes, who knows what might influence a lonely old man growing increasingly senile? Does Jack's scrawled note really present a case of informed consent in the transfer of the property? If one considers issues of utility, there are other farmers besides the Penns who would be happy to farm the land even though they purchase it from a couple who regard it only as a commodity. Jack, no longer being sentient, no longer has direct moral consideration. Can Wheeler's preferences offset those of Clara and Glad Pettit? The moral case easily becomes a free-for-all.

What makes the case a free-for-all is the lack of detail that can only be supplied by considering the ethical centrality of Jack's way of life. Wheeler makes a last plea on behalf of Jack: "Clara, I don't know anybody more worthy to walk in your daddy's tracks than Elton Penn. And your daddy loved him." Her response is devastating: "My father's loves are not mine" (p. 51). Clara is Jack's child only biologically, never emotionally or spiritually. She is not hardhearted, spiteful, or intentionally cold. Because of Jack's estrangement from his wife, Clara grew up in the house, isolated from the farm and her father (perhaps sympathizing with her mother's anger and resentment--Berry does not indulge us with psychoanalysis). In Kotre's terms, Jack's generativity with Clara was purely biological. If she has propositional knowledge of her daddy's "tracks" she certainly never experienced them in terms of knowledge how or knowledge by acquaintance, the kinds of knowledge that bind us most directly to others and to our environment. Her father never taught her his meaningful work, and this is tragic for both of them. Clara's only inheritance from her father is money. Money--historical and numismatic interests aside--has value only as a convenient medium of exchange; its value must be measured by converting it into something useful, or by the psychological

feelings of "freedom" and "security" based on the assumption that it can be so converted, one more commodity among the goods for exchange. Like the terms 'resource' and 'consumer', 'money' and 'goods' and 'commodity' have an alluring verbal versatility because of their spiritual and emotional emptiness. The allure easily becomes a moral siren song. Unless money's use is subordinated to a coherent value system, one winds up with anxiety driven consumerism as an attempt to establish value on the basis of consumption rather than consuming for meaningful ends.

Personally, Clara lacks a certain gratitude to her father. Socially, she lacks a certain magnanimity to Wheeler and the Penns. The key phrase is 'a certain'. Clara is not an ungracious person nor does she seem the sort to scorn charity. But how could she know gratitude to her father when she never knew her father's work and hence did not know what the man's life meant to him and to his friends? Lacking that understanding, she must treat Wheeler politely and distantly as a legal counsellor, not as a cousin who loved and protected her father. To her, the Penns are simply renters. In Clara's life these people function in narrow legal roles, not the broader social roles of a community and certainly not the roles of friends whom her father loved. For Clara, once the contract is completed these people cease to exist.

Wheeler understands Jack's way of life, and his understanding morally entitles Wheeler to speak for Jack. As a lawyer, Wheeler is in a position to sell his services as a commodity for their "fair market value" thereby becoming a legal counterpart of banker Glad Pettit. Unlike Glad, Wheeler recognizes both *that* there is an "order of Creation" and *where* he is in that order:

> ...Wheeler's fidelity has been given to the human homesteads and neighborhoods and the known ways that preserve them. Through dark time and bad history he has been keeper of the names that bear hope of light to human clearings, and an orderly handing down. He is a preserver and defender of the dead, the more so, the more passionately so, as his acquaintance among the dead has increased, and as he has better understood the dangers to their living heirs. How, as a man of law, could he have been otherwise or less? How, thinking of his own children and

> grandchildren, could he not insist on an orderly passage of these frail human parcels through time (1985, p. 128).

Given the coherence of Jack's and Wheeler's way of life (and Berry's fondness for synechdoche), the "frail human parcels" wanting an "orderly passage...through time" are manifold. Most obviously, they are the "homesteads and neighborhoods"--words carefully chosen for their roots of 'home' and 'neighbor'--the places where one lives and one works out (literally and figuratively) one's identity as a self and one's identity with others. The issue is whether Jack's land will remain a "homestead" or become a "property" for Clara and Glad Petit to retain or exchange on a commodity market. The frail human parcels are also the "known ways" which preserve the homesteads and neighborhoods, the forms of working and playing and socializing, the attitudes or dispositions with which they are enacted (and which, Aristotle would point out, they foster), and the emotional ties they engender. These "known ways" have made Wheeler, adapting his non-farming profession to the needs and ways of his rural community, a defender of the dead rather than a settler of estates. Jack doesn't have to reach out to Wheeler from beyond the grave because Jack's hand was on Wheeler from his boyhood. The dead as well are frail and vulnerable, for their identity and impact on the world are not limited to a consciousness which ceases at death. They live on in their biological, psychological, cultural, and spiritual heirs, even in later generations who may know nothing of the dead individual's personal history yet share the same sort of loves and commitments in a way of life. The living heirs too are frail (if awkwardly described as parcels). Those like Wheeler who are acquainted and allied with the dead may fail to keep faith with them. Those like Clara who are estranged from the dead lack a personal tradition with--or against--which they may define themselves with passion. Tolerance is not the equal valuing of any and all ways of life with their often conflicting value commitments and practices; that would lead only to a meaningless quietism in which whatever one did would make no difference to oneself, all choices being equally acceptable. Rather, tolerance is the willingness to understand why others

may be passionately committed to ways of life different from one's own, to re-examine and possibly modify one's own way of life in virtue of these differences, and to allow others, where vital interests are not irreconcilably at risk, to pursue goals in conflict with the goals with which one passionately identifies. A Clara enraged at her father for who he was and what he had done would be preferable to the mousy creature comfortably kept by Glad Pettit. At least then she would have the possibility of finding her own positive identity.

In the end Jack's farm is put up for auction. His spiritual heirs Elton and Mary Penn are ready to drop out of the bidding once the price exceeds what they think they can prudently pay based on what they can earn from the land. At this point Wheeler intervenes promising the Penns financial assistance. They decide to take the risk and they win the bidding war. The Penns will have to work harder, make more sacrifices, and be subject to more financial strain than they had anticipated. But it will be worth it because they will be doing meaningful work for the land and the way of life they love. Wheeler is also taking a risk, not so much with the money, but with the possibility of soured friendships if it eventually turns out that Elton and Mary Penn feel humiliated because they cannot repay him. The episode is brought to an appropriate close because Wheeler and the Penns have kept faith with Old Jack in the orderly passage of the frail parcel of a homestead from his good keeping into that of another, and because in preserving the known ways of the community Elton and Mary Penn will re-enact the sacramental work which defined Jack's way of life.

Biological and Cultural Carrying Capacity

Ecologist Garrett Hardin draws a distinction between an ecosystem's *biological carrying capacity* to sustain a limited number of individuals (of any given species) and its *cultural carrying capacity* to sustain a fixed number of humans living a particular

lifestyle.[11] Even from a narrow value perspective of nature-as-resources, the number of humans that the planet or a particular bioregion can sustain is at minimum a function of the rate of consumption, the amount of consumption, the types of resources consumed, and the ability of the ecosystem to renew them. Given that there are myriads of possible ways of life, there is no formula for sustainability. At some point, however, there is an inverse relationship between the number of human beings and the resources they can continue to use. At current rates of growth it is estimated that the present world population of 5.2 billion people will reach 8.5 billion by 2025. At the same time arable land will decrease.

> Soil erosion, if unchecked, may result in a 20 percent loss in global food production potential by the end of the century. Deforestation and devegetation create additional damage or turn productive rangelands into deserts. Poor irrigation practices create salinity and waterlogging problems that lower crop yields. Already, an estimated 580 million poor people live on marginal or fragile lands, damaging them further in their struggle to feed themselves.
>
> Cropland area per person has been falling steadily since mid-century. The current world average of 0.69 acre per capita is expected to decline to 0.42 acre by the year 2025, if current population trends continue. Such a decline will make it very difficult to avoid human and environmental disaster (World Resources Institute 1992, p. 13).

The statistics portray the problem chiefly in terms of biological carrying capacity. Berry's distinctions between consumptive and sacramental eating, and between drudgery and sacramental work, illuminate the problem in terms of cultural carrying capacity.

People who work as an act of desperation to keep a family alive do not, generally speaking, engage in the kind of work that Berry prizes as "restorative, convivial, dignified and dignifying." The poverty stricken are forced to the work they do by external circumstances rather than being bound to their work by their love or sense of obligation to it. There is all the difference in the world between the attitude of the Roman soldier who voluntarily takes the *sacramentum* out of personal loyalty and the slave chained in the galley, and there is all the difference in the kinds of effort each puts

forth...otherwise the slave would not need to be chained. Like the slave, the desperately poor are denied what Berry sees as "two human possibilities of the highest order": without the dignity and satisfaction of meaningful work, what they want cannot become the same as what they have, and their knowledge cannot cause respect for what they know. If, in Berry's terms, work ceases to be "one of the forms and acts of love" and becomes "an exterior brace or prop" there is no reason to do good work, to care for tools or land. Or, if the sharecropper does happen to love the land, s/he is forced to betray that love in order to survive, as parents were forced by economic necessity to send their children off to the sweatshops of the industrial revolution. The bored factory worker who sabotages the production line is the industrial counterpart of the desperately poor sharecropper exhausting his--or someone else's--land. The difference is that in wealthy nations the factory worker has more alternatives and opportunities, and hence less excuse.

Soil erosion, deforestation, devegetation, and salinization are not problems only for the Third World poor living on marginal land. They have also become problems for the (comparatively wealthy) American heartland. In addition, modern agribusiness practices have led to pollution of groundwater through extensive use of chemical fertilizers. The buying up of local seed companies by multi-national corporations has diminished genetic diversity and accelerated a tendency towards monocultures as non-fertile hybrids are developed for specific use with company brands of herbicides and pesticides. The reduction of genetic diversity increases the likelihood that a single disease strain could decimate a significant portion of a crop. Dependence on chemical fertilizers requires more mechanization, and larger and more expensive equipment. Heavier tractors cause soil compaction, larger plows are less adaptable to the contours of the land thereby increasing soil erosion. Fields are laid out for "efficient" use of farm machinery, not to best preserve arable land. Woods are cut, hedgerows are plowed

under, and swampy areas are drained. Natural windbreaks and wildlife habitat are destroyed and the water table is lowered. The once relatively self-sufficient farmer must incur massive debts to pay for the machinery, and as farms grow larger and larger to compete, the rural population shrinks. The larger the farm, the less attention the farmer can pay to his land and the less care he can give it (Berry 1977, Jackson 1980).

