The Paradigm Topic Kritiks

Environment Kritiks
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Environment Kritiks: Introduction

This book contains two kritiks, Anthropocentrism and Managerialism. The Anthropocentrism positions argues that the root cause of many challenges, including war, resource depletion, and environmental destruction, is anthropocentrism, the belief that humans are more important than, and separated from other beings. Drawing from a number of ecological traditions, especially deep ecology, the argues that the human/nature (or human/animal) binary that undergirds the case for privileging human needs is also responsible for the creation and propagation of social hierarchies that place the interests of one group or individual above others, and that these hierarchies cause inequity, violence, and ecological destruction. Instead, advocates argue that we should recognize that all beings are inextricably interconnected, and take actions to solidify that connection.

The term “deep ecology” was coined by Arne Naess, a Norwegian environmental activist. Naess used the term to distinguish between different strains of pro-environment thinking, especially between “ecocentric” (or deep) ecologies and what he described as “shallow ecology,” the environmentalism of anthropocentric value systems. Deep ecology requires a reorientation of how one views themselves in relation to the rest of the world, and seeks to maintain an ecological balance because of the intrinsic value of all beings. Shallow ecology, on the other hand, justifies pro-ecological policies on the basis of their positive impact upon humans. Such efforts, advocates argue, are doomed to fail because the root cause of ecological damage is the anthropocentric value system that privileges human interests. The fundamental tenets of deep ecology are outlined in the following quote:

Sensing that some kind of platform or general statement was needed to show the unity among a diversity of deep ecology types of positions, Naess, along with philosopher George Sessions, formulated "8 points" as a modest suggestion for discussion. Naess insists that this platform is without great pretensions and has the primary function of stimulating dialogue about philosophy and strategies in politics and personal lifestyle decisions (Devall and Sessions, 1985). Naess and other supporters of deep ecology have expanded and extensively commented on these principles in many publications (see Fox, 1990). (1) The well-being and flourishing of human and nonhuman life on Earth have value in themselves. These values are independent of the usefulness of the nonhuman world for human purposes. (2) Richness and diversity of life forms contribute to the realization of these values and are also values in themselves. (3) Humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy human needs. (4) The flourishing of human life and cultures is compatible with a substantial decrease of the human population. The flourishing of nonhuman life requires such a decrease. (5) Present human interference with the nonhuman world is excessive, and the situation is rapidly worsening (6) Policies must therefore be changed. The changes in policies affect basic economic, technological, and ideological structures. The resulting state of affairs will be deeply different from the present. (7) The ideological change is mainly that of appreciating life quality (dwelling in situations of inherent worth) rather than adhering to an increasingly higher 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. (Devall and Sessions, 1985, p. 70) [Bill Devall, Department of Sociology, Humboldt State University, “Deep Ecology and Radical Environmentalism,” SOCIETY & NATURAL RESOURCES: AN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL v. 4 n. 3, 1991, pp. 249-250, p. 248, http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/08941929109380758, accessed 5-3-14]

In contrast, anthropocentrism is summarized in a recent anthology exploring emerging questions in environmental ethics:

Anthropocentrism just means “human-centered,” and as such can refer very broadly to worldviews and attitudes, as well as to values. Here, however, I’m concerned with a narrower sense of anthropocentrism, anthropocentrism about moral status. This can take different forms. On one view, only humans have moral status; the natural world matters only inasmuch as it is important or useful for human beings. An alternative form of anthropocentrism maintains that humans have higher, or much higher, moral significance than anything else in the natural world, but that at least some nonhuman beings or things have some degree of moral significance. These are sometimes called “strong” and “weak” anthropocentric views, although these
terms can be used in different ways. 6 A non-anthropocentric view maintains that at least some nonhuman beings or things have high moral significance; perhaps as high, or even higher, than human beings. Non-anthropocentric views can also take many forms, however, as I’ll explain below. [Clare Palmer, Department of Philosophy, Texas A&M University, “Chapter 16: Contested Frameworks in Environmental Ethics,” Chapter 11: The Metaphorical Links Between Ecology, Ethics, and Society,” LINKING ECOLOGY AND ETHICS FOR A CHANGING WORLD, ed. R.Rozzi et al., 2013, New York: Springer, pp. 191-206, p. 194]

The kritik contains an variety of link arguments. The shallow/reform ecology and technology links are useful against affirmative cases that attempt to rectify the damage caused by human economic activities, whether it is through the creation of marine protected areas or the development of new, ‘renewable’ energy sources. The climate, biodiversity, and economic growth links will work against many core affirmative advantage areas. The “resources” and “development” links are useful against ocean development cases, while the science/rationality arguments apply to most science and exploration affs. The sustainability link evidence claims that the concept is so squishy that it is virtually meaningless, and has in fact been coopted by interests and institutions why apply the label to any mildly green activity in an effort to increase public acceptance for highly destructive practices. Finally, there are links designed to be used against alternative methodology and philosophical traditions, including varying strains of identity politics, postmodernism, pragmatism, etc. Impact claims are diverse, and you should have an easy time turning the case. The Katz et al. 1993 “rejecting anthropocentrism is key to policymaking” evidence is also quite useful.

The alternative should be adjusted to account for the preferences of your judge, your own argument proclivities, and the weaknesses of your opponent. Most advocates of ecocentrism claim that we need to reject anthropocentric policy prescriptions and value systems in favor of mindsets that reconnect ourselves with nature. One prominent deep ecologist is frequently quoted as stating that the movement can be summarized in the phrase “Think Like a Mountain,” meaning that humans should release themselves from their own selfish concerns and adopt a long-term view of the world and the place of humanity within it. An ecocentric mindset could be actualized by rejecting social and species hierarchies, by attempting to rediscover the sacred and wonderful within the natural world, or by committing oneself to the cause of animal rights. The animal rights evidence is quite strong, although it may pose some competition problems as a stand-alone alternative. As is typical for a kritik of this variety, the impact cards are powerfully worded and quite compelling.

Managerialism shares some concepts with the anthropocentrism position. Human efforts to manage and shape their surroundings seem entirely natural. Civilization and its history are often describe as a process of every increasing human mastery of the natural world, accompanied by ever-greater technological development. The seeming naturalness relying upon technology to control nature, however, is questioned by a number of critical theorists. This kritik reflects the work of many scholars who argue that our efforts to “manage” nature through the application of technology and instrumental reason are counterproductive and dangerous.

Drawing upon concepts originally advanced by philosophers Martin Heidegger, Michel Foucault, and others, critics of human efforts to solve their problems by controlling and managing nature. Much trajectory of the criticism is summarized by one of its major authors, Dr. Timothy Luke:

This study examines how discourses of nature, ecology, or the environment, as disciplinary articulations of "eco-knowledge," might be reinterpreted as efforts to generate systems of "geopower" over, but also within and through, Nature for the governance of modern economies and societies. The thinking of Michel Foucault, particularly his notions of sexuality and bio-power as mediations for discursively formed discipline, provides a basis for this reinterpretation, because many of the terms associated with "the environment" are perplexing until one puts them under a genealogical lens. These dynamics have been at play for nearly a hundred and thirty years-or at least since self-consciously ecological discourses were formulated by George Marsh (1885)
or Ernst Haeckel (1866) in the nineteenth century— but their operations are particularly apparent today. While many examples of such tendencies might be mobilized here, this examination of geo-power systems as a mediation of environmentality will center upon only one—the work of the Worldwatch Institute. The continuous attempt to reinvent the forces of Nature in the economic exploitation of advanced technologies, linking structures in Nature to the rational management of its energies as geo-power, is an ongoing supplement to the disciplinary construction of various modes of bio-power in promoting the growth of human populations (Foucault, History of Sexuality I 140-41). Directed at generating geo-power from the more rational insertion of natural and artificial bodies into the machinery of production, discourses of environmentality can be seen fabricating disciplinary environments where power/knowledge operate as ensembles of geo-power and eco-knowledge. [Timothy W. Luke, “On Environmentality: Geo-Power and Eco-Knowledge in the Discourses of Contemporary Environmentalism,” CULTURAL CRITIQUE n. 31, Autumn 1995, pp. 57-81, p. 57-58]

The argument also incorporates elements of Heidegger’s criticisms of technological enframingment. Critics claim that a belief that we can control nature through technology, and the belief that this control should be directed toward the extraction of resources, is a root of many of our problems. This ‘instrumentalist’ view of nature establishes a relationship between humanity and nature whereby humans see themselves as detached, rational subjects and nature as a passive object to be manipulated. This technologized approach produces human alienation from nature, creating the conditions for future environmental destruction. These management/enframent strategies manifest themselves in a variety of ways, whether through efforts to avert environmental catastrophes, to ensure adequate supplies of energy to power modern economies, or concepts such as “sustainability,” which become potent rationales both for extending our control of human populations and our domination of the rest of nature. Management strategies cannot address our society’s problems (solventy takeout), likely exacerbate eco-destruction (turn the case), and are responsible for many of the worst atrocities that we have seen over the last several decades. Giving up on management and control will force us to reconsider our relationship to nature, forcing us recognize the interconnectedness of all beings.

Best of luck!
**Anthropocentrism Kritik: First Negative**

**A. The Affirmative is rooted in a logic of anthropocentrism—the world is valued insofar as it helps human beings—this ensures our own destruction and must be rejected**


But by far our most prevalent view of nature derives from a rudimentary human desire for more. This is the basis of the economic model that currently directs our relationships with one another and with our environment. It has produced stupendous human population growth and dramatic, deleterious effects on nature. Recognizing these effects, efforts have been marshaled to change the self-serving economic model with notions of Earth "stewardship," eloquently advanced decades ago by then-Interior Secretary Stewart Udall, and, most recently, to infiltrate the economic model with "ecosystem services" by assigning monetary values to functions performed by the Earth that are beneficial to people. All of these views are fundamentally and dangerously flawed, because all are anthropocentric. They begin and end with humans. This isn't the way the Earth works. The Earth has its own set of rules, solidly grounded in laws of physics and chemistry and emergent principles of geology and biology. Unlike our economic model, these are not artificial constructs. They are real, and they govern. Earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions, hurricanes, tornadoes, 100-year floods, massive wildfires and disease epidemics are dramatic examples of parts of nature, neither all service nor all harm, creating and destroying, and governed by rules that are indifferent to humans. Our anthropocentric economic model for interacting with the world ignores and is proving to be incompatible with Earth's rules, and is therefore on a direct collision course with them. To achieve a more accurate model of our relation to nature, we need to see ourselves as part of nature, governed by nature (not economics), beholden to nature for ecosystem services and subject to nature's disturbances. We need to view our existence in nature as dependent on numerous functions we are unable to perform ourselves, and without which we couldn't survive. And we need to recognize that we now have the power and the reckless inclination, driven by shortsighted anthropocentrism, to disrupt these functions to the degree that Earth will become uninhabitable for us. In the end, the physical, chemical and biological rules of Earth will certainly win, and we will either be on the winning side or we will be vanquished. These are the only choices. Our anthropocentric economic model needs to be reconceived, incorporating Earth's rules, to become an Earth-centered, "terracentric" model. Stewardship needs to progress from a condescending view of humans tending their "garden" to an effort to become part of Earth without disrupting its vital functions. Ecosystem services need to advance from recognition of services to humans to recognition of services to our planet. We need to find ways to avoid changing Earth in irreversible directions. We need to soberly evaluate anthropocentric economics' sacred cow, growth, in light of sustainability. And we need to think beyond our own brief lifetimes. Most important, in the new terracentric model, we need to acknowledge that there is nothing more important than preserving the viability of planet Earth. Nothing. Using human ecologist Garrett Hardin's metaphor, Earth is our only "lifeboat" in a sea of empty, cold blackness. Our lives, and those of other organisms, are allowed in this boat only because of a quasi-steady environmental state created by a unique balance of physical, chemical and biological conditions and processes governed by Earth's rules. The central task of ecology is to understand these conditions, processes and rules and thereby understand the qualities and dimensions of this steady state. Unfortunately, before ecology has reached this understanding, humans are testing this steady state's robustness with anthropogenic changes in atmospheric chemistry that cause changes in radiation through the atmosphere, fundamental changes in ocean chemistry and changes in the whole planet's energy budget -- its balance of energy in and energy out. We are testing it with pervasive, potentially irreversible, long-term pollution of Earth's fresh and salt water, using a vast assortment of man-made chemicals that often possess biologically hazardous and ecologically unpredictable properties. We are testing it with relentless, massive, wholesale conversions of ecosystems, channeling their products exclusively into our own limitless consumption. And we are testing it with the global spread of biological species, causing a complex, hugely damaging homogenization of Earth's biota. Recent measurements of unprecedented, directional changes in the vital signs of Earth suggest that we may have already staved in our lifeboat's hull, causing changes beyond the ability of Earth's biogeochemical forces to maintain balance. The quasi-steady state that makes our lives possible may be disappearing before our eyes. We are in direct conflict with Earth's rules. The anthropocentric economic model is fundamentally incapable of providing more than temporary fixes for our massive environmental problems. Reliance on this invalid, incompetent model underlies the recent struggles of world leaders in Copenhagen and Washington to make significant progress in solving global environmental problems. Replacement of this failed model with an economic model that recognizes Earth's rules and embraces terracentricity as its essential focus is the primary step necessary to bring reality into our collective thinking and behavior, and provide an accurate conceptual basis for the hard decisions ahead that will determine the fate of life on our planet.
Anthropocentrism Kritik: Critical 2NC Evidence

1. Rejecting anthropocentrism is key to our survival, generating social change—the alternative is the most morally defensible position


If humanity is to survive and flourish in its precarious journey into the future, it needs a new moral compass because anthropocentrism has failed us dramatically. Albert Schweitzer observed that “the problem with ethics so far is that they have been limited to a human-to-human consideration.” In place of the alienated and predatory sensibility of Western life, Schweitzer proposed a new code – an “ethic of reverence for life.” This entails a universal ethic of compassion and respect that includes all humanity, embraces non-human species, and extends to the entire earth. We need a “Declaration of Interdependence” to replace our outmoded “Declaration of Independence.” The demand to cease exploiting animals and the earth is one and the same: we cannot change in one area without changing in the other. Animal rights and environmental ethics are the logical next stages in human moral evolution and the next necessary steps in the human journey to enlightenment and wholeness. Sadly, on Earth Day, as on every other day, the human species continues to invade and damage the planet. As I write, I receive a report from Traffic, a British-based wildlife monitoring group, saying that because of deforestation and trading in its body parts, the Sumatra tiger, Indonesia's last tiger sub-species, is on the brink of extinction. In addition, I read that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service removed two tropical birds, the Mariana mallard and the Guam broadbill, from its endangered species list – not because they are safe but because they became extinct. In some way we cannot possibly grasp, the entire earth is trying to adjust to their inalterable absence. According to the cliché, “Every day is Earth Day.” Truth be told, every day is Human Growth Day. On April 22, the media might turn away from Michael Jackson or Bush’s terror war for a thirty second fluff piece on the state of the planet, and some individuals might pause for a moment to think about their environment. Like the evil-doer who sins all week and then atones on Sunday, human beings plunder the planet all year long and stop for a moment of guilt and expiation. We congratulate ourselves for honoring Earth Day, when in fact the very concept would be incoherent in an ecological society. In honor of Earth Day it is appropriate to ask: what does it mean to be an environmentalist? Where industries, the state, and toxic nihilists of every stripe want those who care about the environment to bear stigmas such as “kook,” wacko,” “un-American,” and even “terrorist,” being an environmentalist must become a badge of honor. To be an environmentalist is to realize that one is not only a citizen of human society, one also is a citizen of the earth, an eco-citizen. Our community includes not only our society with other human beings on a national and international scale, but also our relations to the entire living earth, to the biocommunity. We need to act like we are citizens and not conquering invaders. We have not only a negative duty to avoid doing harm to the earth as much as possible, but also a positive duty to help nature regenerate.

2. The alternative is key to our survival—we must restore balance and cut consumption to avoid ecological collapse


One reason for the downfall of countless past civilizations is that they destroyed the ecological basis of their social world. We are facing the same fate, making the same mistakes. Since the founding of the nation, US agriculture and industry has destroyed two thirds of its once rich topsoil. Without topsoil, food cannot grow and without food people cannot survive. If the fundamental problem is that we are out of balance with our surroundings, the solution is to restore balance – in our own being, in our society, and in the relation between the social and natural worlds. The biggest challenge the human species has ever faced is staring us right in the face: can we reverse environmentally destructive trends and establish a viable presence on the planet? Or will we accelerate our rapid ride to oblivion? The western world has lived for millennia by the philosophy of humans first, even humans only. It is now time for a new philosophy of earth first whereby human armies begin the process of radical retreat from their advances, provide the space for regenerating wilderness and wildlife, and find ways to harmonize their social world with the natural world. The great shrinkage of the human presence clearly requires a massive reduction of population numbers, but since human impact on the planet is measured both by the quantity and quality of its existence, human beings – those in the US above all – must greatly curb consumption appetites, switch to eco-friendly technologies such as solar and wind energy power, and change in countless other ways.
**Anthropocentrism Kritik: Critical 2NC Evidence [cont’d]**

1. **Embracing biocentrism is vital to addressing the problems of industrial civilization**


   Furthermore, given that mainstream environmentalism and mainstream groups have failed to foster the development of any type of "humans-in-nature" spirituality and have rarely fostered creative expressions of humans-in-nature such as poetry, art, music, new interpretations of ancient myths, or rituals bonding humans to nature, it is likely that people who yearn for such expressions will turn increasingly to the deep ecology movement and to radical environmentalism. Intellectual articulation of deep ecology will continue to develop among a network of philosophers, social scientists, historians, and activists through publications such as The Trumpeter and Environmental Ethics. Within the broad framework of providing an ecological critique of industrial civilization and its anthropocentric thinking, deep ecology will no doubt continue to evolve as it absorbs important elements of transpersonal psychology, Eastern philosophies, and ecofeminist theory, as well as the science of conservation biology and a growing concern with the welfare of native peoples. The ecocentric worldview and strong spiritual identification with the natural world represented by many people in the deep ecology movement promises to provide a potent source of inspiration for radical environmentalism and a challenge to the mainstream environmental movement as well as the rest of industrial civilization. Its ability to learn from earlier critiques by feminists and to absorb the insights of ecofeminism reflect the evolutionary strength of deep ecology (Fox, 1989). Participants in the deep, long-range ecology movement continue to learn and grow in a search for new meanings; to develop, explore, and integrate their embeddedness in nature; and to search for lifestyles and public policies that are less exploitative of nature than the conventional lifestyles of many people in the middle and upper-middle classes in advanced industrial societies. In interaction with supporters of other forms of environmental philosophy, Ame Naess and other supporters of deep ecology continually emphasize the importance of working with and finding common ground with those who speak from these different perspectives, an intellectual endeavor akin to the martial arts of Aikido.