Disturbing as well is the prospect of a few multi-national companies controlling food production in the way that a handful of oil companies now monopolize energy in the United States, whether through genetically tailored seeds and fertilizers, or through outright ownership of the land reducing the farmer to an employee who must follow company regulations. (The latter scenario is less likely as farmland is already being stressed for maximum short term economic gain, and most corporations are not eager to waste their own investment capital on depreciating land assets if someone else's capital--in this case the farmer's--can be used.) Multi-national corporations, it is true, can be regulated within a nation state, but their enormous economic power makes their ability to lobby and fund political campaigns all out of proportion to individuals or groups of individuals. There is also an insidious tendency of those held economic captive by their jobs to embrace corporate interests diametrically opposed to their own basic values, whether through fear or naivete. Further, corporate boards have profit as their overriding interest rather than the value commitments or interests--even vital interests--of any particular nation state.

Underlying this complex web of problems are three basic assumptions which Berry calls "tenets of industrial optimism":

> When people speak with confidence of the longevity of diminishing agricultural resources--as when they speak of their good intentions about nuclear power--they are probably not just being gullible or thoughtless; they are likely to be speaking from belief in several tenets of industrial optimism: that life is long, but time and work are short; that every problem will be solved by a "technological breakthrough" before it enlarges to catastrophe; that *any* problem can be solved in a hurry by large applications of urgent emotion, information, and money. It is regrettable that these

> assumptions should risk correction by disaster when they could be cheaply and safely overturned by the study of any agriculture that has proved durable (Berry 1983b, p. 69).

The study of durable agriculture, claims Berry, reveals the small family farm as its basis. "[A]ny public program to preserve land or produce food is hopeless if it does not tend to right the balance between numbers of people and acres of land, and to encourage long-term, stable connections between families and small farms." This would open up six "possibilities" for broad scale changes that make agriculture sustainable:

> 1. "[M]ost important would be the lengthening of memory. Previous mistakes, failures, and successes would be remembered. The land would not have to pay the cost of a trial-and-error education of each new owner.... [The farm's] present state of health could be measured against its own past--something exceedingly difficult to do *outside* of living memory."
> 2. "[T]he land would not be overworked to pay for itself at full value with every new owner."
> 3. "[H]aving some confidence in family continuity in place" would motivate "good care for the land not for the sake of something so abstract as 'the future' or 'posterity,' but out of particular love for living children and grandchildren."
> 4. "[T]he human establishment on the land would grow more permanent by the practice of better carpentry and masonry. People who remembered long and well would see the folly of rebuilding their barns every generation or two...."
> 5. "[T]he development of the concept of *enough*. Only long memory can answer, for a given farm or locality, How much land is enough? How much work is enough? How much livestock and crop production is enough? How much power is enough?"
> 6. "[L]ocal culture. Who could say what that would be? As members of a society based on the exploitation of its own temporariness, we probably should not venture a guess. But we can perhaps speak with a little competence of how it would begin. It would not be imported from critically approved cultures elsewhere. It would not come from watching certified classics on television. It would begin in work and love. People at work in communities three generations old would know that their bodies renewed, time and again, the movements of other bodies, living and dead, known and loved, remembered and loved, in the same shops, houses, and fields" (Berry 1983b, pp.78-79).

The "possibilities" show us the linkage between culture and agriculture, between love of place and love of life, between the living, the dead, and those yet to come. In Berry's sacramental view of work, the shops, houses, and fields are never mere "resources." They are the sacred physical places which define the work to be done, the ritual movements which each generation of bodies renews. Had Clara loved her father

deeply, the most she could retain of Old Jack would be private memories, for his ways are not hers. But every time Elton Penn plows a furrow, he *enacts* the movements of Old Jack, doing it with the same care, the same love of the soil, the same purpose, the same satisfaction. Being part of a community that shares these loves across generations, Elton Penn's plowing is a shared public act. So long as his way of life continues, Old Jack will live on in actions of the community, even when he has passed out of its living memory.

Though there are compelling reasons for altering agribusiness practices, and although Berry provides an intelligent (and empirically tested) alternative, entrenched thinking and vested interests are still likely to caricature Berry's position as an impractical attempt to turn back the clock or a selfish attempt to safeguard his way of life at the socially borne costs of higher food prices and subsidizing of inefficient farming methods. Three points need to be made in Berry's defense. First, agribusiness problems are threshold problems--they do not depend on single actions of individual persons; they are the results of cumulative and collective actions by many people over time, and of governmental policies which have encouraged industrial agriculture, and of propaganda which molds "commodity thinking." The cumulative effects are often seen as overwhelming or inevitable, but they are not so if we take cumulative and collective action. We do not *have* to continue thinking or acting destructively out of any economico-metaphysical necessity. Second, both the biological carrying capacity and the cultural carrying capacity of the land are at risk because there is a linkage between lifestyle and the fecundity of the land. Ecology teaches us, says Garrett Hardin, that "*[w]e can never do merely one thing*" (Hardin 1985, p. 58). It works both ways. Changes in lifestyle have the potential to solve or alleviate--as well as to cause or exacerbate--multiple problems simultaneously. Third, Berry's criticisms of agribusiness and his paradigm solution are consistent with basic American cultural values such as hard work, individual dignity, political equality, and democratic decision

making. His concept of community is based on self-reliant individuals who voluntarily aid each other. Given the need to change agricultural practices to make food growing sustainable, the relationship between a meaningful way of life and environmental responsibility, the fact that Berry's views are consistent with longstanding values of our culture, plus Berry's first hand knowledge of farming and personal willingness to live by his own recommendations, there is no obvious reason to reject--and a great deal to recommend--his position.

It might still be objected that Berry violates utility or fairness because higher food prices will have to be paid by the many to support the way of life of a minority. The objection that small farms are inefficient has been nicely answered by Mark Sagoff in discussing governmental resource policy:

> [E]conomists have too often proposed that society pursue efficiency in the allocation of resources rather than the ethical and cultural goals stated in public law.... [A] more efficient allocation of resources...is no better than a less efficient one; efficiency [not subordinated to a value system] has no normative or ethical worth (Sagoff 1988, p. 217).

Social goals, says Sagoff, ought to be set by public, democratic debate and decision. The role of the economist should be confined to implementing publicly chosen goals efficiently rather than surreptitiously usurping democratic processes by imposing his disciplinarily and inescapably value-laden agenda in the name of efficiency.

One might accept Berry's proposal to re-establish the small farm simply for lack of a better way to make agricultural production sustainable, because it is the most "efficient" way to guarantee long-term a food supply which the public values. One might accept it because a multiplicity of relatively self-sufficient farmers is a safeguard against corporate monopolizing of the food supply. One might also consider it out of multiple shared values with Berry, whether one shares his way of life and love of soil directly, or whether one sees it as an admirable paradigm of an integrated way of life which develops praiseworthy virtues. The greater wisdom might dictate entertaining Berry's suggestions for all these reasons.

Further Constraints

Any ethical system incorporating ways of life will need constraints to set limits on what can be required by a way of life. Intellectually, unless one is to embrace what Stone calls "rank relativism," one needs to be able to explain and defend one's way of life to those outside it; something more is required than a here-it-is, take-it-or-leave-it response. Morally, as understood within the liberal Western tradition, respect for persons and for the freedom of the individual preclude certain sanctions against those who do not share one's way of life. The pain of torture and the humiliation of ostracism are unjustifiable forms of physical and psychological cruelty. An appreciation of the contingent and fallible nature of human knowledge also counsels the constant monitoring of one's own views and tolerance of the views of others. While there is no definitive and detailed characterization of constraints to be placed on a way of life, Hampshire explicitly recognizes three theoretical forms they take: (1) the principle of utility, (2) justice as fairness, and (3) a convergent set of virtues. As additional factors he explicitly acknowledges (4) the historical context, and, in an updated explanation of Spinoza, he implicitly acknowledges (5) the modern natural and social sciences as important forms of knowledge available to us.

Hampshire finds nothing wrong with high level principles used as guidelines and constraints. What he thinks we need to avoid is the temptation to view them as axioms--or some condensed form of jointly necessary and sufficient moral conditions--from which all requisite moral principles can be deduced for a definitive decision of every moral issue. In place of the axiomatic deductive view of utility and justice, Hampshire advocates a *balancing* view:

> Certainly one can reasonably compare family customs...from the standpoint of justice as fairness, and therefore from a moral standpoint. It might be concluded, for example, that a certain practice, with its injunctions and prohibitions, involved discrimination against women as such and was unfair and unjust, while a comparable practice in another society respected the rights of women, rights which in the name of fairness ought to be

> respected everywhere. This also is a legitimate appeal to a general principle, and the same considerations apply as in the appeal to a general principle of utility. The evil of the unfairness must be balanced against a possible counterbalancing consideration: that the practice, taken as a whole, makes a contribution to the way of life, and is an essential element in it, and the comparative value of the way of life from a moral point of view must enter the balance (Hampshire 1983, p. 6).

Any balancing view itself will be further qualified by the historical development of the interplay between the personal perspective of a way of life and the general principles:

> Our descendants will criticize, from the standpoint of justice and utility, habits and institutions which to us seem scarcely alterable features of human nature as we know it. In reality many of them are just essential features of particular ways of life (1983, p. 7).

Hampshire's point is that there is no formula to tell us when a certain practice should be defended or eliminated; there is an act of human judgment involved. Justice and utility can only be given empirically relevant definition through some interpretive act relying on some particular perspective however broad one tries to make it.[12] A way of life can be judged reflectively by comparing it with other ways of life and employing principles like justice and utility. There is no Archangelic view, as Hare would have it (see the introduction to Chapter 1). Instead there is a dynamic tension, like that in Heraclitus' image of the bow, between the personal perspective of a way of life and the general principles of justice and utility which transcend that way of life, but are never themselves sufficient to generate a full and meaningful moral perspective. Morality, contra Kant, can never be completely freed from anthropology, but neither is it merely anthropology. Contra utilitarianism, making all preferences/pleasures/goods commensurable destroys the very basis for preference, nor is there any nonarbitrary way of ordering preferences into a hierarchy since the hierarchy must rest on preferences of preferences or appeal to nonutilitarian standards.

Systems of virtue ethics must also allow for a range of interpretation and for a balancing where virtues conflict. Aristotle was indeed ethnocentric in assuming that the *polis* was the only proper living arrangement for developing and interpreting the virtues

that constitute human *arete*. Nevertheless, says Hampshire, there is a *convergence* of virtues that are inter-cultural:

> [H]istorically conditioned moralities do converge upon a common core and are not so diverse as the relativists claim. Courage, justice, friendship, the power of thought and the exercise of intelligence, self-control, are dispositions that in the abstract ideal are the essential Aristotelian virtues, although the concrete forms that they take greatly vary in the difference socially conditioned moralities. The virtues of splendid aristocratic warriors are not the same as the virtues of a Christian monk; but they are not merely different. Each of the two ways of life demands courage, fairness or justice, loyalty, love and friendship, intelligence and skill, and some self-control (1983, p. 37).

Given the convergence of virtues, it is possible to understand, tolerate, and even admire other ways of life that are not one's own by seeing shared concerns and ideals though institutions and practices may vary widely. The recognition of the historical contingency of one's own way of life allows one to see how others' ways of life may be equally appropriate or in some respects superior to one's own, especially in cases where circumstances differ radically. Considering the diversity of factors and different types of value required in any full way of life, the kind of coherence a person of integrity achieves is less a matter of logical consistency than of balance and proportion among basic commitments, some of which will inevitably conflict with each other. Struggling to achieve internal harmony or equilibrium prepares one to balance factors in a way of life with high level constraints like justice and utility (Nagel 1979, pp. 128-141). While justice and utility may be thought of as arising from an abstract impersonal perspective, *internally* most ways of life probably generate something like specific forms of justice and utility because appeal to some sort of fairness or happiness is basic to ensuring social cooperation. Few people would admit to themselves--much less to others--that their ways of life were grossly unfair or increased the misery of the general population.

Since Berry's rural communitarianism is likely to arouse suspicions of clannishness and narrow-mindedness among cosmopolitan urbanites (who themselves are prone to mistake indifference for tolerance and rootlessness for cosmopolitanism), two recurrent themes in Berry deserve further mention. First, Berry's understanding of

sacramental ritual in work and eating is epistemologically grounded and judged in the actual words and deeds of the community. Its sanction comes from a community of self-reliant and cooperative equals, not from the authority of church or state, nor from metaphysical dogma whether theological or secular. Sacramental work can be understood and evaluated empirically both by those who share Berry's way of life and those outside it. Berry's aspiration of "local culture" is necessary to preserve and explain a way of life where the "culture" has a literal and figurative grounding. It is also necessary to understand the "certified classics" by giving one an epistemological and moral standpoint--which one recognizes as one's own standpoint--from which to "read into" and evaluate the "great books." Berry would not deny that "local culture" can become chauvinistic, ideological, and propagandistic. But this is true of any "culture." The fact that the chauvinist is not your neighbor makes the chauvinism no more justifiable. Local culture begins, says Berry, in one's own work and love. If the "certified classics" have nothing to do with one's own work and love--whether challenging it or supporting it, illuminating it or offering alternatives--they cannot achieve the liberating effect of the liberal arts.

Second, the kind of coherence or integrity or equilibrium Hampshire sees in a way of life is expressed by Berry in terms of 'harmony' and 'health'. Harmony and health are only achieved when one fits one's way of life into the "order of Creation" which Berry describes ecologically. Berry's strength as a paradigm of a sustainable way of life is the care with which he integrates culture and ecology. Since the holism of a land ethic has been suspect by those who maintain the interest principle (e.g., Tom Regan who charges the holist with of "environmental fascism"), and since there are totalitarian forms of harmony--one thinks of Plato's organic view of the state, or the drab paternalism of More's *Utopia*--Berry deserves a defense by example. He speaks of the repetitions of patterns in lives through generations as "a kind of community dance. And such a dance is perhaps the best way we have to describe harmony" (1983b, p. 79).

Death is accepted in this intergenerational dance as part of the natural order. The heartache of loss is no less (perhaps it is more considering the impersonal distance between those who do not share a way of life) but the grief is shared and purposeful, and the dead remain part of the community in its thoughts and actions. The parallel between an individual's life and the cycle of the seasons has been exploited by poets for millennia. Individuals must die, but nature continues and so does Berry's community. This is the kind of solace appropriate to our biological limits in the order of Creation.

In modern life there is a parallel between the treatment of waste and the treatment of a corpse: both are unpleasant things which are technologically removed from life in a denial of natural cycles of growth and decay. They simply disappear from our daily activities. If morality is to be ecological, Berry claims, it requires an awareness and acceptance of organic decay as part of natural cycles:

> [The flush toilet's] technological purification of the body requires the pollution of the rivers and the starvation of the fields. It makes the alleged offensiveness [attributed by Berry to the "old 'religious' division of body and soul"] of the body truly and inescapably offensive and blinds an entire society to the knowledge that these "offensive wastes" are readily purified in the topsoil--that, indeed, from an ecological point of view, these are not wastes and are not offensive...(Berry 1977, pp. 136-137).

People who see the necessity of organic decay do not have to live as "conduits" channeling nutrients from the supermarket to the sewer. People for whom the dead remain part of the community do not have to live in terror of death or be offended by a corpse. Understanding where one is in the order of Creation allows one to be culturally and ecologically responsible, and, not detesting life for the death and decay that are part of life, to make one's peace.

CONCLUSION

The Problem of "Seeing"

From the beginning I have maintained that the fundamental problem for a land ethic is "seeing," of going through a paradigm shift in which nonsentient nature has direct moral standing instead of being perceived merely as resources which are only valued instrumentally by sentient beings. Though there is no neutral moral ground from which a staunch adherent of the interest principle can be argued out of his position, sustainable ways of life pluralism softens the supposed moral disparity between beings with interests and nonsentient nature in two ways: (1) it does not pit nature against culture in its primary ontology of gestalts, and (2) it advocates a balancing view which recognizes that it is not irrational to hold multiple, incommensurable values which often will be in conflict.

The primary ontology of gestalts is exemplified in Old Jack's farm without which he would have no identity as a farmer, just as in Berry's marriage analogy one would have no identity as a spouse without a comprehensive commitment to an "Other" even through periods of extreme adversity. The farm gestalt does not set off the work of the farmer against the well-being of the land. Quite the opposite, the farmer must understand and respect his land. Although sustainable ways of life pluralism focuses on long-term use of the land, the use is not based solely on an instrumental valuing of the land. The farmer needs to use his land but needs to love it to make farming a way of life (rather than an "external prop" to make a living). The prudential and moral reasons for care of the land coalesce so thoroughly in ways of life that one may suspect that separating them *at this level* is drawing a false dichotomy. The preservation of wilderness has occupied much attention of land ethic proponents from Leopold on, and has become popular as a *de facto* litmus test for a land ethic by deliberately invoking the prudential/moral distinction.[13] There are cases in which drawing this distinction is

appropriate, but it has had a subtle influence on much land ethic argumentation: While attacking the fact/value distinction as a false dichotomy has become common among defenders of a land ethic, there is a danger of tacitly accepting a new false dichotomy in a rigid prudential/moral distinction. For its part, sustainable ways of life need not preclude the valuing of pristine nature even in (supposedly) extremely "useless" forms. Berry himself says:

> The reason to preserve wilderness is because we need it.... We need to go now and again into places where our work is disallowed, where our hopes and plans have no standing. We need to come into the unqualified and mysterious formality of Creation. And I would agree with Edward Abbey that we need as well some tracts of what he calls "absolute wilderness," which "through general agreement none of us enters at all" (Berry 1987, p. 146).

The cosmic humility and the awe of nature that Berry invokes as a "need," is likely to be treated as a frill or foolish sentimentality by those who have not come to understand the cooperative encounter with nature in the broad and prolonged fashion required by a way of life. The meaningful work that Berry advocates helps to develop virtues of patience, self discipline, and dedication to something beyond one's immediate and shallow gratification. This prepares one morally to grant consideration to that which cannot be bent to one's own purposes, whether it be in the form of a sentient individual or nonsentient nature.

Also inherent in Berry's marriage analogy is the balancing view of ethics, for spouses must willingly subject themselves to an intense and prolonged mutual molding process in which each must never totally relinquish personal identity nor totally absorb the other into oneself (as in the "totalizing" and "colonizing" charges of Cheney's ecofeminism). A marriage or a land ethic will work only if the moral agents involved recognize that incommensurable "goods" make up the good life, that these are often in conflict, and that conflict must be resolved in a way that preserves both oneself and the Other. Although conflicts can often be resolved through mutual agreement on some kind of value hierarchy, there are times when the hierarchy does not reflect the

subtleties of the moral situation or the diversity of deeply held moral commitments. Then there is need for compromise which preserves the integrity of the moral agents.

In the final chapter we will see how sustainable ways of life can be combined with Christopher Stone's idea of ethics comprising different moral planes, and how unresolved inter-planar conflict can be handled by Martin Benjamin's notion of integrity preserving compromise.

CHAPTER 5:
MORAL PRIMACY AND A LAND ETHIC

INTRODUCTION

Problems with Planes

Christopher Stone proposes his system of moral planes as a comprehensive pluralistic approach to the many types of entities--sentient and nonsentient, individualistic and holistic--to which we can have moral commitments. As such it can accommodate the varied ontology required by a land ethic while not ignoring the concerns of ethical humanists and animal extensionists. Two major criticisms of Stone's approach, however, are that (1) he presupposes that entities in each plane deserve direct moral standing, and (2) pluralists in general have no decision procedure to resolve ethical conflict. Although ways of life could be subsumed under Stone's category of "membership entities" in planar mapping, sustainable ways of life pluralism would invert this process and give methodological and moral primacy to the moral agent's own sustainable way of life. In so doing, the above two criticisms would be answered to the extent that any moral pluralist can answer them.

The first criticism is addressed by the variety of gestalts and moral intuitions that comprise the ground level of a way of life. Valuing a varied ontology allows one to use Stone's planar maps to articulate and make perspicuous the sorts of relations humans can have with each other and with nonhuman entities whether individual or holistic. The mapping can be used to critique, qualify, modify, and to extend moral intuitions.

The second criticism may be met in part by the legitimate pluralist counter-charges that moral monists (1) ignore, distort, and oversimplify the subtleties of ethical situations for the sake of theory, and (2) appeal to the impossibility that human knowledge could ever approach the unchanging omniscience required to make monism

workable even in principle, much less in practice.[1] These charges by themselves, however, are likely to produce a pyrrhic victory for the pluralist. A monist could admit the charges and still reasonably argue that the general framework and practicality of, say, preference utilitarianism make it far superior to the chaos or quietism engendered when pluralists offer us no way to decide an issue. To avoid abusing the philosophical term 'pragmatic', one might dub this position "convenience monism."