2. **Corporate control is driving us towards environmental collapse and extinction—we need to use the opportunity presented by the crisis to reclaim our future**


   Homo sapiens have embarked on an insane, destructive, and unsustainable path of existence. The human species is driving off a cliff at 100 miles an hour without brakes, and yet people live is if the most urgent issue of the day is Janet Jackson’s “wardrobe malfunction” or who will win American Idol. There is much talk about “national security” but nothing is said about the basis of all security – environmental security. Problems like global warming, desertification, and food and water shortages will wreak havoc throughout the planet. As Homeland Security turns ever-more fascist, environmentalists are vilified as eco-terrorists and legal forms of activism are criminalized under the Patriot Act. While Ashcroft prosecutes activists working to help the planet, corporate eco-terrorists continue to pillage and plunder. Meanwhile, Americans, who make up less than 5% of the world’s population, consume 30% of its resources and produce 25% of total greenhouse gas emissions. Whatever forces striving to save the environment are doing, it is not to ward off corporate and state Pac-men greedily devouring the planet. National environmental organizations such as the Sierra Club are tepid, compromise-based, reform-oriented bureaucracies unable to challenge corporate and state power, and grass-roots forces are not great enough in force and numbers. We are in the midst of a major ecological crisis that stems from a social crisis rooted in corporate power and erosion of democracy. In Greek, the word “crisis” means decision, suggesting that humanity, currently poised at a critical crossroads in its evolution, has crucial decisions and choices to make concerning its existence on the planet. Human identity, values, ethics, worldviews, and mode of social organization need major rethinking and reconstruction. In Chinese, “crisis” means both calamity and opportunity. In a diseased individual, cancer often provides the catalyst for personal growth. As a diseased species, human beings can perish, survive in dystopian futures prefigured by films like Mad Max and Waterworld, or seize their opportunity to learn from egregious errors and rise to far higher levels of social and moral evolution.
Anthropocentrism Link: Agriculture / Capitalism-Markets

1. Technology-based agriculture is incompatible with eco-centrism


Finally, and perhaps most surprisingly, there is in a general "Deep Ecological" orientation a cognitive corrective to the distortions of centralized, reductionist, commodified knowledge and social practice. In agriculture, for instance, the belief that modernized science and technology can replace the fertility of the earth or the expertise of local groups has led to a series of disasters. As Vandana Shiva has described it, the imposition of "advanced," commodity-oriented monocultures has erased a wide variety of crops, seeds, productive uses (for food, fodder, herbs, local consumption etc. as well as sale), and ultimately peoples. The result has been polluted soils, drastically increased water consumption, less productive land use, and violent social dislocation. In commodified monoculture there is respect neither for the earth nor for the people who have sustainably managed their fields and forests for centuries. A perspective that sees communion with nature as having spiritual as well as instrumental value might look very carefully at any attempt to supplant either natural processes or long-established local forms of culture and practice. Thus, as a spiritual view of the ultimate value of persons can provide an orientation for social life (though clearly not a simple way to resolve its conflicts and contradictions), so a spiritual view of nature can offer at least the beginning of an orientation towards production, consumption, and development.

2. Capitalism both destroys the environment and marginalizes alternative, eco-centric politics


There is a direct and profound relationship between global capitalism and ecological destruction. The capitalist economy lives or dies on constant growth, accumulation, and consumption of resources. The environmental crisis is inseparable from the social crisis, whereby centuries ago a market economy disengaged from society and ruled over it with its alien and destructive imperatives. The crisis in ecology is ultimately a crisis in democracy, as transnational corporations arise and thrive through the destruction of popular sovereignty. The western environment movement has advanced its cause for over three decades now, but we are nonetheless losing ground in the battle to preserve species, ecosystems, and wilderness (Dowie 1995; Speth 2004). Increasingly, calls for moderation, compromise, and the slow march through institutions can be seen as treacherous and grotesquely inadequate. In the midst of predatory global capitalism and biological meltdown, “reasonableness” and “moderation” seem to be entirely unreasonable and immoderate, as “extreme” and “radical” actions appear simply as necessary and appropriate. As eco-primitivist Derrick Jensen observes, “We must eliminate false hopes, which blind us to real possibilities.” The current world system is inherently destructive and unsustainable; if it cannot be reformed, it must be transcended through revolution at all levels—economic, political, legal, cultural, technological, and, most fundamentally, conceptual. The struggles and changes must be as deep, varied, and far-reaching as the root of the problems.
**Anthropocentrism Link: Biodiversity Impacts**

1. **Justifying saving species based on their utility to humans is anthropocentric**


   Anthropocentric and instrumental arguments in favor of preservationist policies can be developed in a series and arranged in order of increasing plausibility. First, it is argued that any particular species of plant or animal might prove useful in the future. Alastair Gunn calls this position the “rare herb” theory. According to this theory, the elimination of any natural entity is morally wrong because it closes down the options for any possible positive use. A point frequently raised in discussions of this problem is that the endangered species we are about to eliminate might be the cure for cancer. Of course, it is also possible that it will cause cancer; the specific effects of any plant or animal species might be harmful as well as beneficial. Because we are arguing from a position of ignorance, it is ludicrous to assert either possibility as certain, or to use either alternative as a basis for policy.

2. **The famous “rivets” analogy is anthropocentric to the core**


   A better argument is used by Paul and Anne Ehrlich: the metaphor of the airplane rivets. The Ehrlichs tell a parable of an airplane passenger watching as a mechanic removes some of the rivets from the wing assembly of the plane he is boarding. When asked what he is doing, the mechanic replies that for reasons of economy, the airline is cutting down on the number of rivets used on each plane; some of the rivets are being removed and used on other planes. The procedure is not dangerous, continues the mechanic, since up to this point, no planes have been lost. The point of the parable is that although the elimination of individual species might not be directly harmful to human welfare, the aggregate elimination of many species probably will be. It is thus in the interests of humanity to remove as few “rivets” as possible, to preserve natural species even when they are “nonresources.”

3. **Their biodiversity impacts are from a purely human perspective—nature in service of humanity**


   Without the use of a parable, Bryan Norton makes a similar point. In his discussion of the diversity-stability hypothesis in ecological theory, Norton argues that dynamically stable and mature ecosystems are important elements of that total diversity which stabilizes all ecosystems. There is a danger in continually disrupting these diverse and stable ecosystems: Since the biological diversity of the planet has already entered an accelerating downward spiral, losses of species represent further accelerations toward local and global ecosystem breakdowns. The risks of breakdowns are so great and the contribution of species losses to them is so little understood that any rational society would exercise extreme caution in contributing to that acceleration. Diverse species populations thus contribute to stable ecosystems, which have positive impacts on human life. Finally, this argument is broadened into a general concern for ecological function. The preservation of the natural environment insures a biosphere that supports human civilization. Degradation of the natural environment threatens human survival. Nevertheless, knowledge of ecological processes can help humans avoid damage to essential biological and physical links in the natural world. As Norton indicates, the loss of species and ecosystems is a sign that these natural connections are being “cut,” lost, or damaged. The mere preservation of the natural environment halts this process of degradation. Nature thus has to be preserved because it has a value for human beings and human society: it insures the physical basis of human life.
**Anthropocentrism Link: Climate / Limits Claims**

1. **Their warming impact claims are undergirded by anthropocentrism**


   In sum, these preservationist arguments based on “human interests” move from a narrow concern for the specific direct use of a natural entity or species, to the indirect importance of species as stabilizers of ecosystems, and finally to a general concern for the maintenance of ecosystems as the basis of human existence. These anthropocentric instrumental arguments for environmental preservation are easily transferred to issues of environmental policy. Recent concern about the destruction of the ozone layer and the increased probability of the “greenhouse effect” reflect the fear that current environmental and economic policies are damaging the environment and threatening human life. Indeed, it is a mark of the success of the environmental movement that the public is now aware of the connections between environmental health and human survival.

2. **Limits discourses are rooted in the logic of anthropocentrism**


   There is also a deeper evolutionary and neurobiological basis for Thoreau’s ostensibly Romantic assertion that humans need nature, and wildness, to become fully human. The gift of consciousness and the potential for widespread innovation through cultural transmission was made in and by nature. This is the basis of ecologist E.O. Wilson’s assumptions about biophilia as “the inborn affinity human beings have for other forms of life, an affinity evoked, according to circumstance, by pleasure, or a sense of security, or awe, or even fascination blended with revulsion” (1994, p. 360). Today, intimate, personal knowledge of the environment—at least in most rich, Western nations such as the United States—is at an all time low (Louv, 2005). Most of us are ecologically autistic: we generally have great difficulty communicating and forming relationships with nonhumans (except, perhaps, for pets and some farm animals, which we oftentimes eat unceremoniously or coax to work for us with little regard to their own self-realization). According to Wilson, however, our spirit is woven from, and hope rises on, the currents of our innate affiliation with life and lifelike processes: “To the degree that we come to understand other organisms, we will place a greater value on them, and on ourselves” (1984b, p. 1). Naess has a related, corollary premise that runs parallel to his assumption about the unlimited potential for human development. There are limits to growth! Uncritical, unrestrained expansion of human populations, economic systems, technology, material consumption, specialization, and exploitation of the environment will ultimately bring consequences (often unintended) that are inimical to a fuller realization of our human potentials. Such views stand in stark contrast to the core, taken-for-granted tenet of the Enlightenment—that economic progress, social progress, scientific progress, and technological progress are woven together, and are the inevitable byproduct of the application of reason. This core tenet of the Enlightenment represents what Rescher refers to as “tendency optimism”: regardless of the current state of affairs, things will improve in the future (1998, p. 240).
**Anthropocentrism Link: Critical Pedagogy**

1. **Critical pedagogy ignores the linkages between speciesism and other forms of oppression**


   For this reason, the various movements against oppression need to be aware of and supportive of each other. In critical pedagogy, however, the exploration of questions of race, gender, class, and sexuality has proceeded so far with little acknowledgement of the systemic links between human oppressions and the domination of nature. The more-than-human world and human relationships to it have been ignored, as if the suffering and exploitation of other beings and the global ecological crisis were somehow irrelevant. Despite the call for attention to voices historically absent from traditional canons and narratives (Sadovnik, 1995, p. 316), nonhuman beings are shrouded in silence. This silence characterizes even the work of writers who call for a rethinking of all culturally positioned essentialisms. Like other educators influenced by poststructuralism, we agree that there is a need to scrutinize the language we use, the meanings we deploy, and the epistemological frameworks of past eras (Luke & Luke, 1995, p. 378). To treat social categories as stable and unchanging is to reproduce the prevailing relations of power (Birzman et al., 1991, p. 89). What would it mean, then, for critical pedagogy to extend this investigation and critique to include taken-for-granted understandings of “human,” “animal,” and “nature”? This question is difficult to raise precisely because these understandings are taken for granted. The anthropocentric bias in critical pedagogy manifests itself in silence and in the asides of texts. Since it is not a topic of discussion, it can be difficult to situate a critique of it. Following feminist analyses, we find that examples of anthropocentrism, like examples of gender symbolization, occur “in those places where speakers reveal the assumptions they think they do not need to defend, beliefs they expect to share with their audiences” (Harding, 1986, p. 112).

2. **Progress narratives, rationalism, and notions of freedom within critical pedagogy reinforce anthropocentrism**


   Bowers (1993a, 1993b) has identified a number of root metaphors or “analogs” in critical pedagogy that reinforce the problem of anthropocentric thinking. These include the notion of change as inherently progressive, faith in the power of rational thought, and an understanding of individuals as “potentially free, voluntaristic entities who will take responsibility for creating themselves when freed from societal forms of oppression” (1993a, pp. 25–26). Such assumptions, argues Bowers, are part of the Enlightenment legacy on which critical pedagogy, and indeed liberal education generally, is based. In other words, they are culturally specific and stem from a period in Western history when the modern industrial world view was beginning to take shape. To be fair, Bowers understates the extent to which these assumptions are being questioned within critical pedagogy (e.g., Giroux, 1995; Peters, 1995; Shapiro, 1994; Weiler & Mitchell, 1992, pp. 1, 5). Nevertheless, his main point is well taken: proponents of critical pedagogy have yet to confront the ecological consequences of an educational process that reinforces beliefs and practices formed when unlimited economic expansion and social progress seemed promised (Bowers, 1993b, p. 3). What happens when the expansion of human possibilities is equated with the possibilities of consumption? How is educating for freedom predicated on the exploitation of the nonhuman? Such queries push against taken-for-granted understandings of human, nature, self, and community, and thus bring into focus the underlying tension between “freedom” as it is constituted within critical pedagogy and the limits that emerge through consideration of humans’ interdependence with the more-than-human world.
Anthropocentrism Link: Critical Pedagogy [cont’d]

3. Critical pedagogy ignores the human/animal binary upon which it rests

This discursive frame of reference is characteristic of critical pedagogy. The human/animal opposition upon which it rests is taken for granted, its cultural and historical specificity not acknowledged. And therein lies the problem. Like other social constructions, this one derives its persuasiveness from its “seeming facticity and from the deep investments individuals and communities have in setting themselves off from others” (Britzman et al., 1991, p. 91). This becomes the normal way of seeing the world, and like other discourses of normalcy, it limits possibilities of taking up and confronting inequities (see Britzman, 1995). The primacy of the human enterprise is simply not questioned. Precisely how an anthropocentric pedagogy might exacerbate the environmental crisis has not received much consideration in the literature of critical pedagogy, especially in North America. Although there may be passing reference to planetary destruction, there is seldom mention of the relationship between education and the domination of nature, let alone any sustained exploration of the links between the domination of nature and other social injustices. Concerns about the nonhuman are relegated to environmental education. And since environmental education, in turn, remains peripheral to the core curriculum (A. Gough, 1997; Russell, Bell, & Fawcett, 2000), anthropocentrism passes unchallenged.

4. Freire’s theories reinforce the human / animal hierarchy

Take, for example, Freire’s (1990) statements about the differences between “Man” and animals. To set up his discussion of praxis and the importance of “naming” the world, he outlines what he assumes to be shared, commonsensical beliefs about humans and other animals. He defines the boundaries of human membership according to a sharp, hierarchical dichotomy that establishes human superiority. Humans alone, he reminds us, are aware and self-conscious beings who can act to fulfill the objectives they set for themselves. Humans alone are able to infuse the world with their creative presence, to overcome situations that limit them, and thus to demonstrate a “decisive attitude towards the world” (p. 90). Freire (1990, pp. 87–91) represents other animals in terms of their lack of such traits. They are doomed to passively accept the given, their lives “totally determined” because their decisions belong not to themselves but to their species. Thus whereas humans inhabit a “world” which they create and transform and from which they can separate themselves, for animals there is only habitat, a mere physical space to which they are “organically bound.” To accept Freire’s assumptions is to believe that humans are animals only in a nominal sense. We are different not in degree but in kind, and though we might recognize that other animals have distinct qualities, we as humans are somehow more unique. We have the edge over other creatures because we are able to rise above monotonous, species-determined biological existence. Change in the service of human freedom is seen to be our primary agenda. Humans are thus cast as active agents whose very essence is to transform the world – as if somehow acceptance, appreciation, wonder, and reverence were beyond the pale.


**Anthropocentrism Link: Democracy / Liberalism**

1. **Liberal democracy contributes to environmental destruction and cannot stop it—need to embrace an alternative**

Dr. Steven Best, Associate Professor of Philosophy and Humanities, University of Texas, El Paso, “Crisis and the Crossroads of History: The Need for a Radicalized Citizenry,” updated 5-14-12, http://www.drstevebest.org/CrisisAndTheCrossroads.htm, accessed 4-27-14.

Why then are we not responding to these crises with appropriate concern and levels of struggle? Are Americans like the “good Germans” who went about their business in the midst of Nazi genocide? The environmental crisis is inseparable from the political crisis, which is a crisis in democracy. It seems we reached the end of politics where citizens are consumers, critical thinking is overwhelmed by propaganda and mass media miasma, public concern is negated by private worry, and political action is nullified by mindless consumption of mass media and entertainment spectacles. Rather than a realm of rational and participatory debate, the political sphere has become a site of propaganda, manipulation, disinformation, and spectacle. Unlike in the ancient Greek polis, citizenship today means no more than being a taxpayer, a consumer, and a voter free to choose between two bland brands of corporate candidates. We are in fact reaping the consequences of liberal democracy which is grounded in the pursuit of private good divorced from concepts of the social good and civic virtue. Public affairs are to be organized for private advantage, and (in Locke’s influential formulation) citizens consent to government only for mutual preservation of lives, property, and liberty. Rights are negative rights to be free from interference in the pursuit of private good, rather than positive rights to basic social goods such as work, housing, education, and a healthy environment. Whereas Aristotle saw human beings as political by nature, Locke and the liberal tradition viewed politics as an artificial convention necessary to safeguard private interests from clashing with one another. The liberal model of democracy -- along with the steady rise of state, media, and corporate power it promoted, and the rise of mass culture and a society of spectacles and entertainment -- spelled the demise of citizenship.

2. **Liberalism is inherently unsustainable--lacks the socialization processes and feedback loops that can check consumption, works on too short of a time horizon**


The liberal community's ethic is the simplest ethic we encounter. It concerns only procedural relations applicable to all beings like ourselves. It cannot adequately comprehend relationships appropriate to ethnically richer communities. For example, to be indefinitely sustainable, extractive industries such as fishing, logging, whaling, and farming, have to be harmoniously integrated not just with human communities, they must also be in harmony with the natural community. Since natural processes sustain such activities over the long run, harmony with these processes is more important than harmony with a particular human community. This means that human communities need to provide ways of molding people's perceived self-interest in ways that will respect the very long time-horizons (from a human point of view) required to sustain the natural order. In many earlier societies religious principles, pride of ownership, community standards, and an ethic of responsible husbandry all played a role in integrating human oriented production into the larger natural order. Unfortunately, as these extractive activities become more integrated into the liberal order, they become subordinated to market and politically generated processes which take a much more short term perspective, leading to the decline of forest lands, soil, fisheries, and whales. To take but one example, as farming becomes more mechanized farmers find their freedom of action increasingly constrained by the financial payments they must continually generate in order to repay loans taken out to purchase capital goods. In the short run, agriculture becomes more subordinated to the rate of interest than to natural processes. To preserve and enhance financial capital, too often “natural capital” is used up. Short as the time horizon of the market rate of interest is from a natural perspective, it is eternity itself compared to political time horizons. Most politicians are ruled by the electoral cycle, and most bureaucrats by the fiscal year, when making decisions and determining policies. In addition, while far-sighted policies usually do not provide profit opportunities for their advocates (else they would not be called far-sighted), their on-going implementation will provide such opportunities to those in a position to benefit. Consequently, there will always be a tendency for far-sighted measures to be subverted over time into serving the short term interests of strategically organized groups. This is why liberal democracies can often adopt a far-sighted policy, but succumb to very short term criteria when implementing it.
Anthropocentrism Link: Development

1. The logic of ‘development’ reduces nature to something to be used by humans


"Development" is, above all, a way of thinking. It cannot, therefore, be easily identified with a particular strategy or program, but ties many different practices and aspirations to a common set of assumptions. . . . Despite alarming signs of failure throughout its history, the development syndrome has survived until today, but at the price of increasing senility. When it became clear in the 1950s that investments were not enough, "man-power development" was added to the aid package; as it became obvious in the 1960s that hardship continued, "social development" was discovered; and in the 1990s, as the impoverishment of peasants could no longer be overlooked, "rural development" was included in the arsenal of development strategies. And so it went on, with further creations like "equitable development" and the "basic needs approach." Again and again, the same conceptual operation was repeated: degradation in the wake of development was redefined as a lack which called for yet another strategy of development. All along, the efficacy of "development" remained impervious to any counterevidence, but showed remarkable staying power; the concept was repeatedly stretched until it included both the strategy which inflicted the injury and the strategy designed for therapy. This strength of the concept, however, is also the reason for its galloping exhaustion; it no longer manifests any reactions to changing historical conditions. The tragic greatness of "development" consists in its monumental emptiness. "Sustainable development," which UNCED enthroned as the reigning slogan of the 1990s, has inherited the fragility of "development." The concept emasculates the environmental challenge by absorbing it into the empty shell of "development" and insinuates the continuing validity of developmentalist assumptions even when confronted with a drastically different historical situation. In Rachel Carson's Silent Spring, the book which gave rise to the environmental movement in 1962, development was understood to inflict injuries on people and nature. Since the "World Conservation Strategy" in 1980 and later the Brundtland Report, development has come to be seen as the therapy for the injuries caused by development. What accounts for this shift? Firstly, in the 1970s, under the impact of the oil crisis, governments began to realize that continued growth depended not only on capital formation or skilled manpower, but also on the long-term availability of natural resources. Foods for the insatiable growth machine, such as oil, timber, minerals, soils, genetic material, seemed on the decline; concern grew about the prospects of long-term growth. This was a decisive change in perspective: not the health of nature but the continuous health of development became the center of concern. In 1992, the World Bank summed up the new consensus in a laconic phrase: "What is sustainable? Sustainable development is development that lasts." Of course, the task of development experts does not remain the same under this imperative, because the horizon of their decisions is now supposed to extend in time, taking into account also the welfare of future generations. But the frame stays the same: "sustainable development" calls for the conservation of development, not for the conservation of nature. Even bearing in mind a very loose definition of development, the anthropocentric bias of the statement springs to mind; it is not the preservation of nature's dignity which is on the international agenda, but to extend human centered utilitarianism to posterity. Needless to say, the naturalist and biocentric current of present-day environmentalism has been cut out by this conceptual operation. With "development" back in the saddle, the view on nature changes. The question now becomes: which of nature's "services" are to what extent indispensable for further development. Or the other way around: which "services" of nature are dispensable or can be substituted by, for example, new materials or genetic engineering In other words, nature turns into a variable, albeit a critical one, in sustaining development. It comes as no surprise, therefore, that "nature capital" has already become a fashionable notion among ecological economists.

2. We can only avoid environment destruction if we reject anthropocentric notions of development


We defend this rejection of anthropocentric instrumental reasoning as a basis for environmental policy. Although we do not formulate a value theory or a system of ethics that validates a nonanthropocentric regard for nature, we argue that this direction in environmental ethics is necessary for the solution of persistently difficult questions of public policy. As an example, we consider arguments about the development of the environment in the Third World, especially the destruction of the Amazon rain forests. Anthropocentric justifications concerning development— both for and against—lead to inescapable problems concerning both utility and justice. These problems can be avoided from a nonanthropocentric and noninstrumental perspective. We thus provide an indirect argument for the moral consideration of nature in the formation of environmental policy.
3. Development and property rights justify the domination and exploitation of nature

Merle Jacob, Department of Theory of Science and Research, University of Gothenburg, “Sustainable Development and Deep Ecology: An Analysis of Competing Traditions,” ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT v. 18 n. 4, 1994, pp. 477-488, p. 478. The belief that humans are above nature and that a state should protect individual rights to property lays the foundations for a style of development (organization of material and human resources) that provides the rationale for the exploitation of nature for accumulation of individual material wealth, but it does not by itself explain the environmental crisis. A concatenation of events, viz., the scientific-technological revolution, European migration, and subsequent political and economic domination of the New World, provided the empirical support for the above views and the necessary conditions for their translation into practice. The scientific-technological revolution provided the instruments to exploit nature, and the migration of some Europeans to the New World not only relieved population pressures in Europe, it also stimulated development back in Europe by providing a guaranteed supply of resources and later on markets (Landes 1989, Wallerstein 1979, Headrick 1988). This new wealth encouraged the optimism about the supply of natural resources and the capabilities of science that environmentalists perceive as being the source of the ecological problems we currently face (Luten 1980).

4. The desire to progress and advance justifies human destruction and modification of the environment

Dr. Steven Best, Associate Professor of Philosophy and Humanities, University of Texas, El Paso, “From Earth Day to Ecological Society,” 2004, http://www.drstevebest.org/FromEarthDay.htm, accessed 4-27-14. To build modern civilization, humans drained marshes, dammed rivers, chopped down rainforests, and massacred billions of animals. In place of wilderness, they constructed vast empires of glass, steel, and concrete with no regard for ecology and harmonizing the social and natural worlds. In a mad pursuit of “development,” modernity reduced continents of wild grasslands to a few nature preserves, as biodiversity increasingly survives within the cages of zoos and frozen test tubes of DNA. Our conquest of nature -- our “progress” -- is measured by the number of skyscrapers, freeways, car dealers, fast food joints, and strip malls. People think no “growth” means no progress, but the truth is just the opposite. “Growth” is the mantra of every politician, the mentality no bureaucrat dare question. In his 2004 State of the Union address, Bush denounced steroid use in athletes and attacked gay marriage but said nothing about mounting environment problems. Society ignores the fact that trumpeted increases in jobs, productivity, consumer confidence, home construction, and the Gross National Product come about only through ever-greater strain on ecological systems. As Mathis Wackernagel of the Sustainability Program of Redefining Progress puts it, “the human economy is liquidating the Earth’s natural capital.” The human presence has grown so great that in a significant sense it has brought about what Bill McKibbin calls the “end of nature.” Now that the human species has altered the world’s climate, there is not a raindrop or breeze that is not somehow influenced or altered by its existence. And through the genetic revolution science has begun to refashion the genetic structure of plants, animals, and humans, mixing genes from any species at will in a “second genesis” and new alphabet soup of DNA. Faustian visionaries project immanent futures where science designs genetic ubermenschen and humanity shapes its own evolution through active choice. As in Michael Crichton’s novel, Jurassic Park, the new hubris will confront the debacle of unintended consequences and pay the price for its attempt to rewire billions of years of genetic programming in a rapid and reckless way.
1. **Focusing on discourse reinforces the human/nature divide**


Although we acknowledge the important contribution of poststructuralism to analyses of oppression, privilege, and power in education, we believe that educators must continue to probe its limitations and implications. Accordingly, we consider here how poststructuralism, as it is taken up within critical pedagogy, tends to reinforce rather than subvert deep-seated humanist assumptions about humans and nature by taking for granted the “borders” (as in Giroux, 1991) that define nature as the devalued Other. We ask what meanings and voices have been pre-empted by the virtually exclusive focus on humans and human language in a human-centred epistemological framework. At the same time, we discuss how relationships between language, communication, and meaningful experience are being conceptualized outside the field of critical pedagogy (in some cases from a poststructuralist perspective) to call into question these very assumptions. Although we concentrate primarily on societal narratives that shape understandings of human and nature, we also touch on two related issues of language: the “forgetting” of nonverbal, somatic experience and the misplaced presumption of human superiority based on linguistic capabilities. In so doing, our intention is to deal constructively with some of the anthropocentric blind spots within critical pedagogy generally and within poststructuralist approaches to critical pedagogy in particular. We hope to illuminate places where these streams of thought and practice move in directions compatible with our own aspirations as educators.

2. **Focusing on language separates us from the rest of the world**


This “organic apartheid” (Evernden, 1992, p. 119) is bolstered by the belief that language is an exclusively human property that elevates mere biological existence to meaningful, social existence. Understood in this way, language undermines our embodied sense of interdependence with a more-than-human world. Rather than being a point of entry into the webs of communication all around us, language becomes a medium through which we set ourselves apart and above. This view of language is deeply embedded in the conceptual framework of critical pedagogy, including poststructuralist approaches. So too is the human/nature dichotomy upon which it rests. When writers assume that “it is language that enables us to think, speak and give meaning to the world around us,” that “meaning and consciousness do not exist outside language” (Weedon, 1987, p. 32) and that “subjectivity is constructed by and in language” (Luke & Luke, 1995, p. 378), then their transformative projects are encoded so as to exclude any consideration of the nonhuman. Such assumptions effectively remove all subjects from nature. As Evernden (1992) puts it, “if subjectivity, willing, valuation, and meaning are securely lodged in the domain of humanity, the possibility of encountering anything more than material objects in nature is nil” (p. 108). What is forgotten? What is erased when the real is equated with a proliferating culture of commodified signs (see Luke & Luke, 1995, on Baudrillard)? To begin, we forget that we humans are surrounded by an astonishing diversity of life forms. We no longer perceive or give expression to a world in which everything has intelligence, personality, and voice. Polyphonic echoes are reduced to homophony, a term Kane (1994) uses to denote “the reduced sound of human language when it is used under the assumption that speech is something belonging only to human beings” (p. 192). We forget too what Abram (1996) describes as the gestural, somatic dimension of language, its sensory and physical resonance that we share with all expressive bodies (p. 80). The vast forgetting to which these scholars allude is a culturally and historically specific phenomenon. In Western culture, explains Evernden (1992), it is to the Renaissance that we owe the modern conceptualization of nature from which all human qualities, including linguistic expression, have been segregated and dismissed as “projection.” Once scoured of any normative content assigned to humanity, nature is strictly constrained, knowable, and ours to interrogate (pp. 28, 39–40, 48). It is objectified as a “thing,” whereas any status as agent or social being is reserved for humans (Haraway, 1988, p. 592).
Anthropocentrism Link: Economic Growth

1. Growth focus ensures our doom—we need to incorporate long-term thinking and build a nonhierarchical society

Our crude material definitions of growth and progress must be replaced with psychological and ecological meanings and benchmarks. Human behavior and thinking from now on must be ecologically-focused. Before we do anything we must first consider the long term impact of our actions on the earth, other species, and future generations. In the words of social ecologist, Murray Bookchin, the only solution to our environmental crisis "is rooted in an ecological philosophy, ethics, sensibility, image of nature, and, ultimately, an ecological movement that will transform our domineering market society into a nonhierarchical cooperative society -- a society that will live in harmony with nature because its members live in harmony with each other." When society does consider the need for change, such as on Earth Day, it stops far short of needed courses of action. If they recognize a crisis, people think somehow science, technology, or the market will find the solutions. No god will save us. There is no reform measure or technofix for systemic problems; solutions require a radical reorganization of everything from our psyches and worldviews to our technologies, economies, and social relations.

2. Marketization and growth mindsets are fundamentally incompatible with biocentrism

Dr. Ted Mosquin, formerly of University of Alberta and University of California-Berkeley and Stan Rowe, Emeritus Professor, University of Saskatchewan, "A Manifesto for Earth," BIODIVERSITY v. 5 n. 1, 2004, p. 7-8.
The chief threat to the Ecosphere’s diversity, beauty and stability is the ever-increasing appropriation of the planet’s goods for exclusive human uses. Such appropriation and over-use, often justified by population overgrowth, steals the livelihood of other organisms. The selfish homocentric view that humans have the right to all ecosystem components – air, land, water, organisms – is morally reprehensible. Unlike plants, we humans are “heterotrophs” (other-feeders) and must kill to feed, clothe and shelter ourselves, but this is no license to plunder and exterminate. The accelerating consumption of Earth’s vital parts is a recipe for destruction of ecodiversity and biodiversity. Wealthy nations armed with powerful technology are the chief offenders, best able to reduce consumption and share with those whose living standards are lowest, but no nation is blameless. The eternal growth ideology of the market must be renounced, as well as the perverse industrial and economic policies based on it. The Limits to Growth thesis is wise. One rational step toward curbing exploitive economic expansion is the ending of public subsidies to those industries that pollute air, land or water and/or destroy organisms and soils. A philosophy of symbiosis, of living compatibly as a member of Earth’s communities, will ensure the restoration of productive ecosystems. For sustainable economies, the guiding beacons are qualitative, not quantitative. “Guard the health, beauty and permanence of land, water, and air, and productivity will look after itself” (E.F. Schumacher - Small is Beautiful).

3. Western growth mindset is incompatible with environmental ethics--threatens both us and other species

The deep ecology movement has as its primary focus the reversal of the ecological crisis. To deep ecology, the well-being and flourishing of both human and nonhuman life on Earth have value in and of themselves. These values are independent of the usefulness of the nonhuman world for human purposes. Based on this principle (the first principle of the 8-principle deep ecology platform which forms the unifying principles of the deep ecology movement), deep ecology critiques the Industrial Growth Society as being fundamentally anthropocentric, or human-centred. From the standpoint of this worldview, western culture views the Earth as something outside of itself, raw materials to manipulate, shape, exploit in any way required to meet not only vital needs but also increasingly inflated desires whose satisfaction requires endless consumption. Rather than seeing ourselves as one strand in a complex living web, western culture paints a picture of humans as the crown of all creation or the measure of all being. We see ourselves much like a spider that can tear out any strands of the web she wishes because she has the power to remake the web. Of course this is not so with the biological fabric; humankind is inextricably embedded in the Earth and the Earth community. This way of seeing ourselves as something separate is illusory and is now jeopardising not only the lives of many other species but ourselves as well. For as we all know, we have grossly weakened the web of life not only through the tremendous loss of species but also global warming, nuclear radioactivity, loss of topsoil, genetic engineering, poisoning and scarcity of water worldwide…the list goes on. While industrial culture represents itself as the only acceptable model for development, its destructive technology destroys cultural and biological diversity tooth and nail in the name of human convenience and profit. One can only wonder, at what point will this web be so weakened that it will collapse?
**Anthropocentrism Link: ‘Ecosystem Services’ Focus**

1. **They try to make nature work in the service of humanity—we should not try to understand ecosystems through our own ideals and values**


Human wellbeing is more likely to be secured if we work in the service of nature rather than attempt to force nature to work in the service of humanity. The success of ecology and evolution is attributable to subscription to the philosophical principles of naturalism and pragmatism, neither of which admit romantic, spiritual, moral, or other humanist constructs. Currently, however, environmental science is investing heavily in the idea of ecosystem services which mixes naturalism and pragmatism with humanism. It imagines that we can select those ecological and evolutionary processes that fit humanist ideals while eliminating all others. I suggest that this immiscible blend of philosophies is untenable. Natural science has revealed a biosphere that is governed by nothing that maps well onto humanist ideals. The biosphere is not designed to serve a single species and will collapse if we force it to do so. The way forward is to think less about ecosystems servicing or disserving humanity, and to think more about humanity living in the service of nature as all species do. This idea should not be confused with pantheism, enslavement to dark Malthusian fears, or cold-hearted adherence to evolutionary principles like survival of the fittest—such primitive thinking is as much a formula for planetary demise as blind faith in ecosystem services. Rather, I propose that living in the service of nature yields a biosphere in which all of life prospers and, in so doing, achieves the environmental sustainability that is a necessary precursor to attaining humanist ideals.

2. **Describing ecosystems in terms of “services” imports human values into our understanding of nature**


Viewing nature in humanity’s service, as the ecosystem-service construct does, requires judging ecological and evolutionary processes and outcomes centered on human values. If judgment is based solely on human values, however, then any aspect of nature that does not serve us well will be seen as an environmental problem, something that needs to be fixed. Some go so far as to refer to anything nature does that seems not in our favor as an ecosystem disservice (e.g., Dunn 2010; Limburg et al. 2010; Power 2010; Escobedo et al. 2011), which reflects a complete subscription to the belief that everything revolves around humanity. This anthropocentric perspective is akin to the second-century thinking of Ptolemy of Alexandria who viewed the Earth as the center of the universe. Although counter theories existed long before Copernicus’s famous heliocentric theory of the sixteenth century, in which the sun rather than the Earth was placed at the center of the cosmos, finally displaced the Ptolemaic, there was tremendous appeal to the idea that Earth was at the center so the natural science construct persisted for perhaps 2,000 years. The Ptolemaic view concerned earth as a central sphere among other spheres. The ecosystem-service construct concerns humanity, or the anthrosphere, as the center of the biosphere. From an ethical standpoint, humanity’s place may be at the center, but such a view is not scientific. One might argue that our singularly massive impact on the biosphere places us at the center, so perhaps this Ptolemaic-like perspective is scientifically defensible, but I leave this for others to address.
Anthropocentrism Link: ‘Environment’ Discourse

1. "Environment" discourse is anthropocentrism--foregrounds people

Dr. Patrick Curry, Lecturer, Religious Studies, University of Kent, "Green Ethics and the Democratic Left," SOUNDINGS v. 35, 2007, pp. 66-75.

So it is no longer a question of why ‘the environment’ should concern politics and the left, but how it does. The point of this article is to sketch some answers. To some extent, I am following on from Noel Castree’s excellent earlier contribution, although my position is more radical and therefore ultimately (I would argue) more realistic. To begin with, the very word ‘environment’ is not a good place to start. Its meaning (‘that which surrounds’) already relegates the natural world to something whose primary if not only point is to support and showcase ‘us’; and such an attitude is itself, as I hope to show, part of the problem. For this reason, I prefer ‘ecology’ – as long as we refuse scientific ownership, and accept that it has other equally important dimensions, from political to psychological-spiritual.

2. "Environment" marginalizes non-human nature--is tied to objectivist, rationalist philosophies that destroy the planet


To begin with, let me point out something about each of two major and apparently contrasting approaches to nature. First, there is the clear complicity of objectivism, realism and rationalism – culminating, potentially and often actually, in scientism – in the ecological crisis. Such approaches are united in maintaining and propagating the idea of the “environment” (a word that already does a lot of work marginalizing nonhuman nature) as essentially a mere setting for the human drama, most of which comprises a set of passive resources for the advancement of human interests, with the latter being the most, or even only, ethically considerable kind. This anthropocentric utilitarianism blends seamlessly with an even more impoverished and impoverishing economies, enshrining individualistic self-interest-maximisers. Now such ideas are abstract, but their effects – proceeding largely through the principal institutionalised forms of modernity: corporate capital, the nation-state, and modern science and technology – are anything but.

3. Vague references to the "environment" reveal the human-centrism of their thought--it is only given meaning and value once we figure out how to tame and use it

Stan Rowe, Emeritus Professor, University of Saskatchewan, "What on Earth is Environment," THE TRUMPETER, v. 6 n. 4, 1989, pp. 123-126.