The case for pluralism needs to be strengthened by indicating how major sorts of decisions could be handled generally. Stone tries to do this in two ways. First he suggests the possibility of a "lexical" ordering of planes. The order would seemingly come from Stone's implicit value hierarchy based on what is morally familiar and best known to Persons (probably, but not necessarily, human) as the only moral agents. Second, he discusses a process of overlaying planar maps to see where joint agreement can be reached or new solutions can be found. There will still be cases, however, where overlaid planar maps indicate unresolved moral conflict.[2]

The commitment to a sustainable way of life provides a moral foundation for both methods of resolving planar conflict. In addition, the moral awareness demanded by a sustainable way of life prepares one for difficult moral cases in which there seems to be no solution that satisfies all parties or satisfactorily handles all the relevant moral concerns. Martin Benjamin's notion of integrity preserving compromise can be applied to at least some of these cases. Dedication to a way of life readies one for such compromise by requiring one to balance incommensurable goods and by making one aware of what is most vital to one's own integrity. Acknowledging one's way of life as a way of life--that is, one among many morally defensible ways of life--provides a basis for pluralism and liberal tolerance that foster the attitude of mutual respect necessary to make moral compromise work.

PLANES AND MORAL STANDING

Moral Intuitions and Perspicuity

The criticism that Stone merely assumes that his ontological planes are also moral planes is not easily met by arguing from high level moral principles, at least not as understood in contemporary Anglo-American moral philosophy. Because interests are widely accepted as being of obvious moral importance, partisans of the interest principle as a moral bottom line occupy the argumentative high ground. But Stone can appeal to his critic to consider the varied entities which the critic in fact does incorporate into his own way of life. Failing (or reinforcing) that, one can also make the richness of Stone's moral ontology perspicuous by laying out an example of a coherent way of life such as we have seen in Wendell Berry's writings. Sustainable ways of life pluralism begins with a way of life to which a person already has some moral commitment. Adding a sustainability requirement is almost axiomatic as it is a reasonable assumption that anyone who values a way of life will want it to continue on through future generations. Sustainability must be formulated at a certain level of abstraction since there are many relevant variables including population, consumption levels, and types of "resources" consumed. Therefore, sustainability requires a wide awareness of historical circumstances, ranges of choices, and an ability to estimate probable long-term consequences of one's decisions. This means that a sustainable way of life depends on a thoughtful reflectiveness open to cultural evolution, a reflectiveness which must be itself valued and modeled for the next generation if one's way of life is to survive. This reflectiveness requires that moral intuitions themselves come under scrutiny and refinement. Only in a Parmenidean world of no change--biological or cultural--could every detail of a way of life be set in concrete. Change must, however, proceed at a pace which allows one to absorb and understand its broader

implications and which preserves enough continuity in a way of life to allow the individual to adapt. Because a way of life involves value commitments to many types of entities in its primary ontology of gestalts, the moral case for mapping planes other than sentient beings already has some grounding in moral intuitions. The moral and empirical mapping advocated by Stone can then be used to critique and refine the chosen way of life, its sustainability, and to enlarge its boundaries by increasing the awareness of the moral agent(s) involved. Since I have commented extensively in Chapter 4 on both the methodology of moral argumentation/persuasion, and given an extended example in the paradigm of Berry's farmer, I will say no more.

What can one say in response to a critic who, after careful examination of her own views and a sympathetic examination of the proffered paradigm, still finds the notion of direct moral standing for nonsentient nature incoherent or self-deceiving? Nothing. The problem is the same as that encountered by Rolston when his critic fails to be moved morally by (scientifically informed) encounters with projective nature.

One may, of course, suggest other paradigms or construct thought experiments like the last person experiment in which you are asked to assume that you are the last sentient creature on the planet. A series of nuclear bombs (or other doomsday devices) circling the planet are set to go off sometime after your death unless you disconnect the control mechanism (which is easily done). Would allowing the destruction of nonsentient nature be morally wrong given that there are no sentient creatures to whom nonsentient nature is of instrumental value?[3] A 'yes' answer--provided that it is not attributable to other moral reasons--nudges one beyond the interest principle and into "seeing" that nonsentient nature is morally considerable in its own right.[4] If the answer remains 'no' there is nothing more one can do morally or should do.

The thought experiment works by forcing one to look at a situation from a perspective not previously considered. Rolston, like most land ethic philosophers,

hopes that ecology and geological and evolutionary science will make plain to the mind's eye what is not immediately seen by the physical organ. Berry, like Charles Dickens, uses the novel to make visible in imagination the wrongs (and virtues) that go unnoticed in an age that is transforming the (planetary) countryside and the kind of lives that people live. Stone hopes moral mapping will show us features--individually and in combination with map overlays--that previously were unnoticed. After one has drawn ecological and social connections, shown the vast and fine dependencies between sentient and nonsentient life, pointed out the narrow boundaries and assumptions of the sentientist view, and depicted undreamed of consequences of our impact on the planet, one has reached the limits of making perspicuous the case for moral considerability of nonsentient nature. As in a trial, one must finally rest one's case. Beyond this point what began as moral persuasion becomes more and more a pressure tactic of (im)moral manipulation. The "true believer" who is convinced that the only reason people disagree is that they don't understand has replaced respect for persons with the hubris of his own infallibility. Depending on the degree to which the true believer is willing and able to force compliance, the effects vary from annoying to horrifying. In such cases of intractable disagreement, the moral pluralist is less likely than a monist to assume her antagonist is muddle-headed or perverse because there is no need for an exclusive theoretical position. Much of ethical behavior often overlooked by moral theory involves tolerating, sometimes even appreciating, in others what one would never choose for oneself.

RESOLVING PLANAR CONFLICT

The Hierarchy Method

One method of addressing the criticism that Stone has no way of resolving planar conflict is Stone's suggestion that there be a "lexical" ordering of planes. An implicit hierarchy of planes can be attributed to Stone based on his comments about the candidates for moral standing which we know best, beginning with present Persons and extending outward to creatures most like us. However, Stone never develops this hierarchy in any extensive way. Donald C. Lee has separately proposed a three layer environmental ethic that would give Stone's form of pluralism a more comprehensive way of ranking moral commitments so that cases of conflict could be decided rationally. Lee bases his theory on human developmental psychology as expounded by Abraham Maslow and augmented by insights from Herbert Marcuse. Of attempts to ground an ethic on single features of "human nature" Lee says:

> Rationality and subjective caring are not, as Enlightenment thinkers presumed, a priori common to all human beings. Lockean political theory presumed a God-given rationality, and Humane [i.e., David Hume's] ethics presumed a common sentiment of sympathy. But now it is clear that not all human beings develop their faculties of rationality, love, or sympathy, and certainly not to the same degree. These are not a priori features of human nature, but must be nurtured by love, moral example, and education.

There is a hierarchy of human needs, and the development of each level of psychological/moral growth is dependent upon the satisfaction of needs at the preceding level. The hierarchy of needs, claims Lee, dictates the priority of ethical concerns (or what would be the planar hierarchy in Stone's system).

> ...I see three compatible and hierarchically related levels of environmental ethics. The most basic and of highest priority is the objective anthropocentric concern for the health and stability of the environmental and social systems we live within. These have to do with our most basic biological and social needs for survival, health, and well-being, and are preconditions of meeting our ethical duties at other levels. This is the level most amenable to rational legislation and political control. The anthropocentric aspects of the land ethic, as well as the human concern for proportional economic justice in the social sphere, and the humanistic concern for equality before the law, pertain here.

> The second level is the subjective caring about those non-human or future human beings most like us because they do (or will) share faculties similar to our own (rationality, self-consciousness, sentience, etc.). This is caring for the other for its own sake. Much of humane and humanistic ethics fall into this level.
>
> The third level is an aesthetic or religious caring about even those beings very unlike us: e.g., land-formations, species of insects, biosystems, or Mother Nature. The non-anthropocentric aspect of the land ethic pertains here (Lee 1990, pp. 9-10).

To fulfill one's potential as a human and moral being, one would have to reach the third level. The person who does not reach an aesthetic or religious stage is, so to speak, morally stunted in his growth.

Lee's position brings about as much hierarchical order to Stone's planes as any pluralist could reasonably expect. Even so, it does not decide the ordering of planes within the same level, such as conflict between utility plane Person preferences and nonutility plane Persons as right holders. Moreover, as the development of "human faculties" requires nurturing and moral modeling, the teaching by action and example can only come from a mentor who understands and is committed to some particular way of life. This is not to deny the usefulness or viability of Lee's position, but only to note that it requires somewhere the kind of detail and dedication that Williams and Hampshire see as the bedrock of ethics.

The kind of teaching that is necessary for Lee's hierarchical system is what John Kotre refers to as "cultural generativity" on analogy with the biological generativity of begetting and bearing children. Kotre says:

> When an old man shows his grandson how to preserve seeds from the best produce in his crop, he is ostensively passing on a craft. But he is also, by implication, passing on a culture--a belief, in the case of one man I spoke with, in the "miracle of life." In teaching how to do it, the technically generative individual also teaches what it means--but only indirectly. To the extent that body and mind can be separated, the teaching of technique deals with the body of a culture but not yet its mind.
>
> The fourth type of generativity is directly concerned with mind. When a teacher turns from how to do it to what it means, when she speaks of the idea of music or healing or law, when she brings to the fore the symbol system that stood in the background and offers her student the outlines of an identity, she becomes culturally generative. She is no longer a teacher of skills but a mentor, and her apprentice has become a disciple (Kotre 1984, pp. 13-14).

Kotre's distinction between technical and cultural generativity is one way of pinpointing Wendell Berry's concerns about meaningful work. Where Kotre may be faulted from Berry's point of view is the implicit faith he places in the separation of body and mind. Kotre defines culture as "an integrated set of symbols interpreting existence and giving a sense of meaning and place to members of a perduring collectivity" (p. 14). Kotre seems to regard symbols as primarily, if not exclusively, linguistic. Berry's insistence on the material life, the bodily and sacramental reenactment of the motions of previous generations in the same settings--like Elton Penn plowing the same fields for the same reasons as Old Jack--would require an amended definition of culture. At minimum the definition would include nonlinguistic items, particularly ritual movements--think of the importance of dance in many traditional cultures--in symbols, and it would assign performative and interpretive functions to linguistic and nonlinguistic symbols alike.