Of all the words commonly used in discussions of ecological integrity and deterioration, "environment" is surely the vaguest. That it stands for something important is attested by the many agencies and departments of government that busy themselves with managing its parts and by the army of environmentalists eager to defend them. Yet beyond general statements pointing up, down, and around, to the air, soil, water, food, forests, wildlife, natural resources, wilderness, parks, cities, culture, society, and especially whatever impacts on community health, few agree about the exact referent of the word "environment." The Australian Environment Protection Act defines "environment" as "including all aspects of the surroundings of man whether affecting him as an individual or in his social groupings." A proprietary essence is distilled by the Canadian Study Group on Environmental Assessment Hearing Procedures in identifying environment as "a collectively shared property." Ontario's Act Respecting Environmental Rights gives a more detailed and representatively chaotic definition, taking environment to mean: (a) air, land or water, (b) plant and animal life, including people, (c) the social, economic and cultural conditions that influence the life of people or a community, (d) any building, structure, machine or other device or thing made by people, (e) any solid, liquid, gas, odour, heat, sound, vibration or radiation resulting directly or indirectly from the activities of people, or (f) any part or combination of the foregoing and tile interrelationships between any two or more of them, in or of Ontario. Note that after brief mention of "air, land or (sic) water", the focus is determinedly on people in their cultural setting. This is typical of the strong bias toward socioeconomic concerns that tends to dominate not only provincial but also federal Environmental Assessment and Review Processes, deftly substituting people problems for those of the broader sustaining milieu which accordingly suffers neglect. The difficulty stems from perceptions that humanity is in control of the world, possessing it as property, successfully shaping it through the cultural tools of science and technology. This pre-ecological attitude, popularized particularly by Marxists, conceives "mere" Nature and "brute" Nature as little more than dross until assimilated purposefully by humans into rational-intentional forms. Nature is an erratic, disorderly bitch to be tamed, domesticated, and reformed in the service of humanity. Hence the deduction that the important environment is the built environment, along with its socio-economic culture.
Anthropocentrism Link: ‘Environment’ Discourse [cont’d]

4. Even the genealogy of "environment" revels its human-centeredness

Stan Rowe, Emeritus Professor, University of Saskatchewan, "What on Earth is Environment," THE TRUMPETER, v. 6 n. 4, 1989, pp. 123-126.

The etymology of "environment" offers no easy path out of the morass created by hazy concepts. The word is derived from the French 'virer,' to turn, whence 'in/viron' meaning to encircle. To encircle implies a centre, suggesting that other things of greater interest lie within. Thus, nebulous "environment" surrounds more sharply defined realities, such as organisms and people, from which at second hand it derives its status. A subtle sycophant, environment used in this way reflects back to peoples' preoccupation with themselves. Environment's self-effacement is the source of its problems. If it is merely peripheral, consisting of the secondary odds and ends that surround people, then people are obviously more important than it. Hence, in the crunch when choices must be made, say between more industrial development to enrich and bedizen humanity versus less industrial development to protect and maintain the environment in beauty, health and permanency, the response is: "First things first, and let environment take its chances." After all, which is more important: people or tropical forests, farmers or fertile soils, jobs or environment? Furthermore, by extension of the same logic, if society does not continually increase industrial development, forcing economic growth both domestically and internationally by fostering trade and consumption, then where will the wealth come from to clean up the environment? The message is clear: "Seek first a vibrant economy, for wealth will cure all ills." In the words of the Brundtland Commission, the key to progress is forceful economic growth! Flying in the face of such logic are the worsening problems of chemical changes in the atmosphere, of water pollution, soil degradation, and food toxification as economic development intensified by population growth gathers speed world-wide. Today's problems suggest that whatever the people-encircling "environment" may be, its importance far exceeds that conveyed by the weak word. Behind the verbal disguise lies a reality greater than "that which (merely) surrounds organisms." Indeed this latter definition, adequate for biologists narrowly fixated on biota, must be replaced by one more substantial; namely, the planetary ecological system in which organisms are encapsulated as parts. Recognition of the global ecosystem as the objective thing behind environment's facade will mark a major conceptual advance for the human race.
**Anthropocentrism Link: Environmental Ethics / Environmentalism**

1. ‘Environmentalism’ lacks any significant meaning—is no different that shallow ecology


   Initially, the term environmentalism may have served as an adequate focus for our discourse. It captured and expressed the public desire to embrace a new ethic, new values, and prompted deep thought about our relationship with the environment. But the meaning of the term has been so diluted over time that commentators have noted that it is now on a par with apple pie and motherhood, something most people embrace and only a few view unsympathetically. Today, environmentalism seems to suggest a posture supportive of environmental laws as they exist or with moderate reforms. It may be that environmentalism today lacks a core meaning distinct from the dominant human-centered utilitarian ethic. Use of the word “environmentalism” does not lead to thoughtful engagement with the ethical and practical problems that arise under the current dominant ethic. It is a question mark too often used as a period.

2. Environmental ethics only deal with the symptoms, not the cause of the eco-crisis

   Eccy de Jonge, Lecturer, Middlesex University, SPINOZA AND DEEP ECOLOGY, 2004, p. 5.

   In Chapter 1 we shall address deep ecology’s relationship to environmental ethics. This relationship is tenuous, for while deep ecology does not claim to be an environmental ethics, it clearly upholds positions which are normative in essence. What distinguishes deep ecology from environmental ethical theory is their differing approaches to the environmental crisis. Deep ecologists believe that environmental ethics only deals with the symptoms of the crisis, without explaining its root cause. Deep ecologists believe this root cause lies in an attitude of anthropocentrism, which, once realized, can be undermined. Since environmental ethics concerns itself with understanding our moral responsibility to nature and non-human beings, it is generally not considered relevant what particular attitude we, as human beings, should take to ensure the rights, interests or functions of other beings. What matters is that they are morally considered and not exploited.

3. Normative ethics are unnecessary—the alternative fosters a better relationship with the rest of the world

   Eccy de Jonge, Lecturer, Middlesex University, SPINOZA AND DEEP ECOLOGY, 2004, p. 5-6.

   Deep ecologists take a different stance. They claim the arguments put forward by ethicists are only temporary measures that will sooner or later fail to be persuasive. They believe that normative ethics goes against our natural inclinations – inclinations such as care and love which results in feelings of isolation and alienation towards the biological world. They believe that once we address the basic attitudes we hold towards nature, we will be able to develop a deeper understanding of why we see ourselves as separate and superior to nature, rather than developing a set of arguments to support an environmental ethics.
**Anthropocentrism Link: Human Centered Ethics**

1. **Basing environmental policy on what is good for humans is anthropocentric**


It is not surprising that anthropocentric arguments dominate discussions of policy: arguments for environmental preservation based directly on human interests are often compelling. Dumping toxic wastes into a community’s reservoir of drinking water is clearly an irrational act; in such a case, a discussion of ethics or value theory is not necessary. The direct harm to humans engendered by this action is enough to disqualify it from serious ethical consideration. Never-the-less, other actions in the field of environmental policy are not so clear: there may be, for example, cases in which there are competing harms and goods to various segments of the human population that have to be balanced. The method for balancing these competing interests gives rise to issues of equity and justice. In addition, and more pertinent to our argument, are cases in which human actions threaten the existence of natural entities not usable as resources for human life. What reason do we humans have for expending vast sums of money (in positive expenditures and lost opportunities) to preserve endangered species of plants and animals that are literally nonresources? In these cases, policies of environmental preservation seem to work against human interests and human good.

2. **Anthropocentrism is the root cause of the environmental crisis**


Three most significant and pressing factors contributing to the environmental crisis are the ever increasing human population, the energy crisis, and the abuse and pollution of the earth’s natural systems. These and other factors contributing to the environmental crisis can be directly linked to anthropocentric views of the world. The perception that value is located in, and emanates from, humanity has resulted in understanding human life as an ultimate value, superior to all other beings. This has driven innovators in medicine and technology to ever improve our medical and material conditions, in an attempt to preserve human life, resulting in more people being born and living longer. In achieving this aim, they have indirectly contributed to increasing the human population. Perceptions of superiority, coupled with developing technologies have resulted in a social outlook that generally does not rest content with the basic necessities of life. Demands for more medical and social aid, more entertainment and more comfort translate into demands for improved standards of living. Increasing population numbers, together with the material demands of modern society, place ever increasing demands on energy supplies. While wanting a better life is not a bad thing, given the population explosion the current energy crisis is inevitable, which brings a whole host of environmental implications in tow. This is not to say that every improvement in the standard of living is necessarily wasteful of energy or polluting to the planet, but rather it is the cumulative effect of these improvements that is damaging to the environment. The abuses facing the natural environment as a result of the energy crisis and the food demand are clearly manifestations of anthropocentric views that treat the environment as a resource and instrument for human ends. The pollution and destruction of the non-human natural world is deemed acceptable, provided that it does not interfere with other human beings. It could be argued that there is nothing essentially wrong with anthropocentric assumptions, since it is natural, even instinctual, to favour one’s self and species over and above all other forms of life. However, it is problematic in that such perceptions influence our actions and dealings with the world to the extent that the well-being of life on this planet is threatened, making the continuance of a huge proportion of existing life forms “tenuous if not improbable” (Elliot 1995: 1). Denying the non-human world ethical consideration, it is evident that anthropocentric assumptions provide a rationale for the exploitation of the natural world and, therefore, have been largely responsible for the present environmental crisis (Des Jardins 1997: 93).
Anthropocentrism Link: Human Centered Ethics [cont’d]

3. Anthropocentric reasoning is inherently pro-development—makes ecological destruction inevitable


This issue of justice arises because the policy discussion has been limited to a consideration of human interests. If the criterion for policy decisions is the maximization of human satisfactions or benefits, then it becomes appropriate—even mandatory—to ask questions about the distribution of these benefits. In this way, issues of justice, in general, serve to limit and complement teleological criteria for the determination of policy. In the context of Third World environmental development, however, considerations of justice override any plausible account of benefits resulting from the preservation of the natural environment. The need for economic development seems so great that the hypothetical long-term effects on global warming appear trivial. If we restrict our analysis of policy to the maximization of human welfare and to the creation of just social institutions, then we cannot escape the problem created by the Third World’s need for economic development. Conceived as a problem in maximizing and balancing human goods, the scales incline toward policies of development. The demand for anthropocentric justice dooms the preservation of the natural environment.

4. Anthropocentrism cannot be the basis of real environmental ethics—cause the crisis, too narrow in its worldview


I argue that anthropocentric value systems are not suitable to the task of developing a comprehensive environmental ethic. Firstly, anthropocentric assumptions have been shown to be largely responsible for the current environmental crisis. While this in itself does not provide strong support for the claim, it does cast a dim light on any theory that is informed by such assumptions. Secondly, an environmental ethic requires a significantly wide range of focus. As such, it should consider the interests of a wide range of beings. It has been shown that anthropocentric approaches do not entertain the notion that non-human entities can have interests independent of human interests. "Expansionist", "conservationist" and "preservationist" approaches only acknowledge a value in nature that is determined by the needs and interests of humans. Thirdly, because anthropocentric approaches provide a moral account for the interests of humans alone, while excluding non-humans from direct moral consideration, they are not sufficiently encompassing. An environmental ethic needs to be suitably encompassing to ensure that a moral account is provided for all entities that constitute the environment. It could be argued that the indirect moral concern for the environment arising out of an anthropocentric approach is sufficient to ensure the protection of the greater environment. In response, only those entities that are in the interest of humans will be morally considered, albeit indirectly, while those entities which fall outside of this realm will be seen to be morally irrelevant. Assuming that there are more entities on this planet that are not in the interest of humans than entities that are, it is safe to say that anthropocentric approaches are not adequately encompassing. Fourthly, the goals of an environmental ethic should protect and maintain the greater environment. It is clear that the expansionist approach, which is primarily concerned with the transformation of nature for economic return, does not meet these goals. Similarly, neither does the conservationist approach, which is arguably the same as the expansionist approach. The preservationist approach does, in principle satisfy this requirement. However, this is problematic for such preservation is based upon the needs and interests of humans, and "as human interests and needs change, so too would human uses for the environment" (Des Jardins 1997: 129). Non-human entities, held captive by the needs and interests of humans, are open to whatever fancies the interests of humans. In light of the above, it is my contention that anthropocentric value systems fail to provide a stable ground for the development of an environmental ethic.
Anthropocentrism Link: Identity Politics

1. **Identity-based politics fail—replicated hierarchies by preferencing their cause to that of others**

   Eccy de Jonge, Lecturer, Middlesex University, SPINOZA AND DEEP ECOLOGY, 2004, p. 13.
   Fox's main objection to counter-movements (for example the woman's movement) is that they fail to be sufficiently egalitarian - and thus reinforce anthropocentrism by privileging only their own cause. As a result, `rather than attempting to replace the ideology of anthropocentrism with some broader, ecocentrically inclined perspective, these countermovements have only served to reinforce it.' Fox seeks to show that it is not the inclusion of sub-classes within the social paradigm that is deeply problematic but the paradigm itself, which needs to be undermined. `whatever class of social actors one identifies as having been most responsible for social domination and ecological destruction (e.g., men, capitalists, whites, Westerners), one tends at the most fundamental level to find a common kind of legitimation for the alleged superiority of these classes over others and, hence, for the assumed rightfulness of their domination of these others. Specifically, these classes of social actors have not sought to legitimate their position on the grounds that they are, for example, men, capitalists, White. or Western per se, but rather on the grounds that they have most exemplified whatever it is that has been taken to constitute the essence of humanness (e.g. being favored by God or possessing rationality).'

2. **Social justice focus backfires—leads to the footnoting of eco-centrism**

   When the demands for redistribution of money, power, and wealth, in the short-term, between more wealthy and less wealthy societies, between genders, between age groups, between politically defined ethnic groups, and so forth, become the primary agenda of social activists, there is a danger, as George Sessions has concluded, of "the demise of the ecology movement" because social justice concerns frequently replace concern for the ecological integrity of the Earth (Sessions 1995b, 1995c ).
   While many social issues can be addressed simultaneously, even if a utopian social justice society could be established, it may be on a planet that is rapidly losing biodiversity, primary forests, and free nature.
Anthropocentrism Link: Political Engagement

1. It is too late to act to ‘save’ the environment—we need to embrace the idea that we can do nothing to fix our current predicament


Faced with what seems to be a looming environmental crisis spiralling out of control and an awareness of a history of human action which has caused this crisis, the reaction of many environmentalists is, contra Hawking, not to run away to another habitat but to call for new forms of action. The call for urgent political and social action to change human behaviour in relation to the environment is echoed globally not only by environmentalists and activists but also by celebrities and politicians. The response is highly modern in the sense that a problem such as global warming is not considered to be something ordained by fate or the outcome of divine providence. Instead it is understood as something caused by human action for which humans bear the responsibility and, further, that disaster may still be averted if we act in such a way to change the course of history. The move towards critical historical reflection, the assuming of responsibility, and action guided by such an attitude, is certainly a better approach than shutting one’s eyes to the violence and errors of human history or placing blind faith in technology. Indeed, criticism of these latter views is heard from within eco-ethics circles themselves, either by labelling such endeavours as ‘technofix’ or ‘technocentric’ (Smith, 1998), or by criticizing the modes of action of green-politics as ‘eco-bureaucracy’ and ‘men-politics’ (Seager, 1993). However, even if we try to avoid falling into the above patterns, maybe it is actually too late to change the course of the events and forces that are of our own making. Perhaps a modern discourse or belief in the possibilities of human action has run aground, hamstrung by its own success. Perhaps the only forms of action available are attempts to revert to a pre-industrial lifestyle, or a new radical form of action, an action that lets go of action itself and the human claim to continued habitation within the world. In this case, the action of cosmic colonisation envisaged by Hawking would not be enough. It would merely perpetuate a cycle of destructive speciesist violence. Further, general humanist action, guided by some obligation of ‘care’ for the environment, would also not be enough as it could not overcome an individual’s complicity in systematic and institutional speciesist violence.

2. Traditional politics fail—will simply be out-spent by corporate interests


Many people around the world today are deeply concerned about the decline of the planet, its eco-systems and its species and, on a smaller scale, the deterioration of their local environments and bio-regions. Frustrated at the slow pace of public education and consciousness raising efforts, they see their respective legal systems as “courts of last resort.” “We can write stronger laws,” they think, “and we can force those who are destroying our planet and damaging our environments to change their ways.” But those on the front lines who are actually trying to do this—the advocacy groups and the environmental lawyers working with them—have a more realistic and more pessimistic perspective. They realize that, while they are winning some battles, they are losing the war to save the planet. They can’t compete against the seemingly unlimited resources of those large corporations and governments that see destruction of the environment as “collateral damage” in the struggle to create global economies. Part of the problem is the biased nature of the legal systems and the corresponding human jurisprudences on which they are based. They continually promote the interests of the human community while affording no real protection to other species, or to the planet itself. Trying to use a human jurisprudence system to recognize and protect the rights of other species is a bit like sending the fox to guard the chickens.
4. **Human systems of law are incompatible with eco-justice--are inevitably human centered**

Mike Bell, management consultant, "Thomas Berry and an Earth Jurisprudence," THE TRUMPETER v. 19 n. 1, 2003, p. 75-76.

First, a human jurisprudence is, by definition, a system of laws designed to recognize the pre-eminence of the human species. One of the definitions for jurisprudence offered by the Oxford English Dictionary is “the science which treats of human laws.” It is unlikely that a human jurisprudence can serve as a suitable framework for an Earth jurisprudence. If our human jurisprudence were inclined to recognize and protect the rights of other species, it would have done so long before now. But it has never done this, not even through environmental legislation that is designed to protect other species for the benefits they bring to our human species. Far from protecting the Earth and other species in their own right, our human jurisprudence systems have continually protected the rights of humans over and against the rights of non-humans. Second, our human jurisprudence systems, like our Western science and political systems, are reductionist in nature. They respond to the needs of individuals (including corporations that are given “person” status), and they are based on the individual ownership of property. An Earth justice system requires a jurisprudence that recognizes the rights of all species as they interact with one another. It must be holistic in nature and have the capacity to embrace whole eco-systems that can’t be reduced to their individual components. Third, by their very nature, our human jurisprudence systems are adversarial in nature. They pit one individual or corporate entity against another. There are winners or losers—but very few winners and winners. But in the delicate balance of nature, there are no zero-sum games. If one species wins and another other loses, all species ultimately lose. Thus, an Earth jurisprudence must foster and promote mutually enhancing benefits and be built on the principle of mediation. This does not mean simply to use mediation as tool as our human jurisprudence systems occasionally do. Fourth, our human jurisprudence systems are, in many respects, legal systems rather than justice systems. They tend to favor the rich and powerful—those who can afford to pay for strong legal counsel, for example—over the poor and the weak. They tend to favor the rights of large corporations over the rights of weaker individuals. Given these inherent tendencies within our human jurisprudence systems, it is unlikely that these systems will give voice to those species that have no voice (at least no voice that we can understand). In making these comments, I am not trying to impugn or cast aside all of our human jurisprudence systems. Despite their limitations, in many cases they work quite well. But it is unlikely that they will work for the interests of the non-human species and, therefore, will not provide a suitable framework for the development of an Earth jurisprudence. This leaves us in search of an alternative.

4. **“Doing good” within our own social spheres it not enough—our very participation in modern institutions perpetuates environmental destruction**


In one sense, the human individual’s modern complicity in environmental violence represents something of a bizarre symmetry to Hannah Arendt’s notion of the ‘banality of evil’ (Arendt, 1994). For Arendt, the Nazi regime was an emblem of modernity, being a collection of official institutions (scientific, educational, military etc.) in which citizens and soldiers alike served as clerks in a bureaucratic mechanism run by the state. These individuals committed evil, but they did so in a very banal manner: fitting into the state mechanism, following orders, filling in paperwork, working in factories, driving trucks and generally respecting the rule of law. In this way perhaps all individuals within the modern industrial world carry out a banal evil against the environment simply by going to work, sitting in their offices and living in homes attached to a power grid. Conversely, those individuals who are driven by a moral intention to not do evil and act so as to save the environment, are drawn back into a banality of the good. By their ability to effect change in only very small aspects of their daily life, or in political-social life more generally, modern individuals are forced to participate in the active destruction of the environment even if they are the voices of contrary intention. What is ‘banal’ in this sense is not the lack of a definite moral intention but, rather, the way in which the individual’s or institution’s participation in everyday modern life, and the unintentional contribution to environmental destruction therein, contradicts and counteracts the smaller acts of good intention. The banality of action hits against a central problem of social-political action within late modernity. In one sense, the ethical demand to respond to historical and present environmental destruction opens onto a difficulty within the relationship between moral intention and autonomy. While an individual might be autonomous in respect of moral conscience, their fundamental interconnection with and interdependence upon social, political and economic orders strips them of the power to make and act upon truly autonomous decisions. From this perspective it is not only the modern humanist figures such as Hawking who perpetuate present violence and present dreams of colonial speciesist violence in the future. It is also those who might reject this violence but whose lives and actions are caught up in a certain complicity for this violence. From a variety of political standpoints, it would seem that the issue of modern, autonomous action runs into difficulties of systematic and institutional complicity.
Anthropocentrism Link: Postmodernism

1. Postmodernisms are incompatible with our alternative--both views nature as a social construct and denies the objective truth of the continuing eco-crisis


Later postmodernists (Foucault, Derrida, and Lyotard), Zimmerman points out, have "focused on human and social and cultural airs, thus minimizing Levi-Strauss's and Heidegger's criticism of modernity's assault on nature" (p. 92). Ross, for example, attacks environmentalists for promoting the "Neoromantic" idea that primary peoples lived in harmony with their environment. Thus, there has been a complete reversal, by contemporary urban anthropocentric postmodernists, of Levi-Strauss's early postmodernist position. Zimmerman further points out that postmodernists, in addition to their view of Nature as a "social construct", also reject any concept of "objective" truth. Again, as a holdover from Marxist doctrine, postmodernists claim that "what passes for objective truth is a construction generated by power-interested elites" (p. 93). And so, when 1575 of the world's leading scientists from 69 countries signed the "World Scientist's Warning to Humanity" in 1993, claiming that "Human beings and the natural world are on a collision course...A great change is required...if vast human misery is to be avoided and our global home on this planet is not to be irretrievably mutilated", this statement would be construed by postmodernists not as an attempt at an objective statement and warning about the ecological state of the world, but rather as a self-serving conspiratorial "power-play" on the part of the "elitist" scientists involved. As Zimmerman puts it, "To counter the power elite's hegemonic grip on truth, postmodern theorists maintain that "truth' should result from nego-

2. Their position is simply anthropocentric cultural relativism


But what if people of color, and others, are mistaken that these so-called "alarmist threats" are unjustified, that, on the contrary, they accurately portray the contemporary ecological "state of the world"? Would this awareness then serve to undercut the Marxist-postmodernist "power elite" theory of truth? And just what is the status of this sociological and relativistic analysis of truth? Is it an empirical claim capable of being falsified? Or is it an empty tautology, an "article of faith"? Based, as it is, on an inevitable psycho/social conflict model of human relationships, it should arouse suspicion that these epistemological doctrines conveniently serve to bolster a particular ideology and the anthropocentric social/political agendas of Marxists and postmodernists. To a logician's ear, this analysis of truth (in which the emphasis is not on what is claimed and how it is documented, but rather on who and which social group says it) amounts to an immense ad hominem fallacy. Furthermore, the epistemological alternatives are not exhausted by (1) some absolute irrevocable theory of pristine "objective" truth versus its polar opposite in the (2) cynical elite "power-play" interpretations of the postmodernists. It is possible, for instance, to be a philosophical skeptic with regard to absolute truth and ultimate human knowledge (as I tend to be) and yet not subscribe to the postmodernist "power elite" theory of truth. With no "objective" truth to be found, for example, from the biological and other sciences, and with Nature conceived of as a social construct (a "social category"), the fate of the Earth, and the destinies of wild creatures and ecosystems, is to be decided anthropocentrically by the desires of the affected peoples and cultures of the world: through human compromise, negotiation, and, as Zimmerman puts it, by humans "contesting Earth's future." These postmodernist doctrines, of course, make hash out of the claims by Deep Ecologists and conservation biologists that the independent reality and integrity of the Earth's wild ecosystems, biodiversity, and evolutionary processes have intrinsic value and must be protected for their own sakes, for the ecological health of the Earth, and for the ultimate well-being of humans who are embedded in these processes. These postmodernist views have prompted a leading conservation biologist, Michael Soule, to edit a recent collection ( Reinventing Nature?: Responses to Postmodern Deconstruction, Island Press, 1994) which takes issue with postmodernism's anthropocentric cultural relativism.
3. Viewing the world as a social construct is anthropocentric


Each part is introduced by an informative and insightful introduction by the editor George Sessions. I find his discussion of the illusion of a human "second nature" and his critique of the anthropocentrism of the thinkers of the New Age phenomenon particularly valuable. The conception that reality is "a social construct" or that nature is a "social category" is anthropocentric, sets humanity apart, and perpetuates a belief system responsible for the environmental crisis, argues Sessions. Often the view that "reality is a social construct" is promoted in the humanities and social sciences without considering the status and value this view assigns to non-human living beings. Philosophical traditions that lead to a denial of the objective and independent reality of the ecosystem manifest from the Deep Ecology point of view species egoism. Many New Age thinkers also believe that the destiny of humans is to transcend the natural world and replace the wild evolutionary process with a human controlled artificial environment. The New Age, argues Sessions, is a continuation of philosophical and religious anthropocentrism and is, therefore, no ally of Deep Ecology.

4. Their kritik does not go far enough--it challenges Eurocentrism, but fails to address the real problem, anthropocentric humanism


The idea that humans have a universal genetically-based human nature is one of the major areas of disagreement between Deep Ecologists and Marxist/postmodernists. The latter, harkening back to older Enlightenment/social science humanist views of humanity's uniqueness, separation from Nature, and visions of total human freedom, hold that humans are not genetically hardwired for anything in particular: the future for humanity is totally open. Theodore Roszak once argued that urban intellectuals have a special responsibility to address the ecological "planetary emergency" (Person/Planet, 1978, pp. 271-82). Shepard's theory may help explain why it is so difficult for them to do so. Postmodern deconstructionists have deconstructed certain ethnocentric aspects of Eurocentrism (although ecpoliticians and environmental historians have also been deconstructing Eurocentrism beginning at least with Thoreau). But these urban theorists have yet to deconstruct the biases of their own Enlightenment anthropocentric humanism, their antipathy to such modern sciences as anthropology, biology, and genetics which cast a new and important light on the universality of human nature and, perhaps most importantly, their profound alienation from wild nature. It seems clear that they would be much closer to the mark today if they had followed the lead of one of their founders, the anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss.

5. Postmodern philosophies are thoroughly anthropocentric


Davis accuses Ross and other postmodernist urban intellectuals (and their boomer generation followers) of being thoroughly anthropocentric and committed exclusively to social justice in the current "politically correct" form of "multiculturalism": "When postmodernists hear Nature, they reach for their revolvers. [Much of] this is motivated in part by the threat hardcore [radical] ecology poses to postmodernism's most visibly progressive rhetoric: the politics of diversity. For if you take into account this planet's intense profusion of critters and habitats - now increasingly put to the knife by the relentless spread of human civilization - then the rainbow multiplicity of "contested identities" starts looking more and more like a monoculture in motley guise." By way of some historical background, Michael Zimmerman points out, in Contesting Earth's Future, that postmodern deconstructionism arose in the 1960's when disillusioned French intellectuals turned away from Marxism (p. 91). And much of the basic Marxist orientation still lingers in their theorizing. So it is no surprise, then, that Ross adheres to the Marxist anthropocentric and relativistic doctrine of the social construction of all knowledge about nature - that Nature is a "social category". Ross claims that "what we know about nature is what we know and think about our own cultures."
Anthropocentrism Link: Reform / Shallow Ecology

1. Calls of reformism and moderation will destroy us—they cannot get at the root of the problem

Dr. Steven Best, Associate Professor of Philosophy and Humanities, University of Texas, El Paso, “Crisis and the Crossroads of History: The Need for a Radicalized Citizenry,” updated 5-14-12, http://www.drstevebest.org/CrisisAndTheCrossroads.htm, accessed 4-27-14.

Who will rise to the challenge? Politicians are too corrupt, cowardly, and beholden to corporate money to act; they are part of the problem, not the solution. The media have long ago abandoned their responsibilities to inform. Themselves giant corporate powers, they uphold elitist agendas and respond to ratings and profit imperatives not public interest. Their business is entertainment not enlightenment. Mainstream organizations such as Greenpeace publicize much and accomplish little, absorbed in the task of collecting the money that fuels their bureaucratic machines. Organizations such as the United Nations Conference on the Environment commission research, hold conferences, release reports, and warn of catastrophe. But the media doesn’t cover it, the public doesn’t hear about it, and the Corporate Titans turn a deaf ear. Let’s face facts: After decades of environmental struggles, we are nevertheless losing ground in the battle to preserve species, ecosystems, and wilderness. Increasingly, calls for moderation, compromise, and the slow march through institutions can be seen as treacherous and grotesquely inadequate. In the midst of predatory global capitalism and biological meltdown, “reasonableness” and “moderation” seem to be entirely unreasonable and immoderate, as “extreme” and “radical” actions appear simply as necessary and appropriate. To borrow a phrase from Martin Luther King, we need armies of “creative extremists” who are most intemperate in their struggle against injustice, exploitation, and destruction of the earth.

2. Shallow ecological approaches are mere managerialism, still instrumentalize nature


This kind of ethics, being anthropocentric, views non-human nature as possessing only instrumental value. In other words, it has value only insofar as it enables humans to survive and flourish. This is the ethics of managerialism or, in theistic terms, stewardship. It has its place – some nonhuman nature survives on sufferance – but that place is not the almost unquestioned dominance it now exercises. In the UK, for example, it rules not only city and local planning offices everywhere but stretches from the newly ‘green’ Conservative Party and corporate boardrooms (themselves sometimes slightly in advance of the current Labour government: what a sad comment to have to make!) across the spectrum to the Green Party itself, wherein socialism, feminism, anti-racism etc. can certainly be found, but very little concern for nonhuman nature for its own sake. That is what ecocentrism entails: a respect, legitimately extending to reverence, for non-human nature as much as humanity, for its intrinsic value rather than as an instance of that oxymoron, enlightened self-interest. For the purer self-interest is the more it is, precisely, unenlightened. By the same token, I think Castree is in danger of putting too much hope in “social democratic greens”, unless they are seriously pressured, at least, by a deep or dark-green green movement which will virtually need to avoid mainstream institutionalization in order to escape cooption and neutralization.

3. Mild reforms are inadequate—we need a radical restructuring


In a short essay, "Modesty and the Conquest of Mountains,” Naess reflects that " . . . modesty is of little value if it is not a natural consequence of much deeper feelings, and even more important in our special context, a consequence of a way of understanding ourselves as part of nature in a wide sense of the term. This way is such that the smaller we come to feel ourselves compared to the mountain, the nearer we come to participating in its greatness. I do not know why this is so” (Naess 1979, 16). In the face of a crisis of planetary scale, some radical environmentalists argue that mild reforms in public policy and practices are basically useless. Deep changes in society require a ‘paradigm shift’ from the dominant modern paradigm of industrial civilization to a “new environmental paradigm” or “new ecological paradigm” (Catton 1980b; Drengson 1980).
Anthropocentrism Link: Reform / Shallow Ecology [cont’d]

4. Shallow ecology justifies action based on human needs alone

Although a conservation ethic had been around for decades (Nash, 1989) before the publication of books such as Carson's Silent Spring (1962) and studies such as The Limits to Growth (Meadows et al., 1972), Arne Naess took environmental philosophy into new areas with his call for a 'deep ecology'. In 1973, Naess provided a summary of a lecture given the year before in Bucharest at the World Future Research Conference. That short article (Naess, 1973) was to take on paradigm-shifting proportions. It introduced us to a terminology that has since become commonplace. Naess (1973: 95) points out that a shallow but influential ecological movement and a deep but less influential one compete for our attention. He characterizes the 'shallow' ecological movement as one that fights pollution and resource depletion in order to preserve human health and affluence, while the 'deep' ecological movement operates out of a deep-seated respect and even veneration for ways and forms of life, and accords them an 'equal right to live and blossom'.

5. Even preservationist approaches to the environment are anthropocentric—reduce nature to the service of humanity

Fox identifies three broad approaches to the environment informed by anthropocentric assumptions, which in reality are not distinct and separate, but occur in a variety of combinations. The "expansionist" approach is characterised by the recognition that nature has a purely instrumental value to humans. This value is accessed through the physical transformation of the non-human natural world, by farming, mining, damming etc. Such practices create an economic value, which tends to "equate the physical transformation of 'resources' with economic growth" (Fox 1990: 152). Legitimising continuous expansion and exploitation, this approach relies on the idea that there is an unending supply of resources. The "conservationist" approach, like the first, recognises the economic value of natural resources through their physical transformation, while at the same time accepting the fact that there are limits to these resources. It therefore emphasises the importance of conserving natural resources, while prioritising the importance of developing the non-human natural world in the quest for financial gain. The "preservationist" approach differs from the first two in that it recognises the enjoyment and aesthetic enrichment human beings receive from an undisturbed natural world. Focusing on the psychical nourishment value of the non-human natural world for humans, this approach stresses the importance of preserving resources in their natural states. All three approaches are informed by anthropocentric assumptions. This results in a one-sided understanding of the human-nature relationship. Nature is understood to have a singular role of serving humanity, while humanity is understood to have no obligations toward nature. Such a perception represents "not only a deluded but also a very dangerous orientation to the world" (Fox 1990: 13), as only the lives of human beings are recognised to have direct moral worth, while the moral consideration of non-human entities is entirely contingent upon the interests of human beings (Pierce & Van De Veer 1995: 9). Humanity is favoured as inherently valuable, while the non-human natural world counts only in terms of its use value to human beings. The "expansionist" and "conservationist" approaches recognise an economic value, while the "preservationist" approach recognises a hedonistic, aesthetic or spiritual value. They accept, without challenge, the assumption that the value of the non-human natural world is entirely dependent on human needs and interests. None attempt to move beyond the assumption that nature has any worth other than the value humans can derive from it, let alone search for a deeper value in nature. This ensures that human duties retain a purely human focus, thereby avoiding the possibility that humans may have duties that extend to non-humans. This can lead to viewing the non-human world, devoid of direct moral consideration, as a mere resource with a purely instrumental value of servitude. This gives rise to a principle of 'total use', whereby every natural area is seen for its potential cultivation value, to be used for human ends (Zimmerman 1998: 19). This provides limited means to criticise the behaviour of those who use nature purely as a warehouse of resources (Pierce & Van De Veer 1995: 184).
**Anthropocentrism Link: Resources**

1. **“Resource” is itself anthropocentrism—assumes that it is there for the use of people**


As I indicated in a previous post, the word "resources" is problematic because it implies materials are placed on this planet for the use of people. We see finite substances and the living planet as materials to be exploited for our comfort. Examples of intense anthropocentrism are so numerous in the English language it seems unfair to pick on this one word from among many. And, as with most other cases, we don't even think about these examples, much less question them (cf. sustainability, civilization, economic growth). My only justifications for singling out "resources" are the preponderance with which the word appears in contemporary media, the uncritical acceptance of resources as divine gifts for Homo sapiens, and previous posts on a few of the other obvious examples. I'll start with definitions, straight from the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary.

**Resource:** 1 a: a source of supply or support : an available means --usually used in plural b: a natural source of wealth or revenue --often used in plural : c: a natural feature or phenomenon that enhances the quality of human life d: computable wealth --usually used in plural : e: a source of information or expertise.

All these definitions imply an anthropogenic basis for resources, and c is particularly transparent on this point. Digging a little further, the etymology of "resource" brings us directly to lifelong bedfellows anthropocentrism and Christianity. "Resource" is derived from the Old French "resourdre" (literally, to rise again), which has its roots in the Latin "resurgere" (to rise from the dead; also see "resurrection"). From this etymology, it's a simple step back in time to Aristotle's "final cause" (which followed his material cause, efficient cause, and formal cause). Aristotle posited that, ultimately, events occurred to serve life, particularly the life of humans. This anthropocentric take on causality grew directly from the philosophy of Aristotle's teacher Plato, who focused his philosophy on separating humans from nature while popularizing the feel-good notion that humans have immortal souls. The idea that humans have souls, which was subsequently discredited by the (western) science that grew from humble Grecian roots, became the basis for Christianity, one of three Abrahamic religions that developed in the Mediterranean a few centuries after Plato learned from Socrates and then taught Aristotle. Considering the history of western thought, it's no surprise we view every element on Earth as feedstock for industrialization. The only question is when we exploit Earth's bounty, not if. The logical progression, then, is to exploitation of humans to further feed the industrial machine.