Kotre is right that technique and meaning can be separated, both in intellectual understanding and in practice. That is exactly what is wrong with much of modern corporate life, including the industrial model of education. When human existence suffers a bifurcation of meaning and technique, it results in meaningless work and moral schizophrenia. Kotre gives us a beautiful example of the grandfather showing the grandson how to preserve seeds and pass on "the miracle of life." But then he makes a comment worthy of Nietzschean scorn: The grandfather is teaching what the technique means, "but only indirectly." Only indirectly! As if, believing in the miracle of life, the grandfather would not exhibit a loving tone and touch in speaking of and handling the seeds, the same sort of tone and touch which reassures and guides children long before they understand intellectually and which remains an essential part of intimacy through adult life. To any grandchild intent upon a grandparent, there would surely be an awareness of affective aspects of meaning as well as the mechanical procedure. What would the teaching be like if it were taught only directly? Would children--or adults for that matter--really learn if they heard wonderful panegyrics about the miracle of life and

never dirtied their hands by planting seeds? How many generations would it take before the only people interested in planting seeds were those who could make money at it? What kind of cultural generativity would that be? Would it be a culture worth passing on? Kotre, like many intellectuals, has a tendency to become what novelist Tom Robbins calls a "symbol junkie."[5]

The moral and methodological primacy of a way of life comes from its requirement that one act out one's commitments as well as reflecting linguistically upon them, and in acting put them to an empirical test which cannot be externalized or alienated from the moral agent. It demands an integration of knowledge by acquaintance, knowledge how, and propositional knowledge. Much of culture presupposes what Aristotle called mimesis (imitation)--usually in forms that are "second nature" and taken for granted with no overt awareness of them--and it is doubtful that cultural generativity could occur at all without the knowledge by acquaintance and knowledge how that are given daily emphasis in a way of life.

The Map Overlap Method

Stone's second method of resolving planar conflict is to overlay moral maps. Stone claims that many moral problems can be handled without combining planar maps at all, and that in cases requiring more than one map an overlay will often indicate the same solution. Given common basic needs of sentient and nonsentient life forms for relatively clean air, water, and nontoxic soil, this is not surprising. Preserving wilderness, for example, provides airsheds and watersheds, plant and animal habitat (the most critical factor in species preservation), and aesthetic, historical, recreational, scientific, and psychological benefits for humans.[6] Multiple values multiply held reinforce a legitimate moral agreement.

Stone's overlapping of planes begins to go sour morally, however, when conflicting values that dictate the same actions are not recognized as being in conflict.

To continue with the example of wilderness preservation, there is heavy pressure for what Edward Abbey calls "Industrial Tourism" and turning the National Parks into a kind of Disney World amusement:

> Accustomed to this sort of relentless pressure since its founding, it is little wonder that the Park Service, through a process of natural selection, has tended to evolve a type of administration which, far from resisting such pressure, has usually been more than willing to accommodate it, even to encourage it. Not from any peculiar moral weakness but simply because such well-adapted administrators are themselves believers in a policy of economic development. "Resource management" is the current term. Old foot trails may be neglected, back-country ranger stations left unmanned, and interpretive and protective services inadequately staffed, but the administrators know from long experience that millions for asphalt can always be found...(Abbey 1968, p. 57).

Are the National Parks even meeting their narrow politically chartered purpose as "pleasuring grounds" when one drives hours in bumper to bumper traffic for a ten minute postcard glimpse of Yellowstone Falls? This is not to say that a moral compromise might not be reached between designating some areas for high tourist traffic (and thereby creating badly needed jobs and providing some access to the park's beauties for the handicapped and infirm) while preserving other areas from development. But for the compromise to be a moral compromise, the parties involved must recognize what they are trading away and why.

The need for moral awareness becomes even more pronounced when dealing with subtler cases than the avarice and political empire building that drive Industrial Tourism. Thomas H. Birch has pointed out that the very method of preserving wilderness can vitiate legitimate reasons for its preservation. Many preservationists who "love nature" and want to secure it against a corrupt and polluted outside world, then try to contain it legally and morally by the very same ideological thinking and institutions--the imperium in Birch's terms--which have fostered the corruption of our daily lives:

> For the imperium, only that which is other can be sacred, because all of the usual world, the mundane and the not-so-mundane, is taken to be profane, secular, objective. The imperium is committed to cordoning off sacred space, to separating it as other, effectively keeping it out of the center of our practical lives, and keeping us out of it and thus safe from its subversive effect. Wildness

> as wilderness land is incarcerated as sacred space. This is perhaps one of the main uses to which the imperial order puts wilderness. It consigns sacred space to the museum of holy relics, as one of the prime manifestations of the wildness it is compelled to incarcerate in order to demonstrate its total triumph (Birch 1990, p. 23).

We have already encountered Birch's point in Berry's refusal to create an opposition between the material and the spiritual, in Berry's insistence on talking of a way of life being perpetuated in bodily motions (on an animalistic level which traditional philosophers have tended to denigrate or ignore as nonrational, or worse, interpret as merely mechanical), and in Berry's insistence that a nation which does not care for its farms and cities will not care for its wilderness areas. By requiring work and personal sacrifice, sustainable ways of life develops a moral awareness that helps one to avoid the potential seductions of easy planar overlaps, and that prepares one to make responsible decisions in difficult cases of compromise.

Integrity Preserving Compromise

A third method for settling planar conflict is suggested by Martin Benjamin's work on integrity preserving compromise (IPC). As a pluralist, Benjamin builds on Hampshire's notion of a way of life and its acceptance that there are incommensurable moral values. There are, according to Benjamin, conflicting world views that are equally consistent and that treat empirical evidence with equal adequacy so that there can be no rational methodology to decide between them. Benjamin nonetheless thinks that genuine ethical--as opposed to tactical--compromise is possible between such drastically differing positions in some cases and under carefully circumscribed conditions. Though most of Benjamin's work has been done in the area of medical ethics, the conditions he sets out for ethical compromise are readily adaptable to environmental ethics, especially in the form of sustainable ways of life.

Benjamin notes that genuine integrity requires a harmony between both internal and external views of the consistency of one's life:

> Individual integrity...requires that one's words and deeds generally be true to a substantive, coherent, and relatively stable set of values and principles to which one is genuinely and freely committed. Integrity can be viewed internally from the point of view of the agent, and externally, from the point of view of others. One's life is "of a piece" only if it is integrated from both points of view. Neither the hypocrite, who possesses internal but not external integrity, nor the alienated victim of coercion, who possesses external but not internal integrity, leads a genuinely integrated life (Benjamin 1990, pp. 51-52).

Internal and external consistency, however, is not the complete measure of integrity. Integrity also requires some degree of wholeness, and Benjamin grants that aspects of consistency and wholeness will not always be in perfect accord:A person of strong will

> whose words and deeds flow from a deliberately restricted, comparatively small set of closely related and coherent values and principles may have little difficulty in maintaining overall consistency. But as such single-mindedness shades into fanaticism or distorts the self by systematically disregarding important aspects of it, we may question the person's humanity.... For integrity involves wholeness as well as consistency. If a preoccupation with consistency requires that we deny or repress a number of authentic feelings, attachments, commitments, values, and principles that are not in themselves ethically untoward and that occasionally incline us in contrary directions, we will have sacrificed wholeness. A fixation on one dimension of integrity will result in neglect of another (p. 55).

This wide, embracing view of integrity makes it compatible with Stone's attempt to lay out a comprehensive approach to pluralism, and with the exemplar of Berry's farmer. While Benjamin personally regards the interest principle as a moral bottom line, he readily acknowledges that there are ways of life with moral integrity in which nonsentient nature could have direct moral standing.

The kind of compromise which concerns Benjamin is that in which two parties have opposing moral values and are not able to reach an understanding that satisfies both, nor are they able to come to a new understanding that supersedes the moral opposition. Benjamin distinguishes between "external" compromise between two (or more) parties, and the "internal" compromise an individual makes because, quoting John Rawls, "Human good is heterogeneous because the aims of the self are heterogeneous" (p. 22).[7] The heterogeneous nature of self has been evident in a sustainable way of life through the need for balancing different goods. (Jack's loss of his wife and daughter because of his single-minded determination to succeed financially

is a literary warning to those who would sacrifice wholeness of self.) The internal compromise required prepares one for external compromise as both process and product. As a formal requirement a sustainable way of life must be communal over generations. It must also meet certain practical requirements. Most notably it must be flexible enough to cope with changing conditions, and it must foster the kinds of caring and respect that bind humans to each other as a precondition for what Kotre calls technical and cultural generativity. Another formal requirement for sustainable ways of life is its pluralistic recognition that there is no one single way of life equally fulfilling for all persons. The tight kinship structure of the tribe provides emotional support at the expense of personal privacy and freedom; industrialized, urban nation states provide social mobility by breaking up the extended family. It is an anthropological truism that each culture emphasizes only a few of the infinite range of possible human choices and thereby must forego others. The situation becomes much more diverse at the level of individual choice. To recognize a way of life as a way of life is to be aware that there are alternative ways of life which people take up and pass on, not out of ignorance, bigotry, or naivety, but because these different ways of life have their own coherence, their own satisfactions and their own sorts of fulfillment. Tolerance is a corollary of this kind of pluralism since one cannot claim exclusive understanding, much less possession, of moral virtue. The flexibility, tolerance, respect and caring required to make sustainable ways of life workable also enable the moral agent to make integrity preserving compromises in the imperfect and often uncertain world of human existence. According to Benjamin, integrity preserving compromise (IPC) is appropriate when four circumstances obtain:

> First, the facts are uncertain.... Second, the issue is morally complex.... Third, the parties are involved in a continuing cooperative relationship.... And fourth, we face what appears to be an impending, nondeferrable decision (p. 164).

To see how these circumstances can be applied to environmental ethics we can consider

a parallel to Benjamin's attempt to resolve the debate over abortion in the controversy over the spotted owl and the logging of old-growth forests.