2. **Social ecology (Bookchin) is insufficient—still justifies atrocities against other beings**


Social ecologists and “eco-humanists” such as Murray Bookchin condemn the industrialization of animal abuse and killing but never challenge the alleged right to use animals for human purposes. Oblivious to scientific studies that document reason, language, culture, and technology among various animal species, Bookchin rehearses the Cartesian-Marxist mechanistic view of animals as dumb creatures devoid of reason and language. Animals therefore belong to “first nature,” rather than the effervescently creative “second nature” world of human culture. Like the Left in general, social ecologists fail to theorize the impact of animal exploitation on the environment and human society and psychology. They ultimately espouse the same welfarist views that permit and sanctify some of the most unspeakable forms of violence against animals within current capitalist social relations, speaking in the same language of “humane treatment” of animal slaves used by vivisectors, managers of factory farms and slaughterhouses operators, fur farmers, and bosses of rodeos and circuses.
Anthropocentrism Link: Rights

1. Rights discourses place humans at the center of social/economic order—reinforce the binary


One of the organizing narratives of western thought and the institutions it has shaped is humanism and the idea that human beings are at the core of the social and cultural order. The cultural critique humanism has endured, by way of academic theory and social movements, has focused on the failure of its promise of universal equal treatment and dignity for all human beings. To address this failing, a rehabilitative approach to humanism is usually adopted with advocates seeking to undo humanism’s exclusions by expanding its ambit and transporting vulnerable human groups from “subhuman” to “human” status. Law has responded by including more and more humans under the coveted category of “personhood”. Yet, the logic of the human/subhuman binary typically survives this critique with the dependence of the coveted human status on the subhuman (and the vulnerabilities it enables) going unnoticed. This gap in analysis is evident in how most of us think about violence and its related concept of vulnerability. Some would even say that what sets us apart from nonhumans is a capacity for vulnerability. Others who address human-nonhuman relationships more closely might say that what sets human apart from nonhuman animals, if anything, is our capacity for violence. More particular still, feminists would highlight the masculinist orientation of this violence against nonhumans, animals and otherwise, noting that institutionalized violence against nonhumans primarily occurs in male-dominated industries. Yet, the discourse around (hu)man violence against animals is muted in mainstream debates about violence, vulnerability and exploitation in general. More common is a concern with violence against humans and how to eliminate it and make humans less vulnerable. This theorizing largely proceeds through affirmations of the inviolability or sanctity of human life and human dignity, establishing what it means to be human through articulation of what it means to be animal. The humanist paradigm of anti-violence discourse thus does not typically examine the human/nonhuman boundary, but often fortifies it. The failure to address this boundary and its creation and maintenance of the figure of the subhuman undermines anti-violence agendas.

3. Rights discourses fail, reinforce the binary—we are better off collapsing it


That the human/subhuman binary continues to inhabit so much of western experience raises the question of the continuing relevance of anthropocentric concepts (such as “human rights” and “human dignity”) for effective theories of justice, policy and social movements. Instead of fighting dehumanization with humanization, a better strategy may be to minimize the human/nonhuman boundary altogether. The human specialness claim is a hierarchical one and relies on the figure of an Other – the subhuman and nonhuman – to be intelligible. The latter groups are beings, by definition, who do not qualify as “human” and thus are denied the benefits that being “human” is meant to compel. More to the point, however, a dignity claim staked on species difference, and reliant on dehumanizing Others to establish the moral worth of human beings, will always be vulnerable to the subhuman figure it creates. This figure is easily deployed in inter-human violent conflict implicating race, gender and cultural identities as we have seen in the context of military and police camps, contemporary slavery and slavery-like practices, and the laws of war – used in these situations to promote violence against marginalized human groups. A new discourse of cultural and legal protections is required to address violence against vulnerable humans in a manner that does not privilege humanity or humans, nor permit a subhuman figure to circulate as the mark of inferior beings on whom the perpetration of violence is legitimate. We need to find an alternative discourse to theorize and mobilize around vulnerabilities for “subhuman” humans. This move, in addressing violence and vulnerabilities, should be productive not only for humans made vulnerable by their dehumanization, but nonhumans as well.
Anthropocentrism Link: Risk Assessment

1. Risk assessment is used to justify projects that disproportionately hurt women, minorities, and the poor


The degradation of the environment is fundamentally tied to the disproportionate burden placed on the disenfranchised members of our society: minorities, women, and the poor. Several environmental philosophies have emerged - among them Deep Ecology, Ecological Feminism, and Bioregionalism - to attempt to explain how it became acceptable to exploit the environment while endangering the health of certain groups of humans in the name of economic development. In this section, a brief review of these ecological philosophies, as well as an examination of industrial risk analysis, are presented as possible explanations for the origins of environmental injustice. Industries and governments use risk analysis to determine whether to allow projects to move forward. "When landscapes and ecosystems are regarded as commodities, then members of an ecosystem, including human beings, are treated as 'isolated and extractable units.'” Industrial risk analysis determines how much exposure is acceptable in terms of "one-in-a-hundred-thousand or one-in-a- million additional 'acceptable' deaths for toxic chemical exposure." While neutral on its face, risk analysis serves as a means for justifying disproportionate treatment for some "acceptable" percentage of an exposed human population. However, this method is fundamentally flawed because there is no set standard for which tests to use in determining risks. Therefore, extremely different conclusions can be reached about the same risk depending on which tests are used. When a potentially hazardous project is being proposed, if it is a well-organized and economically well-off community, the community members will be able to come up with their own risk analysis numbers showing an unacceptable risk resulting in permit denial. However, if the negative impact is going to fall mainly on people who are not able to fight back, then the project will most likely go ahead with a risk analysis showing an acceptable risk by the permitting agency. There are alternatives to risk analysis that will be discussed infra, in the solutions for achieving environmental justice section.

2. Biocentrism rejects industrial risk analysis


Deep Ecology is an ecological philosophy that places humans within the context of ecological systems rather than outside or central to the system. In addition, humans are considered to be equal, not superior or more important, in value to other components of an ecological system. It is a science based philosophy in that it is based on the connections of an ecological system, but it is also a true philosophy in that it encourages humans to delve "deep" into their fundamental values. Arne Naess, considered the father of Deep Ecology, has developed a set of seven tenets which, when considered together, would form a type of ecological consciousness. The fourth tenet focuses on anti-class posture. "Diversity of human ways of life is, in part, due to (intended or unintended) exploitation and suppression on the part of certain groups. The exploiter lives differently from the exploited, but both are adversely affected in their potentialities of self-realization." Naess and supporters of Deep Ecology believe that if we could focus on the impact of all of our actions on everything in the system (and importantly place humans within the system) that we could achieve social justice and live in harmony with the environment. Another one of the tenets is to fight against pollution and resource depletion. Taken together, these two tenets describe environmental justice: to treat all people equally while reducing pollution. Naess believes that when one of the tenets is considered independently problems will arise, and either the environment or a class of people will suffer. Therefore, Deep Ecology requires inclusive, open thinking rather than the current industrial risk analysis focus that we now predominately use when determining whether to allow a polluting industry to develop or continue, or when determining where they can dump their hazardous waste.

3. We need to reject the industrial, risk-assessment model


Deep Ecologists also believe that We must make fundamental changes in basic values and practices or we will destroy the diversity and beauty of the world, and its ability to support diverse human cultures." Like bioregionalists, supporters of Deep Ecology believe that we must shift our focus from a global economy to a local economy. We must do this to preserve not only biological diversity, but also cultural diversity. If we continue to follow the risk-analysis industrial model then we will be unable to protect the diversity of human cultures, let alone biological diversity. Deep Ecology, therefore, like bioregionalism and ecofeminism, calls for a rejection of the industrial model in favor of adopting ecocentric values: place-specific, ecological wisdom, and vernacular technology practices. These will vary by place due to the variance in culture, resources, and topography.
Anthropocentrism Link: Rorty / Pragmatism

1. Rorty's politics fail--are rooted in the anthropocentric assumptions of Judeo-Christian thought, and at best produce a failed, reactionary response to the environmental crisis


Rorty’s view of the ideal political system that will maximize the freedoms of ironist individuals (i.e., autonomous individuals) is based on a number of cultural assumptions that can be traced back to early Hebrew and Christian theology, and to the Enlightenment tradition of thinking that now underlies modern society: the linear organization of time that trivializes the cycles of the natural world, the progressive nature of change, the efficacy of abstract ideas, the individual as an autonomous rational and moral agent, and the anthropocentric universe. The identification of these cultural assumptions is critical to understanding why Rorty’s liberalism represents the ultimate irony; that is, how the anthropocentric cultural assumptions underlying what many Western thinkers regard as the most progressive and enlightened way of thinking have been turned into a reactionary position by the ecological crisis. For all his protestations about metaphysical thinkers who want to discover truth and then impose their final vocabulary upon others, Rorty’s own thinking is deeply rooted in the Western myth of progress. For example, in the struggle between metaphysicians and ironists he sees the latter prevailing. This same sense of progress is expressed in his argument that we should “see language as we now see evolution, as new forms of life constantly kill off old forms . . .” While he rejects the idea of cosmic design or a purpose being worked out in the evolutionary process, he nevertheless retains the assumption that a life based on continual doubt, and the acceptance of contingency, represents a progressive process—just as his reference to Mill’s formulation of a liberal society is framed by a view of political evolution that is progressive in nature.

2. Rorty's politics and theory only make things worse--they create a form of liberalism that cannot address the ecological crisis


This brings us to the real source of the double bind; namely, the form of liberalism Rorty proposes we adopt in the name of progress is reactionary in terms of bringing our cultural patterns into sustainable balance with the life sustaining eco-systems. Before considering why Rorty’s arguments lead to one of the most reactionary and nihilistic formulations of modern liberalism it is essential to summarize what has now become part of the daily news coverage on the damage being done to different systems that constitute the biosphere upon which human life depends. According to numerous scientific reports, the demands of a rapidly expanding human population (which increased nearly 3 billion over the last 50 years) on natural systems are contributing to a greenhouse effect that threatens major disruptions in other areas of the biosphere, including the fertility of soils already depleted by our overuse of petrochemicals and availability of usable fresh water. The increasing devastation of tropical forests (about 27 million acres a year) and loss of species diversity among plants and animals continues unabated. To this alarming list must be added the vast amounts of toxic wastes being poured into the atmosphere, onto the land, and into the water systems. That human cultures may be close to crossing critical thresholds in the capacity of natural systems to sustain life is a possibility that is being given serious consideration by both national and international agencies that are monitoring a growing body of scientific evidence. Aside from the numbers of people in Africa and Asia who are starving (or perilously close) in numbers that overwhelm our capacity to comprehend fully what is happening and how to respond, we must also recognize that the wealthy countries of the world (which constitute only a fourth of the population) consume 80 per cent of the world’s commercial energy, and that 40 per cent of all the carbon dioxide building up in the atmosphere is emitted by the seven most wealthy countries of North America and Europe. The figures and trends cited here should now be familiar to anybody who has even the most casual contact with the media. But what the litany of daily news reports on the worsening condition of the environment fail to address is the way in which cultural beliefs and practices contribute to the deepening crisis. It is against this background of rapid environmental degradation that Rorty’s ideas must be judged. Rorty’s arguments on the nature of language and thought, as well as his attempt to extrapolate a coherent set of ideological guidelines for living a personally and socially meaningful life, are framed in a vocabulary that has wide appeal to people who still believe in the emancipatory and progressive vision of liberalism. Unfortunately, readers who identify with his messianic political vocabulary may lose sight of the fact that the ecological crisis is the most important challenge we face. In assessing the adequacy of Rorty’s ideas for meeting this challenge, we must also keep in mind that the stream of liberalism he proposes to revitalize served as the ideological engine of the Industrial Revolution that treated the earth as an exploitable resource. As one of the central arguments being advanced here is that this stream of liberalism (as well as its more technocratic mutations) is exacerbating the cultural forces that continue to degrade the earth’s eco-systems, it is important to avoid treating the vocabulary of liberalism as sacrosanct. We must also be open to considering the possibility that primal cultures that have evolved ecologically sustainable ways of knowing may have more relevance for addressing the current imbalance between cultural demands and life-sustaining capabilities of eco-systems than the ideas of leading philosophers like Richard Rorty.
Anthropocentrism Link: Science / Rationality

1. Rationality and claims to objective knowledge drive the eco-crisis


Now it can hardly be doubted that the modernist rationalisation of the natural world, its consequent disenchantment, and its subsequent commodification play an integral role in driving the ongoing global ecocrisis. And in this process, the objectivist ideologues of techno-science – together with massed ranks of utilitarian ‘managers’, many armed with Environmental Impact Assessments and cost-benefit analyses – are a far bigger and more intractable part of the problem than any number of constructionist university departments of literature, cultural studies and so on. Nonetheless, members of the latter might want to ask themselves whether they want to add a little intellectual polish to the former programme, effectively acting, in Gary Snyder’s bitter words, as ‘the high end of the “wise use” movement’? At the very least, their modernist view of nature – no less among postmodernists in other respects, such as Richard Rorty – effectively disables any ability to effectively oppose its current exploitation and destruction by those whose values and policies they otherwise abhor.

2. Claims that a particular way of knowing is "scientific" is a mere power move--designed to exclude other ways of knowing and being


The universal would spread in openness. The globalising local spreads by violence and misrepresentation. The first level of violence unleashed on local systems of knowledge is to not see them as knowledge. This invisibility is the first reason why local systems collapse without trial and test when confronted with the knowledge of the dominant west. The distance itself removes local systems from perception. When local knowledge does appear in the field of the globalising vision, it is made to disappear by denying it the status of a systematic knowledge, and assigning it the adjectives ‘primitive’ and ‘unscientific’. Correspondingly, the western system is assumed to be uniquely ‘scientific’ and universal. The prefix ‘scientific’ for the modern systems, and ‘unscientific’ for the traditional knowledge systems has, however, less to do with knowledge and more to do with power. The models of modern science which have encouraged these perceptions were derived less from familiarity with actual scientific practise, and more from familiarity with idealised versions of which gave science a special epistemological status. Positivism, verificationism, falsificationism were all based on the assumption that unlike traditional, local beliefs of the world, which are socially constructed, modern scientific knowledge was thought to be determined without social mediation. Scientists, in accordance with an abstract scientific method, were viewed as putting forward statements corresponding to the realities of a directly observable world. The theoretical concepts in their discourse were in principle seen as reducible to directly verifiable observational claims. New trends in the philosophy and sociology of science challenged the positivist assumptions, but did not challenge the assumed superiority of western systems. Thus, Kuhn, who has shown that science is not nearly as open as is popularly thought, and is the result of the commitment of a specialist community of scientists to presupposed metaphors and paradigms which determine the meaning of constituent terms and concepts, still holds that modern ‘paradigmatic’ knowledge, is superior to pre-paradigmatic knowledge which represents a kind of primitive state of knowing.

3. Scientific discourses insulate themselves against change--claim to be more knowing and superior to other methods


Horton, who has argued against the dominant view of dominant knowledge, still speaks of the ‘superior cognitive powers’ of the modes of thought of the modern scientific culture which constitute forms of explanation, prediction and control of a power unrivalled in any time and place. This cognitive superiority in his view arises from the ‘openness’ of modern scientific thinking and the ‘closure’ of traditional knowledge. As he interprets it, ‘In traditional cultures there is no developed awareness of alternatives to the established body of theoretical levels, whereas in the scientifically oriented cultures, such an awareness is highly developed.’ However, the historical experience of non-western culture suggests that it is the western systems of knowledge which are blind to alternatives. The ‘scientific’ label assigns a kind of sacredness or social immunity to the western system. By elevating itself above society and other knowledge systems and by simultaneously excluding other knowledge systems from the domain of reliable and systematic knowledge, the dominant system creates its exclusive monopoly. Paradoxically, it is the knowledge systems which are considered most open, that are, in reality, closed to scrutiny and evaluation. Modern western science is not to be evaluated, it is merely to be accepted. As Sandra Harding has said: Neither God nor tradition is privileged with the same credibility as scientific rationality in modern cultures,... The project that science's sacredness makes taboo is the examination of science in just the ways any other institution or set of social practises can be examined.
4. **Scientific knowledge systems actively crowd out and destroy other ways of knowing--they create a literal monoculture of the mind**


Over and above rendering local knowledge invisible by declaring it non-existent or illegitimate, the dominant system also makes alternatives disappear by erasing and destroying the reality which they attempt to represent. The fragmented linearity of the dominant knowledge disrupts the integrations between systems. Local knowledge slips through the cracks of fragmentation. It is eclipsed along with the world to which it relates. Dominant scientific knowledge thus breeds a monoculture of the mind by making space for local alternatives disappear, very much like monocultures of introduced plant varieties leading to the displacement and destruction of local diversity. Dominant knowledge also destroys the very conditions for alternatives to exist, very much like the introduction of monocultures destroying the very conditions for diverse species to exist. As metaphor, the monoculture of the mind is best illustrated in the knowledge and practise of forestry and agriculture. ‘Scientific’ forestry and ‘scientific’ agriculture, split the plant artificially into separate, non-overlapping domains, on the basis of separate commodity markets to which they supply raw materials and resources. In local knowledge systems, the plant world is not artifically separated between a forest supplying commercial wood and agricultural land supplying food commodities. The forest and the field are in ecological continuum, and activities in the forest contribute to the food needs of the local community, while agriculture itself is modelled on the ecology of the tropical forest. Some forest dwellers gather food directly from the forest, while many communities practise agriculture outside the forest, but depend on the fertility of the forest for the fertility of agricultural land. In the ‘scientific’ system which splits forestry from agriculture and reduces forestry to timber and wood supply, food is no longer a category related to forestry. The cognitive space that relates forestry to food production, either directly, through fertility links, is therefore erased with the split. Knowledge systems which have emerged from the food giving capacities of the forest are therefore eclipsed and finally destroyed, both through neglect and aggression.

5. **The scientific enterprise is deeply anthropocentric**


Scientific objectivists also share with the great majority of social constructionists an anthropocentric worldview that denies agency and value to nonhuman nature. Human beings are held to be unique, and uniquely valuable, either in their ability to grasp the scientific truth or their status as culture-bearing, and especially linguistic, animals. Such hypostatisation of the linguistic conflates it with the discursive in order to render nature conveniently ‘mute’. The contrasting view is, of course, ecocentrism, which locates value and agency within nature as such, including, but not limited to, humanity: what David Abram aptly calls the “more-than-human world”. The vital point is that a genuine and consistent relational pluralism does not restrict the network of relations and perspectives that constitute all entities to human ones alone, because it recognises that the latter are, in all cases and respects, a subset of the open-ended, ongoing, embodied and embedded meanings that constitute life on Earth. Relational pluralism is thus necessarily (that is, within the parameters of this discourse) ecocentric. And conversely, recognizing the same effectively unbounded and therefore ultimately unmasterable field of more-than-human relations and perspectives as nature, ecocentrism is necessarily pluralist.

6. **Science places humanity at the center of the universe--need to reject this egotism**

Stan Rowe, Emeritus Professor, University of Saskatchewan, "What on Earth is Environment," THE TRUMPETER, v. 6 n. 4, 1989, pp. 123-126.