The spotted owl which requires the high cover for nesting provided by old-growth forests has been declared endangered under the Endangered Species Act. A federal court ruling has resulted in the suspension of timber sales in the owl's habitat of the national forests of the Pacific Northwest. Estimates of potential jobs lost if the owl is permanently protected vary considerably from 20,000 to the logging industry's figure of 100,000. The Secretary of the Interior has convened the "God Squad," a committee which has the authority to override the Endangered Species Act which is up for renewal in Congress this year. Environmentalists want to save the owl and the old-growth forests. Developers want to use the forest as economic resources and to supply jobs. Neither group is certain of victory and both stand to lose a great deal. If the Endangered Species Act is overridden by the "God Squad" or gutted in a Congressional revision, it will likely set a pattern in which threatened species are stripped of legal protection whenever there is any significant conflict with economic development. For its part, the government loses money on its timber sales and many members of Congress want to add riders to new legislation requiring the logging industry to pay the full price for government timber. If the spotted owl protection decision is upheld by the "God Squad" and the Endangered Species Act is renewed or strengthened, it will serve as a legal precedent for bringing similar suits in other areas of the country (Lemonick 1991, Turque 1991, Alexander 1992).

Benjamin cites as examples of the first condition for IPC, uncertainty about the facts, the questionable "metaphysical--and hence moral--status of the fetus" and the unknown long-term effects of abortion policy (p. 164). The parallel in the case of the spotted owl is the questionable metaphysical and moral status of species (whether that of the sentient owl or that of the nonsentient trees) and other holistic entities such as

forests and ecosystems. The spotted owl assumes additional significance because of its use as an indicator species, one whose increase or decrease serves as a benchmark for measuring ecosystem health. Some evidence indicates that the spotted owl can nest in second growth forests; the marbled murrelet has been suggested as a better indicator species for the studies required to determine environmental impact of forest use. There are immense practical difficulties in monitoring even a few species for reliable statistics. The cost of finding a spotted owl nest is estimated at $200 to $300 while the murrelet is pegged at $100,000 per nest (Abate 1992).

Benjamin's second condition for IPC is moral complexity. "Each party to the debate bases its position on plausible moral considerations, none of which clearly violates the principle of utility or the principle of respect for persons" (p. 164). Whether or not species per se have direct moral consideration, their loss is permanent once they become extinct. This not only deprives present and future human generations of recreational and aesthetic enjoyment, but it is a permanent loss for scientific study and a reduction of genetic diversity. Large scale losses of certain species and destruction of ecosystems, notably forests, now threaten life support systems of the planet. There are clearly significant risks to humans if we pursue business as usual. On the other hand, the developers can point to the very basic human need to make a living, and to the disproportionate amount of land held by the federal government in the West which makes economic development difficult without federal cooperation. In theory national forests (not designated Wilderness) are multiple use areas. It would be extremely difficult to calculate utility in any decisive way, especially if animals and future generations are included. As for justice, the logging industry is being subsidized by public timber sales, but local economies are also not as free to develop in ways possible where most land is in private hands. Is it fair, for instance, given that Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota having benefitted (temporarily) from the clear-cutting of

their forests, that forest land use should now be severely restricted in Washington, Oregon, and Idaho? If we have learned about the need to conserve resources from past bad practices of the lumber barons, then the historical and contextual sensitivity required to judge changing conditions and save endangered species ought to be applied as well to humans caught in similar contingencies. But the loggers and locals are also pawns in the logging industry's corporate game. Neither appeals to utility nor justice seem capable of decisively settling the issue in favor of either party.

The third condition for IPC, a continuing cooperative relationship, involves the nation as a whole both in Benjamin's paradigm problem of abortion and in the conflict between the developers and environmentalists. Not only do we require a "uniform policy on matters of life and death," but we also require a uniform policy on conditions under which economic development and environmental protection can be accommodated. Large scale capital investments require reasonable assurance that the rules will not suddenly be changed or wealth tied up in land turned into an economic liability by unexpected legislation or court decree. Environmental protection and preservation requires regulations that are not overturned at every recession or exempted by ideological fiat.

Of the fourth condition, facing "an impending, nondeferrable decision," Benjamin says: "The continued moral and political impasse on this issue is now spilling over and adversely affecting many areas of public life" (p. 164). Whereas Prochoice activists have much to lose if Roe v. Wade is overturned, so Prolife activists have much to lose if Congress passes legislation ensuring a woman's right to an abortion. Similarly, environmentalists have much to lose if the Endangered Species Act is not renewed in any meaningful way, and developers have much to lose if their projects can be blocked by lawsuits at every turn.

Benjamin's solution is to split the difference by requiring concessions from both sides. While some extremists from both Prolife and Prochoice camps may feel that the

issues are simple and clear, and that they cannot compromise without losing their integrity, the generally conceded complexity of the abortion issue creates a larger middle (and muddled) ground. Benjamin says:

> Inasmuch as the consistency and independent validity requirements for an adequate political solution are not as stringent as those in philosophy or constitutional law, it might be best...to shift the focus from the Supreme Court to Congress. If a moderate position cannot be shown to be morally or philosophically superior to either of the polar positions, it may be defensible as a legislative compromise--one that at the congressional level acknowledges our national ambivalence and divisions rather than papering them over (p. 166).

Benjamin suggests as a hypothetical solution a policy which permits early abortions (e.g, the first 10 weeks) but prohibits later abortions unless special circumstances apply (e.g., anencephalic fetus, danger to the mother's life).

A similar sort of solution could be envisioned in the case of environmentalists and developers. With each party recognizing the threats to its own position and (perhaps) the legitimacy of some of the opposing party's concerns, there might be enough consensus to support a revision of the Endangered Species Act which would recognize different levels of protection depending on two factors: the viability of the ecosystem and its ownership.

Bryan Norton notes that preserving remnant populations can be done in zoos and through germ plasm samples. Like Rolston, he sees the real value of species preservation as part of a functioning ecosystem. Norton says:

> Having a broad range of species available...as potential colonizers and competitors for niche space strengthens the forces that lead, through niche packing, to diversity in successional communities. Each species has contributory value as it comes in contact with other species: it offers a context of competition and opportunities for synergisms that create new adaptations and, eventually, new species. Species existing in varied habitats...are valuable because they give rise to long-term genetic variation. But diversity of biological life is also a valuable aesthetic and cultural resource (Norton 1987, p. 261).

Species that have to be nursed along as tenuous remnants of now defunct ecosystems, and that could not be transferred to ecosystems where they would survive on their own, would not be given the same level of legal protection as those which had a reasonable

prospect of flourishing. Functional ecosystems and the diverse species in them would be given high levels of protection.

In the case of land ownership, species in the National Wilderness Preservation System might be given an almost sacrosanct legal status, while those in "multiple use" lands such as national forests--with the proviso that such lands really are managed for multiple use in perpetuity--might be protected subject to certain well-defined contingencies, but species in lands under private ownership would have a minimal sort of protection subject to important needs of the owner (such as not suffering great economic harm). Procedures would also have to be established for land swaps and priorities in the cases in which large functioning ecosystems were in private hands.

The compromise, if it is viable, is a moral compromise not because everyone thinks that nothing important was lost or is pleased with the outcome. Developers can still complain that environmentalist lock up Wilderness lands ignoring human needs; environmentalists can still complain that developers are engaging in biological genocide. Neither party has abandoned its commitments and values. Since the facts are uncertain and the situation is morally complex, there is, at this point, no adequate method by which either party can be judged clearly in the right or clearly in the wrong. The compromise is moral because the parties realize that the only thing worse than compromising is the risk to what they value if they do not compromise. Not only does the compromise center on a moral issue, but all things considered the compromise respects the not clearly immoral views of one's adversary as well as oneself. The compromise is integrity preserving insofar as one's values include respect for others holding differing, but not unreasonable views, as well as a commitment to one's own values and world view. Finally, the compromise is a means of maintaining a degree of social harmony while preserving the rich diversity that is a special mark of the human species.

CONCLUSION

The Primacy of Sustainable Ways of Life

We have seen how a way of life can provide a foundation for answering critics of Stone's pluralism who assert that Stone's ontology lacks direct moral standing and that his system lacks an adequate procedure for deciding between competing ethical concerns. In particular, Wendell Berry's marriage analogy has demonstrated how a partnership ethic with nonsentient nature is possible and how it can be sustained through generations. The virtues of meaningful work celebrated by Berry focus on basic satisfactions in living well rather than in a consumptive life of acquisition. The self-knowledge and dedication in the kind of life Berry models prepare one for making hard ethical choices while the way of life grounds all three methods of resolving planar conflict in Stone's pluralism. Without that rich and detailed ground level awareness of who and what we are, high level ethical principles can be given no real content nor do we have analogies from which to work when we are presented with new situations. This is not due to any failure of ethical systems but to the human condition. As Jeffrey Stout remarks:

> None of us starts from scratch in moral reasoning. Nor can we ever start over again, accepting only beliefs that have been deduced from certitudes or demonstrable facts. We begin already immersed in the assumptions and precedents of a tradition, whether religious or secular, and we revise these assumptions and set new precedents as we learn more about ourselves and our world. Our starting point is not so much arbitrary as inescapable: we are who we are, the heirs of this tradition as opposed to that one, born into one epoch rather than another, our intuitions shaped by the grammar of our native tongue. We demonstrate our rationality, if at all, by how we move out from that starting point--subjecting this or that assumption or precedent to criticism as real doubts arise, employing old vocabularies or inventing new ones, the better to think and live well (Stout 1988, p. 120).

Our own "epoch" is one in which philosophers have come to question foundationalism not only in epistemology but also in ethics. One of the driving forces of moral pluralism is the awareness that we live in a contingent situation trying to

balance many different and incommensurable goods. The transitory nature of an individual's existence can to some extent be overcome through the continuity of a way of life. But always that way of life is contingent upon many things not under our control, what Martha Nussbaum refers to as "the fragility of goodness." Perhaps it is fitting that in this same "epoch" we have become aware of the transitory nature of nature itself, that it too is fragile and contingent on our actions in ways that our great-grandparents never could have dreamed. Wendell Berry shows us in the paradigm of the farmer who loves his land the intimate connection of the fragility and strength of both. In understanding that paradigm we affirm the same possibilities for ourselves.

EPILOGUE

> Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth!
> --Isaiah 5:8

When I return to the small Minnesota town where I grew up in the 1950s many things have changed. The black earth of the newly plowed fields lightens to brown then yellow at the crests of the gently rolling hills. In less than two lifetimes, and grown visible within my own, the rich prairie soil, millennia in forming, has been worn to the clay. To the urban vacationer driving west on Interstate 90 there is nothing alarming. If the color change is noticed at all, it is a minor relief in a tedious landscape, the 600 miles of boredom that one must cross between the Mississippi Valley and the South Dakota Badlands, Wall Drug, Black Hills, Mt. Rushmore.