Ever since the Renaissance, epistemology has been strongly influenced by science with its analytic and objective method of obtaining knowledge. Within the same time span, as theism faded, humanity moved to the centre of ontology's stage. The ethic that emerged in harmony with science and humanism is the prevalent one of individuality and self-aggrandizement. If Homo sapiens is the central reality of the universe, then human rights are the sole focus of ethical concern. Further, science is the appropriate way of knowing, for what else so effectively promotes human interests and human power over everything else? But if things other than humans are of surpassing importance, as today's deteriorating world leads some to suspect, then the conventional mode of knowing and the conventional individualistic ethic are called into question. Reconception of reality, of what is centrally important, can open avenues of escape from tradition's species-centred ethic and the mode of knowing that serves it. What humanity's leading vision and direction will be is today's portentous question. The history of where humankind has been in thought and action, and how the race has arrived at its present difficulties, is interesting but less important. The modern age has produced many theories as to what has gone wrong but few visions of what, from here on, might go right. To fulfil its promise, ecological philosophy needs to launch an imaginative quest for an attractive, rational future. Wrong-way Vision To see the world inside-out is to see it wrongly. Yet that is precisely the perspective that people have brought to the interpretation of their role on Earth. The new vision, from outside-in, more accurately portrays the ecological reality. It reveals people, society, human institutions, as dependent within the encompassing context of the planet.
7. **Science and rationality cannot produce real sustainability--requires a re-enchantment with the wonder of the world**


Certain features could be said to be common to each of these, differentiating each from the mainstream of Western modernist thought: a sense of interrelationship; a love of the intangible Other; a delight in the unknown and the unknowable (yet perceivable, under the right circumstances); a belief that the whole is greater than the part will ever apprehend (including the human reason part), so an acceptance of both our power to be at one with nature and the healthy limitation of our powers; and a belief that there may be no ultimate technological answer, including no ultimate recipe for sustainability. I have argued elsewhere that scientific and critical realist readings of the environmental crisis tend to lack one or more of these crucial ingredients. The modernist obsession with control over both nature and society, though it has brought us many benefits, has, for example, tended to blind us to the fact that many of our most fulfilling experiences are encounters with the non-human, often when we are alone. A few weeks ago, I sat on a stile in a Wiltshire field and watched a fox as it approached me, stopped and looked at me while I looked at it, and we mutually failed to understand each other. A little later, I spent even longer observing gorillas in a zoo. (The very existence of zoos raises questions about environmental learning, of course.) We remember such things, I would suggest, because they disrupt, or make us question, or make us somehow aware of, our frames and remind us that there is always life beyond the narrow limits of our reason: life to which we are related in some way, though we cannot understand it. We are reminded, as Shakespeare wrote, that there is more in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophies. Some experiences can rattle our frames. So a sustainable world may be one that continues to contain more than we can understand. To bring about sustainability, thus defined, we have to leave open the possibilities for surprise and wonder by reminding ourselves that the real riches of living lie in the world beyond that which we control. Life can be perfect (cf. Kant's idea of the Beautiful) and awe-inspiring (the Sublime). Whether we can actually guarantee keeping a balance in what we cannot understand or control is a moot question, though we can certainly try to keep a balance within ourselves.

8. **Science-ism is inherently dangerous--rejects the spiritual and non-human, playing into the hands of those would destroy the planet**


Scientific humanists also attack those who perversely hold to the kind of experience of nature that most resistant to such a programme (and I quote O’Neill) for their “anti-scientific, mythologized and personalized picture of the natural world”. But such scientism is not merely question-begging in assuming that nature is exhausted by what natural science defines it as; in its contempt for all qualitative, sensuous and spiritual experience of nature as merely “secondary” in the Galilean sense (no coincidence), it plays directly into hands of those whose programme involves the further privatisation and manipulation of humanity and nonhuman nature alike. And in relation to the latter, I would just remind the reader that humanity already appropriated almost half of the planet’s photosynthetic energy, re-ordered and impoverished a massive amount of its land surface, and is currently driving forward a mass extinction of other species. In this context, a determination to cut ecologism to fit human interests and demands amounts to saying something like this: “Come come, be realistic. The ruling species will have its way, so rather than make unreasonable demands let us ask how we may soften the blow.” In short, by combining monist essentialism with anthropocentrism in ecological guise, the scientific humanists promulgate a particularly insidious form of “modernisation”. Not surprisingly, perhaps, most of the scientific humanists’ political provenance is broadly Marxist; but it seems fair to ask that with enemies of neo-liberal globalisation like this, what need has the latter of friends?

9. **Mechanically-driven solutions to the eco-crisis won’t work--it's a mere band aid**


What’s happening today is an increasing spread of mechanical technology, through outward institutions that are industrially and politically organized. But this external spread needs to be balanced by an inner depth of education. And that inner depth is achieved by going more deeply back, into common principles of knowing, beneath our different personalities. As a mechanical approach is spreading globally, it is quite naturally presenting us with global problems that now need urgent action through political and industrial institutions on a global scale. But this kind of urgent action is essentially patchy and short term. It’s like using surgical operations and chemical drugs to patch up a body that has been harmed by abusive attitudes and habits in a damaging life style. More deeply than such surgery and drugs, a longer term treatment is needed, to restore a patient’s health.
**Anthropocentrism Link: Science / Rationality [cont’d]**

10. **Scientific inquiry and discourses reduce the world to a mere machine to be broken down and understood**


What is the cause of our environmental crisis, which continues to worsen as we try to make things better? In one way, the answer is simple and obvious. Through recent developments in science, we have greatly developed our mechanical technologies in order to achieve particular objectives. But what we choose to achieve is desired by our minds, which are directed differently towards a variety of partial and conflicting achievements. As science is used to achieve our desired choices, their conflicts get played out in our living environment, which is shared in common by our bodies and our minds. That shared environment thus gets increasingly conflicted by our objective achievements, until we can find some way of resolving their inevitable partiality and their resultant conflicts. There’s nothing new, of course, about this problem of conflicting partiality. It has been understood since ancient times; and it has long been investigated in an old way that I think is still useful today. That old investigation starts by asking how it is that experience our environment. For each of us, it is experienced through a personal identity. A knowing person is identified at the centre of one’s own experience, and this knowing person is surrounded by a known world. An illustration is given in Figure 1 above. Here, one identifies oneself as a sort of knowing island made up of a perceiving body, with a thinking and feeling mind. This person is experienced as alive, through its perceptions, thoughts, and feelings about objects in the world. But there is something wrong with this personal identity. Its bodily perceptions are not properly knowing. They only show us partial appearances, of various objects in the world. To know things better, bodily perceptions have to be interpreted, through thoughts and feelings in the mind. Those thoughts and feelings enable us to put perceptions together, in fuller and more accurate descriptions of what has been perceived. We thus describe a structured world, which is made up from co-existing parts. Each object may be described macroscopically, as related to other objects in some larger structure. And each object may also be described microscopically, as made up of smaller parts. Our minds are here used to describe an objective world, which is made up like a machine, from smaller parts at various scales of size. This is the kind of mechanical description that has been so much emphasized by what is now called ‘modern physics.’ But, as we experience our environment, we find that it is not just mechanical. It is not just a structure made of objects. In the world’s objective structure, we find living purposes and meanings and values, which we understand by reflecting back into our minds. Through that reflection, we experience mind as a living process of continued learning. And we find life expressed – not just in our own personalities, but also in the objective world. It’s thus that our experience is not just mechanical. When mind is taken into count, our personalities are recognized organically, as taking part in a living environment.

11. **Science can only describe the world mechanically**


But what then is that living energy, and how can it be understood? It is an energy of inspiration, which inherently expresses value and meaning and purpose, in our personalities and in the world. And it can only be understood by reflecting back – through forms that we observe, through meanings we interpret and through qualities that we appreciate. This is an inward reflection, which takes us back to underlying consciousness, where the reflection is absorbed. Thus, reflecting inwardly, we understand an energy which is essentially organic. It is that energy which drives the process of experience in our lives. It is not a mechanical energy, which gets transacted from one object to another. Instead of being transacted by objects, it is recycled out and in – as it arises from underlying consciousness, and is returned back there again. Where science is mechanical, it studies nature as an external world, made up of objects that have been related into structures. These structures are described mechanically – as though they were carefully engineered machines that function in a calculated way, with results that are reliably predictable. Here, scientific theories work essentially through calculation. They are designed primarily to calculate predicted results. And the results are then tested and applied mechanically, through external instruments and machines, in a world of space and structure. But, in the organic approach of many ancient sciences, the emphasis is different. Here, science works primarily through education. Its theories must be tested and applied through a reflective investigation back into our living faculties – so as to train our natural capabilities, to clarify our confusions, and to correct our mistakes. From these two differing approaches, we get two rather different views of nature’s energy and life.
**Anthropocentrism Link: Sustainability**

1. **Shallow sustainability backfires--ends focus risks producing means that actually make us worse off**


   But, beyond this, there is also the logical point that ends, to which deep sustainability is relevant, are deeper than means, in the sense that they can (though they don't always) justify means. That the frames of mind from which our ends emerge go with the grain of nature gives point, as well as impetus, to the adaptation of our means to match; that we may have adapted our means to ecosystemic constraints says in itself nothing to support the human viability of the ends to which we have done so. If, indeed, we have thus adapted our means to unnatural or otherwise bad ends, that can actually make matters worse. That the society envisaged in our thought-experiment was bioeconomically sustainable might well be considered a worse thing for its sustainability overall than if it had not been | it would certainly mean that it warped and deranged human life for longer. And the practical corollary of this is also clear: concentrating firmly on bioeconomic sustainability, as we do now right across the public policy spectrum, we are quite likely to be taking as given ends which in fact jeopardize the overall likelihood of our policies' safeguarding a human future. So deep sustainability does seem to me to deserve its adjective.

2. **“Sustainability” is simply development in disguise, is deeply anthropocentric**


   Realists point to the fact that no human civilization has sustained itself for more than a few centuries. Civilizations overshoot the carrying capacity of their resource base, and due to changes in weather patterns, overcutting of forests, etc., go into decline. Sing Chew, professor of Sociology at Humboldt State University, documents this process from 3000 B.C. to 2000 A.D. in his book World Ecological Degradation: Accumulation, Urbanization, and Deforestation (Chew, 2001). In his article, "The Shaky Ground of Sustainability," historian Donald Worster concludes that "like most popular slogans, sustainable development begins to wear thin after a while. Although it seems to have gained a wide acceptance, it has done so by sacrificing real substance. Worse yet, the slogan my turn out to be irredeemable for environmentalist use because it may inescapably compel us to adopt a narrow economic language, standard of judgment, and world view in approaching and utilizing the earth” (in Sessions, 1995:418). Even more damning is Wolfgang Sachs conclusion that sustainability is the shadow of development. "Even bearing in mind a very loose definition of development, the anthropocentric bias of the statement springs to mind; it is not the preservation of nature is dignity which is on the international agenda, but to extend human-centered utilitarianism to posterity" (in Sessions, 1995:434).

3. **“Sustainability” is a bankrupt concept—need to embrace biocentrism**


   Neil Harrison, in his book Constructing Sustainable Development, concludes that sustainable development proposals are at least incomplete or impractical and at worst dangerously misleading (Harrison, 2001). The use of contested meanings of sustainability among Progressives shows that they have remained dangerously anthropocentric, impractical, and that they have failed to address the moral ambiguities of both technology and their own ideological agendas. Arne Naess, the famous philosopher who used the phrase deep, long-range ecology movement, concludes that the concept of sustainability can only be salvaged if "...(our discourse) rejects the monopoly of narrowly human and short-term argumentation patterns in favor of life-centered long-term arguments. It also rejects the human-in-environment metaphor in favor of a more realistic human-in-ecosystems and politics-in-ecosystems one. It generalizes more eco-political issues: from “resources” to “resources for”..." from “life quality” to “life quality for...”: from :consumption” to “consumption for...”' where “for...” is, we insert “not only humans, but other living beings” ” (in Sessions, 1995:452). Currently, cultural and social change is occurring very rapidly, and if Professor Sing Chew is correct, these changes may mean we are headed towards a new dark ages during which human population decreases rapidly and accumulation of capital radically decreases. In the past, during so-called dark ages of human civilizations, nature was able to renew its vitality after centuries of abuse by human civilizations. However, past civilizations were regional in location. Humans have never before experienced a globalized civilization which is causing massive human-caused extinctions of other species and human-caused massive changes in global climate patterns.
Anthropocentrism Link: Sustainability [cont’d]

4. Simply rendering our activity bio-benign is not enough—we need a change in mindset


It is crucial to be clear what is at issue here. The prospect invoked might not in fact be so utterly far-fetched in real life | the Danish political scientist Bjorn Lomborg has recently claimed that, 'in principle, covering just 2.6 per cent of the Sahara Desert with solar cells could supply our entire [energy] needs" (and perhaps we need only add to this some plausible assumptions about the potential for gene manipulation to substitute increasingly for the beneficial effects of biodiversity). But nothing is meant to turn on how defensible these claims actually are | nor is it to the point to respond that all such technological miracles performed to date have had hidden environmental costs that require us to answer the question in the negative just in virtue of the bioeconomic aspect. This is, precisely, a thought-experiment, intended to set aside disputes about likelihoods and exclude hidden costs ex hypothesis. We are to imagine a technological miracle that works. Imagining it, what is the answer? I think that, for many people, it must still be, emphatically: no, that couldn't be sustainability. Something essential to the idea would be betrayed under those conditions. However long such a civilization could (at least in principle) survive materially, it would still involve humans in living fundamentally against the grain of nature | and living against the grain of nature can't, intuitively, be sustainable. But what exactly is going against the grain here? The terms of the thought-experiment have guaranteed that neither our means to the end of prolonging our current way of life, nor the states of affairs handed on down the generations in which that prolongation consists, derogate overall from the biosphere's regenerative powers. What we must intuit to be unsustainable can only be to do with our having that kind of thing as an end | our wanting, and going on wanting, to live thus. It is not the form taken by our actions, but something much more like the frame of our minds, that must be running counter to the grain of nature. Take a frame of mind, in this sense, to be a loosely cohering set of dispositions to value and believe, together with tendencies to action, configured by a pattern of working values and beliefs which have sedimented, as it were, over time | amounting overall to a specific style of sense-making. At the level of a society we find various frames of mind embodied in a range of traditions, institutions, and practices: a menu of possible culturally-constituted takes on the world. Thus, at the broadest, we might distinguish the scientific from the religious frame of mind; and also the scientific, the religiose, the sceptical, the technicist, the managerial with other more specific options and hyphenations. On this basis, we might say that what was still tending against the grain of nature in our thought-experiment was the techno-managerialist frame of mind itself, as displayed in the determination to adapt and substitute the natural world so thorough-goingly, by technological means albeit bioeconomically sustainable, to subserve human preferences for the artefactual. I call the sense in which 'sustainable' is predicable of frames of mind, and then by extension of a society in which they predominate, deep sustainability.
**Anthropocentrism Link: Technology**

1. **Ecological crisis is driven by technological thinking—we need to change**

Klaus Klotstemaier, former head, Department of Religion, University of Manitoba, "Bypassing the Triple Gate to Ecological Hell," THE TRUMPETER v. 25 n. 1, 2009, p. 98-99.

Few would doubt that much of the ecological crisis is due to lobha, avarice and greed. Similarly it is fairly evident that krodha, anger and hatred, both against humans and nature, is responsible for much environmental depredation: the science-based technical revolution began with Francis Bacon's demand that nature be "put on the rack," to extort her secrets for the benefit of humanity. Moha, delusion and overreachs, is not only the root of lobha and krodha but it is also the root of the ecological crisis, designating the fundamental ignorance of modern humanity concerning its place in the cosmos leading to the hubris that tries to put nature under the control of technology. Indian traditions—Hindu, Buddhist and Jain—widely agree on the issue and they have a large amount of practical advice on how to counteract lobha, krodha, and moha. While traditional religious writers focus almost exclusively on the individual and the individual's salvation, one can apply, without forcing the issue, their teachings to humanity as a whole. Again, without doing violence to it, one can update traditional ethics and expand its principles so as to include issues not perceived at the time of their first articulation. L. G. Hewage, a prominent contemporary Buddhist scholar speaks of the need to address the "psycho-sphere" in which greed, hatred, and illusion are located, in order to get at the root of the ecological crisis. It has been stated often that in spite of all the technological advances, human nature has not changed very much within known history, and that the basic human drives have proven fairly constant through the ages and across different cultures: present humanity operates under the same human constants as former generations. The ecological crisis appears to be not so much a mere technological glitch that could be fixed by the very same technology that had caused it, but as culturally conditioned. In W. Ophuls' words: "The ecological crisis is primarily a moral crisis in which the ugliness and destruction outside in our environment simply mirror the spiritual wasteland within: the sickness of the earth reflects the sickness of the soul in modern industrial man, whose life is given over to gain, to the disease of endless getting and spending."

2. 'Big Science' is wasteful and military-oriented—fuels totalitarianism


It is now very clear, when looking at the historical array of 20th century “big science” projects, that knowledge and scientific curiosity without social compassion is dangerous and ultimately anti-life. Imperfect human beings can only make imperfect technologies, therefore, over a period of time, “accidents” become normal events. “Big science” projects also have become excessively costly (even when they perform poorly) and divert money away from more socially useful and meaningful areas. This is creating a major economic and ecological crisis in American society. An orbiting Space Station, the Superconducting Supercollider, the Hubble Space Telescope, the “Man on Mars” program, “Star Wars” and other astronomically expensive projects will cost 600 billion dollars or more. They all, to one degree or another, have some kind of military application and cater to the interests of relatively small and elite groups in American society which, in turn, will have control over them. It is in this sense that these technologies promote totalitarianism. These implications bode ill for social spending in the areas of public health, education, housing, homelessness, child care, environmental clean up and the prevention of species extinction, global warming, the greenhouse effect and acid rain. Humanity always has a waste problem to contend with after a “big science” project outlives its usefulness or becomes too dangerous for any life form to handle! Witness the entire nuclear fuel cycle. Technologies must not overwhelm life or the human spirit.

3. Technology is not neutral—it is the biggest threat to our existence


Technological progress is most seductive. Its elegance often times obscures the ethical, moral and political basis of its original and defining relationships. The history of cultural development makes it very clear that no tools or technologies are neutral. They are shaped by human beings who are in turn shaped by their creation; the measurement of time by time-pieces is a good example of this. This process has become intensified as the value of labor, productivity, and efficiency have increased, the products have become greater than the producer. Technologies impact on the political, sociocultural, environmental and economic realms of existence. It would appear, from the vantage point of the end of the 20th century, that the greatest threat to civilization is technological civilization itself. The greatest threat to modern civilization are its cultural products. The products of modern technological societies threaten the quality of life of these same societies.
Anthropocentrism Link: Technology [cont’d]

4. Promoting sustainability through technology is shallow ecology


During the 1980s and 1990s, shallow or reform environmental movements continued to emphasize the tenet that "sustainable economic growth and development" for both developed and "underdeveloped" societies is desirable, and indeed necessary, in order to achieve goals of cleaner air and water as well as protection of natural resources for sustained use by a growing human population (see the Bruntland Report, Our Common Future 1987, and Agenda 21 approved by the Rio Summit on Development and the Environment 1992). The subtext of all the major documents, based on reform environmentalism, is that an increasing population of humans will "sustainably" use increasing amounts of "natural resources" by efficiently using evolving technologies such as biotechnology, computer technology, nanotechnology, and energy technology. Most of the documents issued at world conferences on the environment fail to clearly answer the questions "what is being sustained," "how long is it being sustained," and "how will conflicts between priorities or between the short-term interests of various categories of people be resolved?" "How will priorities of the current generation of humans and future generations be resolved?"