The country roads are paved now and the farmsteads at greater distance. Town children riding in pickup trucks no longer bounce through ruts and slide over gravel on the way to see a new calf or litter of piglets and to be invited in for coffee and cake, the vital tasks of community life accomplished under my father's thin pretext of delivering bottled gas to rural customers. Nor do the farm children, of whom there are fewer, know these things. Farms have become larger and more "efficient" concentrating on one or two cash crops. Most farms do not have animals, and those that do lack the variety of my childhood. These farmers are specialists, professionals: milk producers, beef producers, pork producers.

Along Main Street there are more empty buildings, more vacant lots where buildings once stood, more buildings housing craft shops rather than the clothing, hardware, and shoe stores, the restaurants and bakeries that were once mainstays in a healthy local economy. There is only one grocery now, a supermarket. In a farming

community used to eating well, the single supermarket is an omen ominous as the yellow hilltops in the fields. These people live under Isaiah's warning.

If the prophet were alive today, he would inveigh against those who join corporation to corporation, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the wealth. But, coming from a pastoral people, Isaiah would also warn that there can be no wealth if there is no land. While Aldo Leopold and Wendell Berry are children of a new age of ecology, they too are heirs of an historical tradition that makes their wisdom a variation on a theme. How could any Hebrew prophet treasure the gift of the Promised Land and not value the land itself?

The development of ecology and evolutionary biology have given us the means to comprehend beyond the range of our immediate experience, to project likely consequences of our numbers and actions, and to envision a more intricate ontology than any ancient prophet could foresee. What the natural sciences have not given us is the wisdom to recognize that Isaiah's warning applies not only to greed but also to technocratic pride. In consequence, we lack the personal will and understanding to form new moral relationships with the varied ontology which has been revealed. For this we need the witness of those who have been attentive to the details of a way of life, who have the practical experience which ethical theory always glosses, and who have in "living memory" the *knowledge how* and *knowledge by acquaintance* which immerse us in the affairs of the world by making our own identities inseparable from the many "others" we encounter. The debate over holism in environmental ethics has focused on the ontological and moral standing of species and ecosystems. But there is another kind of holism understood in terms of individual integrity where one's life is "of a piece." A truly environmental ethic needs both. Whether that is accomplished by a monistic theory or a kind of balancing under pluralism is less important than that we understand, as Berry might say it, the relationships among people, land, and community which determine both who we are and where we are in the order of Creation.

NOTES

INTRODUCTION NOTES

1. 'Sentientists' is gaining favor as the preferred term, but I will use the clumsier label 'animal extensionists' to emphasize the methodology as well as the locus of value.

2. Peter Singer (1975) remains the foremost exemplar of utilitarian defense of animals, while Tom Regan (1983) is the best known deontologist.

3. Animal ethics is probably the mainstream moral position today among philosophers. Bernard Rollin (1981, 1989), who argues for animal rights on the basis of an animal's genetically programmed *telos* or nature, and who stresses on the importance of knowing the *kind* of animal under consideration, is a possible borderline exception to this group's dichotomy between the conceptual and the empirical.

4. My usage of 'land ethic' departs from a stricter Leopoldian sense as expounded by Callicott (1987, 1989).

5. Taxonomies quickly grow unwieldy. Holistic biocentrists might argue for species, but not accept ecosystems, as loci of value; then again they might espouse the Gaia principle asserting the entire planet is one superorganism. An ecosystem may be anything from a pond to the planetary biosphere. Taxonomies are further complicated by different types of values, many of which overlap distinctions between conventional individuals, species, and ecosystems. Holmes Rolston (1988), for instance, discusses 14 different types of values "carried by nature," some of which are intrinsic while others are instrumental.

6. The most celebrated example is Callicott, 1980. Callicott excoriates animal liberationists for failing to distinguish wild from domesticated animals, and for viewing pain as an evil rather than as an evolutionary mechanism for information vital to animal survival. Of domesticated animals he says, "They have been bred to docility, tractability, stupidity, and dependency. It is literally meaningless to suggest that they be liberated" (p. 330). Though Callicott has distanced himself from the article, he has not repudiated it, and the issues remain divisive.

7. Peter S. Wenz (1988) also deserves mention as a major pluralist. Because Stone's moral ontology is as broad as that of Wenz, and because Wenz' position involves extensive technical discussion of rights and obligations, I have limited my use of Wenz to that of occasional critic and commentator.

CHAPTER 1 NOTES

1. Cf. Varner 1991. Varner denies the legitimacy of Callicott's move from individuals to holistic entities. "It is because an ecosystem has no welfare of its own, in the sense that each individual member of an ecosystem has a welfare of its own, that a holistic environmental ethic must be pluralistic" (p. 179). I think Callicott is correct in saying that moral sentiments can attach to holistic entities, but Varner's point is valid because Callicott's ethical altruism requires that candidates for direct moral standing be appreciated morally for what they are themselves according to their respective--if not unique--properties.

2. Native American cultures, frequently cited as models of ecological responsibility, do not share the scientific outlook in an extensive and uniform way. They may share insights with ecology that everything is interconnected, but the mythic descriptions of these interconnections and the ritualistic means of influencing natural events are considerably different. Also, a positivistic fact/value chasm is still the popular norm for laymen who find science "cold" and practicing scientists who make claims to "value free" research.

3. Cf. Wenz 1988, pp. 316-317, for an outline of a "concentric circle theory" which presents in more thoroughgoing and legalistic form the kinds of obligations which Callicott might have in mind. Wenz, however, is a pluralist.

4. Of the mixed community Callicott says: "Leopold...regales his reader with a rustic idyll in which the wild and domesticated floral and faunal denizens of a Wisconsin farmscape are feathered into one another to create a harmonious whole. In addition to cash and the usual supply of vegetables and meat, lumber and fuel wood, Leopold's envisioned farmstead affords its farm family venison, quail and other small game, and a variety of fruit and nuts from its woodlot, wetlands, and fallow fields; its pond and stream yield pan fish and trout. It also affords intangibles--songbirds, wildflowers, the hoot of owls, the bugle of cranes, and intellectual adventures aplenty in natural history" (p. 19). Though the examples in the quote are treated as instrumentally valuable for the farmer, the mutually reinforcing relationships of the mixed community are the same as those found in the works of Wendell Berry and discussed in Chapter 4.

5. In addition to formal training in physics, Rolston is an accomplished bryologist.

6. See "Duties to Endangered Species" in Rolston 1986, pp. 206-220.

7. Jeremy Bentham, *The Principles of Morals and Legislation* (1789), Chapter XVII, Section 1, as quoted in Regan and Singer 1976, p. 130.

8. Cf. Callicott 1980.

9. On the distinction between pain and suffering (Rolston's "affliction") see Eric Cassell (1991) who says: "The ideas, beliefs, or conceptions used to interpret perception virtually always contain expressions of value. When interpreting natural facts, observers employ their own values, and these values should not be confused with the second kind of information required to know the subject of observation--the values of the suffering individual. The same sensory information may be assigned very different values by the observer and the sufferer. For example, different observers of a particular person...may read the same behaviors as taciturn, withdrawn, or hostile" (p. 28). In addition to the interpretation of "natural facts" and the values of the patient, determining whether someone is suffering requires "[a]esthetic judgments [which] are

beliefs about the presence or absence of correctness, pleasantness, or completeness in a combination of characteristics" (p. 29). Given the complexity of Cassell's analysis, the case for animal pain is easier to establish than that for animal suffering, but (some) animals do have values in the sense of preferences that are exhibited in regular behaviors over time.

10. See Edward O. Wilson, *Biophilia* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984).

11. See, for instance, Andrew Brennan (1988) who denies Rolston's claim of systemic value in nature because a "natural system, like a natural community, has no good of its own, and so cannot be harmed or helped in its own right" (p. 157). Brennan elaborates: "Even if we can make sense, in the way Taylor suggests, of the good of individual creatures, sustaining their existence in the face of a co-operative, but often challenging, environment, ecology furnishes us with no 'objective' account of the goods, the ends or the directions of biological communities or ecosystems. As species populations come and go, as whole species die out and others emerge, there is no natural pattern, no direction, no end to be served. Rolston, admittedly, has argued...that evolution shows a certain direction--namely a tendency to produce a greater and greater diversity of species. But this is simply to associate a direction with what has in fact happened. Over aeons of time, more and more species have appeared. This observation by itself has no moral force, for just as the tendency of scorpions to maintain their lives against environmental challenges shows nothing about the moral worth of scorpions, so the tendency for species to diversity shows nothing about the moral worth of such diversity" (p. 163).

12. PVS victims live for many years and require enormously costly care diverting medical resources from other patients. Genetic engineering creates even more difficulties in arguing for a "good" based on *telos*. Consider Harvard University's recently patented "Oncomouse" designed to be more susceptible to cancer. Is part of the mouse's "good" to become diseased? Can it be treated as an artifact? The patented animal is perhaps still close enough biologically to its healthier ancestors for the changes introduced to be treated morally like a case of deliberate mutilation, but if and when wholesale changes in genetic structure are possible, it is not clear how one would handle the issue of an engineered animal's *telos* and its "good."

CHAPTER 2 NOTES

1. For a discussion of relativism see DeCew 1990.

2. An early draft was of Stone's position was cited in the Supreme Court minority opinion in Sierra Club v. Morton. His argument is much more extensive than here represented.

3. Stone partly anticipated this objection by suggesting that a trust fund of monies from successful suits on behalf of nature could established to compensate persons injured by natural disasters. Even disallowing suits by those who insist on building cities on fault zones or homes in flood plains, the magnitude and unpredictability of nature's forces make Stone's suggestion a formula for environmental disaster. Any "act of God" could bankrupt the fund and force a selloff of nature's "assets" such as the National Wilderness Preservation System.

4. Cf. Putnam (1983) who criticizes moral reasoning that becomes so unwieldy and convoluted in its quest for absolute decision procedures as to bewilder rather than guide the moral agent.

5. Cf. Rolston 1988 on *in situ* preservation of species, pp 153-154.

6. See Robert L. Holmes, "Violence and Nonviolence," in *Violence*, ed. Jerome A. Shafer (New York: McKay, 1971), pp. 103-135.

7. This strategy is advocated by Donald Scherer who says: "[D]ifferent combinations of values seem to be at stake in different environmental problems, and the research agenda for many environmental philosophers reflects the hypothesis that fruitful conclusions about appropriate courses of action may best emerge, not from an all-encompassing ethical theory, but from a careful consideration of recurrent situations in which particular constellations of values yield typical conflicts" (Scherer 1991, p. 5). By way of contrast see Thomas Nagel 1979, pp. 128-141.

8. Quoted in Benjamin 1990, pp. 120-121.

9. I owe this point to Mr. Mark T. Voss.

10. The extent to which Rorty does sever language from the world may be questioned since Rorty is much concerned about action within linguistic communities. He might more justly be condemned as a human chauvinist because of his emphasis on language which, conventionally understood, would exclude animals and Leopold's "biotic community" from Rorty's community. My intent here is merely to follow Cheney's criticism of Rorty to make Cheney's position clear.

11. Cf. W.V.O. Quine 1985. Quine argues that "natural kinds" are based on our innate ability to discern similarities which he calls "quality spaces." But, he concludes: "In general we can take it as a very special mark of the maturity of a branch of science that it no longer needs an irreducible notion of similarity and kind. It is that final stage where the animal vestige is wholly absorbed into the theory. In this career of the similarity notion, starting in its innate phase, developing over the years in the light of accumulated experience, passing then from the intuitive phase into theoretical similarity, and finally disappearing altogether, we have a paradigm of the evolution of unreason into science" (p. 46). Despite the fact that evidence underdetermines theory

and that in Quine's model of a "web of belief" any part of the web may be altered, Quine still requires observation sentences. His disdainful attitude toward the innate "animal vestige" of "quality spaces" which influence how we experience the life-world is a reaction against positivist notions of empiricism. It also is the result of making theoretical physics, with its reliance on instrumentation to "show" us micro and macro worlds not open to our ordinary experience, as the paradigm of the sciences. Many moral theorists seem to have (unwittingly?) adopted Quine's attitude. Ethics, however, unlike theoretical physics and more like biology and ecology, must deal with the life-world as we ordinarily experience it in all its messy actuality.

12. Allen 1986, pp. 103-105.

CHAPTER 3 NOTES

1. See, for instance, Rolston 1982, and Callicott 1985 and 1986.

2. Naess prefers to talk in terms of realization of potential rather than valuational terminology. David Rothenberg quotes deep ecologist Warwick Fox: "The appropriate framework of discourse for describing and presenting deep ecology is not one that is fundamentally to do with the value of the non-human world, but rather one that is fundamentally to do with nature and possibilities of the self, or, we might say, the question who we are, can become, and *should* become in the larger scheme of things" (Naess and Rothenberg 1989, p. 19). Naess regards the fact-value distinction as artificially drawn in thought; our experience is of cognitive and affective gestalts. 'Realisation' avoids splitting facts from values and encompasses both.

3. Again there is a similarity with Rolston who claims that in many cases "value excitement" is not an arbitrary or idiosyncratic response to nature. As with Rolston, anomalies can be explained by searching out other conditions affecting those who experience conflicting tertiary qualities.

4. Among the philosophic positions Naess is opposing would be those drawing any hard fact/value distinction, simplistic arguments against "private language," and just about any form of eliminative materialism that really is eliminative.

5. For an analysis of problems with traditional assumptions undergirding moral norms see Donald Scherer's Introduction and first chapter, "The Molding of Norms and Environment," in Scherer 1990.

6. See, for instance, Ehrlich and Ehrlich 1981.

CHAPTER 4 NOTES

1. Parts of this chapter were first published in my article "Pluralism and Prospects for a Land Ethic," *Michigan Academician* 23:2 (Spring 1991): 191-200.

2. Liminality is relative to social and historical context. The farmer is a suspect paradigm for many environmentalists as Max Oelschlaeger (1991) notes in discussing the change from Paleolithic hunter-gatherers to Neolithic farmers: "Although prehistoric people were relatively content in accepting the natural order and sought above all to maintain the integrity of their world, the agriculturists experienced an enormous quickening of the human potential to modify the naturally given. Rather than attempting to live in harmony with wild nature, as hunter-gatherers had done since time immemorial, farmers literally rose up and attempted to dominate the wilderness. Boundaries were drawn between the natural and the cultural and conceptual restructuring was inevitable" (p. 28). It is a reasonable assumption that a wild-is-bad/domesticated-is-good dichotomy is exaggerated by adopting settled agriculture; the wolf and the "weed" are "natural" enemies of the sheep and the bread wheat (see Oelschlaeger, Chapter 1, and Diamond 1987). However, hunter-gatherers did not find all plants equally useful nor were all animals likely to have been viewed benignly. What Oelschlaeger sees as Western Europe's environmentally virulent heritage in the combination of agriculture with transcendent religion, even if historically correct, is only one of many possible scenarios for farming. In the Near East the problem may stem not so much from farming *per se*, but farming dependent on vast irrigation projects which breed social inequality due to the bureaucracies necessary to plan, oversee, and protect these projects. Farming on rain-watered land does not require the same kinds of services and hence leaves the farmer more self-dependent. The contemporary parallel to the ancient Egyptian or Mesopotamian farmer's dependence on the state for water is the dependence on corporations for seed, fertilizers, and machinery, a dependence Berry wishes to reverse by making the small family farm viable again.

3. Wes Jackson (1980) describes how his work as an author and researcher of sustainable agriculture "began as much in the kitchen of my youth as in the fields. In our farm kitchen scarcely a meal began without a prayer of thanksgiving for food and other blessings or ended until the plate had been wiped clean with bread. During dishes and clean up following the meal even so little amount of food as half of a fried egg would be returned to the refrigerator.... This wasn't poverty, just frugality well-managed by an imaginative mother. I have become increasingly aware that more values about land and its relationship to people are taught in dining areas than anywhere else in America. I am forever indebted to my parents for providing this treasured environment, for it concentrated my mind on land as the true source of sustenance and health" (p. 154). The tendency to see praise for the housewife as sexist is legitimate if the role does not have equal influence and dignity with other work, or if it is used to deny women the opportunity for other work. Neither Berry nor Jackson is defending a sexist position. For Berry's response to critics claiming sexism see his essay "Feminism, The Body, and the Machine" (Berry 1990, pp. 178-196).

4. Though Berry's novels and short stories can be understood as self-contained works, the same characters recur in different novels at different stages of their lives. They grow up, mature, die, and live on in the memories and lifestyles of others in the community who share their way of life. Berry's essays have essentially the same concerns abstracted from the particular setting of Port William. As a farmer who practices sustainable agriculture Berry has a personal commitment to the way of life he discusses. This gives his writing an integrity both in the sense of honesty and the sense of coherence.

5. Berry is sensitive to environmental criticisms of the Judeo-Christian tradition raised by Lynn White, Jr., in "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crises" (1973). White argued that God's giving man "dominion" over the earth and telling him to "subdue" it in the Genesis creation account has been taken as a cultural license to do whatever we please to nonhumans. There is nothing in Berry's comments on the "order of Creation" or its moral implications for a land ethic that requires a commitment to any sort of theism. All that is required is a little humility in recognizing the tenuous nature of human knowledge. Berry's position does exclude two sorts of people: those who have a fundamentalist's absolute certainty (whether it is theistic or atheistic), and those with an unbounded optimism--an intense faith one might call it--about our technological ability to overcome any problem. For an interpretation of Genesis differing from White see Callicott 1990b.

6. For many--and not merely those living in poverty--the culture is already destroyed. As Dale W. McCollough put it, "We don't have a culture; we have an economy" (personal conversation).

7. Cf. Schumacher 1973. In a chapter titled "Buddhist Economics" Schumacher says: "The Buddhist point of view takes the function of work to be at least threefold: to give a man a chance to utilize and develop his faculties; to enable him to overcome his ego-centeredness by joining with other people in a common task; and to bring forth the goods and services needed for a becoming existence.... [T]o strive for leisure as an alternative to work would be considered a complete misunderstanding of one of the basic truths of human existence, namely that work and leisure are complementary parts of the same living process and cannot be separated without destroying the joy of work and the bliss of leisure" (pp. 54-55).

8. The abuses of animal factories (Mason and Singer 1980) are in part due to the total control over the animal which allows the "factory farmer" to think of the animal as a "product" with no will, life, or existence of its own. Berry's farmer does not have this kind of control over the soil nor does the Lakotah have this kind of control over the wild buffalo, and both are aware of it.

9. The reasons for using the farmer rather than the Lakotah as a paradigm is that the farmer's way of life is still viable and s/he is less easily dismissed as "primitive." It would be consistent with a deep ecology position and with sustainable ways of life pluralism, however, to reduce the human population to a point at which those who choose to do so could take up a hunter-gatherer way of life.

10. See Partridge 1981. Notable exceptions include the articles by Partridge (pp. 203-220) and that of Holmes Rolston, III (pp. 123-132).

11. Hardin 1987.

12. See Rorty 1989, especially chapters 1-3.

13. For historical accounts of the idea of wilderness in contemporary philosophy see Nash 1989, pp. 121-160, and Oelschlaeger 1991, pp. 205-242 and 281-319.

CHAPTER 5 NOTES

1. Given the case made by Kuhn (1970) and others for the theory-laden nature of perception and periodic "revolutions" in science, moral monists could be charged with relying on a sort of knowledge that is a conceptual as well as a practical impossibility.

2. For criticism of moral pluralism in general, and Stone and Cheney in particular, see Callicott 1990a.

3. The thought experiment is recounted with variations. It is originally attributed to Richard Routley (1973).

4. One can argue an intuitionist position that waste and unnecessary destruction are in themselves wrong, or a virtue ethics position that they demean one's moral character even if they cause no pain or suffering. A rejoinder to the virtue ethics position is that 'waste' and 'destruction' can have no meaning or moral force to a "sentientist" once they are robbed of their practical consequences of harming interests.

5. Robbins comments via one of his characters: "[Symbol junkies are] so addicted that they prefer the abstract symbols to the concrete things which symbols represent. It's much easier to cope with the abstract than with the concrete; there's no direct personal involvement--and you can keep an abstract idea steady in your mind whereas real things are usually in a state of flux and always changing. It's safer to play around with a man's wife than with his cliches" (Robbins 1971, p. 253).

6. See Godfrey-Smith 1979; Hendee et al. 1978, pp. 11-22; Nash 1980; Henberg 1984; Rolston 1985.

7. Rawls 1971, p. 544, Benjamin's emphasis.

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