5. Technology is a manifestation of the problem, not a solution to it


Deep Ecology constructs itself as a tradition going back to Thoreau, Muir, the rise of the science of ecology, Rachel Carson, and the perception of environmental crisis of the 1960s and 70s. The leading thinker of the Deep Ecology movement is probably the Norwegian philosopher and environmental activist Arne Naess. Naess noted already in 1972 that two environmental movements had arisen in the previous years, a shallow anthropocentric and technocratic movement interested primarily in resource depletion, pollution, and health, and an ecocentric "Deep, long-range Ecology movement. "The shallow view fails to understand that since the ecological crisis is caused by a mistaken human identity, the technological process can offer no solution to the ecological problems. Technology is itself a manifestation of the mind-set causing the problem. Never-the-less the ecological crisis functions for many to reinforce the belief in technology and consumerism. Since the Brundtland Report, the shallow view has been perpetuated in the concept "sustainable development."

6. Techno-focus risks destroying us--cannot replace the world, needs to be harnessed to moral purposes


The successes of civilization have become dangerous and deadly for many living things. Human beings are coming to rely more on their technological products rather than nature and natural systems. The ambiguous implications are profound. While technology can be incredibly destructive, it creates, develops and builds a new culture. This new form of doublespeak (for example) destroys many existing species while scientifically attempting to resurrect those which are long extinct. Civilization may ultimately be building a new habitat that only a few species can inhabit. If technological civilization substitutes an artificial ecosystem for the natural one, will it be as comfortable and sustaining as the original? Who and what will be allowed to live in it? Will spontaneity and randomness exist? Will the second technological biosphere be more life affirming than the original? Will humanity be able to prevent the inner and external condition of totalitarianism? What will “nature,” therefore, mean? A long overdue public policy imperative is needed to begin to address many of the above listed issues. The form of the imperative might be called a social impact statement which would be democratically derived and modeled after environmental impact statements. A social impact statement would always precede any new technological development. A social impact statement would allow humanity some time and wisdom for making a technological assessment and understand, as Paul Goodman noted, that . . . “technology is a branch of moral philosophy, not science.”
Anthropocentrism Link: Western Philosophy

1. Western philosophy devalues traditional cultures, which is deemed defective and backwards


Western philosophy has been a part of a nearly 2500-year effort to establish a new regime of truth that led to viewing primal peoples as intellectually and culturally inferior. These mostly agrarian, non-literate cultures have been studied scientifically and used as a source of artifacts for museum curators. They have also been used as a reference point for determining how far the rationally based cultures of the West have evolved. One of the possibilities denied by this regime of truth is that there is anything really important to learn from these cultures. But with the growing awareness that the values and ways of thinking underlying Western technological practices are degrading the habitat at an alarming rate, there is a growing recognition that primal cultures may be important for reasons that go beyond our fascination with their form of aesthetic expression. Of particular interest now is their ability to live in sustainable balance with their habitat. That they have been able to do this over a span of time we are not likely to match, even with our “superior” forms of culture, makes their achievement even more remarkable. Although primal cultures vary widely in their belief systems, technologies, and patterns for guiding daily life, they are a number of shared traits that relate directly to their ability to live within the margins of their habitats. A brief identification of these characteristics may help put in focus why Rorty’s more progressive and rationally based ideas would likely contribute to further accelerating the destruction of the environment. The identification of these characteristics is not meant to be taken as ready made patterns we can adopt for our own culture. But they can suggest new pathways we might evolve along in our own distinctive way.

2. Western systems of knowing assume their own universality, crowding out other epistemic communities


The disappearance of local knowledge through its interaction with the dominant western knowledge takes place at many levels, through many steps. First, local knowledge is made to disappear by simply not seeing it, by negating its very existence. This is very easy in the distant gaze of the globalising dominant system. The western systems of knowledge have generally been viewed as universal. However, the dominant system is also a local system, with its social basis in a particular culture, class and gender. It is not universal in an epistemological sense. It is merely the globalised version of a very local and parochial tradition. Emerging from a dominating and colonising culture, modern knowledge systems are themselves colonising. The knowledge and power nexus is inherent in the dominant system because, as a conceptual framework, it is associated with a set of values based on power which emerged with the rise of commercial capitalism. It generates inequalities and domination by the way such knowledge is generated and structured, the way it is legitimised and alternatives are delegitimised, and by the way in which such knowledge transforms nature and society. Power is also built into the perspective which views the dominant system not as a globalised local tradition, but as a universal tradition, inherently superior to local systems. However, the dominant system is also the product of a particular culture. As Harding observes: We can now discern the effects of these cultural markings in the discrepancies between the methods of knowing and the interpretations of the world provided by the creators of modern western culture and those characteristics of the rest of us. Western culture's favourite beliefs mirror in sometimes clear and sometimes distorting ways not the world as it is or as we might want it to be, but the social projects of their historically if identifiable creators.
1. Metaphor choices shape how we understand science and nature


Not only in science itself do metaphors meld fact and value (as “invasion” so obviously demonstrates), but also when a metaphor from science, interpreted as an “is,” is used to justify how things “ought” to be in the cultural context from which it is drawn (see Fleming 2006 ; Elliott 2009 ; Larson 2011a ). The classic example is the “survival-of-the-fittest” metaphor drawn from Darwinian evolutionary biology and then used as a justification for competitiveness within society, as in Social Darwinism, and even as justification for eugenics and for genocide (Keller 1992 ; Taylor 1998 ; and see Larson 2011a for further nuance). Accordingly, the choice of which metaphor to use is an ethical and value-laden one, not just epistemological, even though scientists have often restricted discussion to a metaphor’s epistemic dimensions—as if science were indeed “objective” and occurring in a social vacuum. Although the attempt to be objective is a laudable ideal, it is ultimately not possible to actually achieve (Putnam 2002 ; Kincaid et al. 2007 ; Douglas 2009 ), despite the determination by the early twentieth-century Logical Positivists to draw a sharp distinction between objective facts and subjective values. This is not to suggest that the selection of a metaphor can be deliberately managed because no scientist can operate as a perfect “social engineer.” Metaphoric choices are often quite unconscious, even though one goal of this chapter is to make their choice more conscious or at least more transparent. On the other hand, there are now some very good examples of biologists who have consciously used metaphors, such as “invasional meltdown” and “DNA barcoding” (Larson 2009 , 2011a ), to promote a particular worldview and its associated values. Not only is the choice of metaphor an ethical choice, it is also performative, which enlarges its significance even more. By performative, I mean that the metaphors we choose are not merely cognitive: they lead to actions in the world that have consequences. The naturalistic fallacy—inferring an “ought” from an “is”—provides one example of such consequences (see Wilson et al. 2003 ; Fleming 2006 ). That is, while a metaphor may seem like a scientifically validated “is,” it in fact implies “oughts” that contribute to social decisions, actions, and outcomes that may sometimes be undesirable. Even if we do not consciously transpose a metaphor from one domain to another (e.g., “competition occurs in nature, so it ought to occur in human society”), in the case of some metaphors the “is” is strongly tied to an “ought” and associated actions (e.g., “those species are invading a forest”, so we are led inexorably to think, “therefore, we ought to stop them”).

2. Metaphors can dominate and shape entire worldviews—examples prove


Over time, metaphors have their greatest power in the performativity of an entire worldview, as evidenced by some subfields and schools of thought in ecology. In the history of ecology, as already pointed out, there has been a decided emphasis on studies of competition as opposed to cooperation. The “invasive species” metaphor has been so powerfully performative as to give rise to an entire field of “invasion biology.” Resilience is a fairly new metaphor in ecological science, but one that has become an increasingly common metric of the state of an ecosystem and its ability to tolerate anthropogenic change. Interestingly, though, one might say that the increasing prevalence of this metaphor in ecological discourse actually reflects a narrowing of options, thus in effect reducing our cognitive resilience for understanding ecological change in diverse ways. As ecologists, we should always be sensitive to whether our metaphoric lenses have become too narrow or whether a greater plurality of metaphors would be helpful for maintaining diverse options for responding to change.
Anthropocentrism Link: Answers to “Metaphors / Language Irrelevant” [cont’d]

3. Metaphors are powerful—we need to find and deploy those that promote sustainability

As a consequence of the way they operate, ecological metaphors create a significant tension between neutrality and advocacy. Some would argue that we can dispense with the problem of metaphors by simply abandoning them, but that is hopeless because of their cognitive function—and even the attempt to be neutral is value-laden (Weber and Word 2001). More to the point, many ecologists, philosophers, and social scientists argue that ecology would be more effective in terms of conservation outcomes if it became more explicitly and consciously value-laden (e.g., Westoby 1997; Norton 1998; Bradshaw and Bekoff 2001; Robertson and Hull 2003; Foote et al. 2009). Conservation is, after all, motivated by values. That the contemporary zeitgeist is broadly inconsistent with sustainability values poses a significant problem for conservation because the metaphoric referents available for use by conservationists may not be consistent with desired sustainability outcomes (see Larson 2011a). There is an ongoing challenge here to find metaphors that speak positively to people about conservation and sustainability and that do not simply reinforce the largely incompatible, contemporary worldview (which puts a premium on consumption and economic growth).

4. Science is not neutral—metaphors prove

The myth of science as a “value-free” and “objective” pursuit of knowledge is just that: a myth. Inescapable and cognitively indispensable are metaphors in science, as Brendon Larson persuasively argues. Physicists persist in speaking of subatomic “particles,” even though there is nothing particle-like about an electron or a photon. Metaphors can, thus, guide scientific thought in perverse ways and portray nature to laymen in wildly misleading terms. Metaphors are especially rife in evolutionary biology and ecology. Take “competition,” for example, a metaphor derived from the playing field and the free market, that when attributed to say plants living in close proximity to one another—“competing” for sunlight—agency is implicitly attributed to unconscious organisms. For most of the history of evolutionary biology, an emphasis on “competition” masked the equally fundamental and indeed more venerable evolutionary process of endosymbiosis. Scientific metaphors also carry baked-in values. Consider “alien,” “exotic,” “invasive” species. These terms all bring with them negative connotations, not unlike characterizing undocumented immigrants to the US as “illegal aliens.”
Anthropocentrism Impact: Environment—General

1. All life depends on the ecosphere—placing humans above it risks its destruction

Dr. Ted Mosquin, formerly of University of Alberta and University of California-Berkeley and Stan Rowe, Emeritus Professor, University of Saskatchewan, "A Manifesto for Earth," BIODIVERSITY v. 5 n. 1, 2004, p. 3.

The Ecosphere is the Life-giving matrix that envelops all organisms, intimately intertwined with them in the story of evolution from the beginning of time. Organisms are fashioned from air, water, and sediments, which in turn bear organic imprints. The composition of sea water is maintained by organisms that also stabilize the improbable atmosphere. Plants and animals formed the limestone in mountains whose sediments make our bones. The false divisions we have made between living and non-living, biotic and abiotic, organic and inorganic, have put the stability and evolutionary potential of the Ecosphere at risk. Humanity’s 10,000-year-old experiment in mode-of-living at the expense of Nature, culminating in economic globalization, is failing. A primary reason is that we have placed the importance of our species above all else. We have wrongly considered Earth, its ecosystems, and their myriad organic/inorganic parts as mere provisioners, valued only when they serve our needs and wants. A courageous change in attitudes and activities is urgent. Diagnoses and prescriptions for healing the human-Earth relationship are legion, and here we emphasize the visionary one that seems essential to the success of all others. A new worldview anchored in the planetary Ecosphere points the way.

2. The entire ecosphere depends upon maintaining the integrity of ecosystems—is undermined by industrialism

Dr. Ted Mosquin, formerly of University of Alberta and University of California-Berkeley and Stan Rowe, Emeritus Professor, University of Saskatchewan, "A Manifesto for Earth," BIODIVERSITY v. 5 n. 1, 2004, p. 5.

"Integrity" refers to wholeness, to completeness, to the ability to function fully. The standard is Nature’s sun-energized ecosystems in their undamaged state; for example, a productive tract of the continental sea-shelf or a temperate rain forest in pre-settlement days when humans were primarily foragers. Although such times are beyond recall, their ecosystems (as much as we can know them) still provide the only known blueprints for sustainability in agriculture, forestry, and fisheries. Current failings in all three of these industrialized enterprises show the effects of deteriorating integrity; namely, loss of productivity and aesthetic appeal in parallel with the continuing disruption of vital ecosystem functions. The evolutionary creativity and continued productivity of Earth and its regional ecosystems require the continuance of their key structures and ecological processes. This internal integrity depends on the preservation of communities with their countless forms of evolved cooperation and interdependence. Integrity depends on intricate food chains and energy flows, on uneroded soils and the cycling of essential materials such as nitrogen, potassium, phosphorus. Further, the natural compositions of air, sediments, and water have been integral to Nature’s healthy processes and functions. Pollution of these three, along with exploitive extraction of inorganic and organic constituents, weakens ecosystem integrity and the norms of the Ecosphere, the fount of evolving Life

3. Separating humans from nature allows the world’s destruction


Ingrained cultural dogmas further separate people from their life-giving context. The old idea that man-made "culture" has lifted humans to a plane higher than "Nature" makes of Earth a lower brutish adversary. In reality, culture and Nature are inextricably merged in human society. Culture is social learning founded on and evolved from survival in Earth's ecosystems. Cultures that persist over long time periods are those that incorporate in their belief systems and rituals an ecological knowledge of and sensitivity to their particular land/water-organism environments. Misunderstanding of this point is ecological ignorance -- especially dangerous when wedded, as today, with tremendous technologic power that can be used to destroy or reconstruct land-and-water ecosystems.
Anthropocentrism Impact: Environment—Warming

1. Industrialism risks destroying us—warming

Frederic Bender, philosophy instructor, University of Colorado, "On the Importance of Paul Shepard's Call for Post-Historic Primitivism and Paleolithic Counter-Revolution against Modernity," THE TRUMPETER v. 23 n. 3, 2007, p. 3.

We live today on a planet undergoing abrupt non-linear change, also known as overshoot and collapse, not least with respect to rapid rises in atmospheric carbon dioxide and equivalents, average global temperature, and sea level. The best science we have today, as represented by the Report of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) of February 2007, predicts, as a baseline consensus, that atmospheric CO2 will at least double from pre-industrial levels of 280 parts per million, compared to 368 ppm in 2000. The 2,500 scientists from over 130 nations responsible for the report predict average global temperatures will rise by 1.8 to 4.0 degrees (3.2 to 7.8 degrees Fahrenheit), but warn that greater warming cannot be ruled out. The global mean sea level will rise by 28 to 43 centimetres (11.2 to 17.2 inches) by 2100, with larger increases possible if ice sheets in Antarctica and Greenland continue their rapid thawing. Beyond reasonable doubt the primary cause of these changes has been industrialized humanity: Homo colossus. Ubiquitous toxic pollution and ever-rising atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide have been the by-products of industrialization since its inception, and have created pollution and climate change that is now so drastic as to define industrial civilization as the culture of extinction.

2. Unchecked industrialism will destroy us—warming, other factors


Berry reflects: "Our present system, based on the plundering of the Earth's resources, is certainly coming to an end. It cannot continue." Yet politicians, industrialists, bankers and consumers are searching for ways to stave off the inevitable. We will find ways of sequestering carbon. We will build hydrogen-fuelled cars. We will make lots of money through carbon trading schemes. We will recycle our bottles. We will recycle our water. We will remove the salt from sea water when our rivers and reservoirs dry up. We will create wind farms and solar arrays. We may even decide to close down our coal-fired power stations and replace them with new generations of nuclear reactors. But the damage has already been done and we remain perversely fixed in our ways. For many political leaders, our way of life, predicated as it is on a highly productive industrial system and a global economy, is simply not negotiable. Most discussions centre on ways that will enable us to "grow the economy" while continuing on our present trajectory. Although the increase of carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere is a major factor in creating climate change, it is but one of the many constellations of deleterious influence created by industrial civilisation. Background radiation levels have been progressively rising since Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The methods of industrial-scale broad acre farming have destroyed the arable top-soils in most nations. The widespread use of agricultural chemicals has vitiated insect life and encumbered both human and animal metabolisms. Groundwater has everywhere been depleted or poisoned. The fish stocks of the oceans continue to fall. The point was made and has been reiterated many times since Rachel Carson lamented the coming of a Silent Spring in 1962. Thomas Berry calls it as it is: "The earth cannot sustain such an industrial system or its devastating technologies. In the future, the industrial system will have its moments of apparent recovery, but these will be minor and momentary. The impact of our present technology is beyond what the earth can endure."
Anthropocentrism Impact: Ethics / Mass Death

1. We have an obligation to value other beings


Biocentrism takes the standpoint that all living beings, not just humans, have moral standing. Albert Schweitzer was one of the earliest proponents of biocentric ethics and his ‘reverence for life’ ethic holds that the fundamental principle of morality is that “[i]t is good to maintain and to encourage life; it is bad to destroy life or to obstruct it” (Schweitzer, 1950, p. 309). By life, Schweitzer means a living being which has a “will-to-live … whether it can express itself … or remains dumb” (Schweitzer, 1950, p. 309). One the most developed arguments for biocentrism has been put forward by Paul Taylor. Taylor defines a biocentrist as “[o]ne who takes the attitude of respect toward the individual organisms, species-populations, and biotic communities of the Earth’s natural ecosystems regards those entities and groups of entities as possessing inherent worth, in the sense that their value or worth does not depend on their being valued for their usefulness in furthering human ends” (Taylor, 1986, p. 46). Taylor argues that, as moral agents, humans have a duty to nonhuman organisms that possess inherent worth – a value that belongs to them by their very existence and which makes it wrong to use them solely as a means to human ends.

2. Speciesism is the root form of animal domination—justifies violence and mass killing


Speciesism is the belief that nonhuman species exist to serve the needs of the human species, that animals are in various senses inferior to human beings, and therefore that one can favor human over nonhuman interests according to species status alone. Like racism or sexism, speciesism creates a false dualistic division between one group and another in order to arrange the differences hierarchically and justify the domination of the “superior” over the “inferior.” Just as society has discerned that it is prejudiced, illogical, and unacceptable for whites to devalue people of color and for men to diminish women, so it is beginning to learn how utterly arbitrary and irrational it is for human animals to position themselves over nonhuman animals because of species differences. Among animals who are all sentient subjects of a life, these differences —humanity’s false and arrogant claim to be the sole bearer of reason and language— are no more ethically relevant than differences of gender or skin color, yet in the unevolved psychology of the human primate they have decisive bearing. The theory —speciesism— informs the practice —unspeakably cruel forms of domination, violence, and killing.

3. Anthropocentrism causes massive destruction


Within the picture many paint of humanity, events such as the Holocaust are considered as an exception, an aberration. The Holocaust is often portrayed as an example of ‘evil’, a moment of hatred, madness and cruelty (cf. the differing accounts of ‘evil’ given in Neiman, 2004). The event is also treated as one through which humanity might comprehend its own weakness and draw strength, via the resolve that such actions will never happen again. However, if we take seriously the differing ways in which the Holocaust was ‘evil’, then one must surely include along side it the almost uncountable numbers of genocides that have occurred throughout human history. This history of modern colonialism thus presents a key to understanding that events such as the Holocaust are not an aberration and exception but are closer to the norm, and sadly, lie at the heart of any heritage of humanity. After all, all too often the European colonisation of the globe was justified by arguments that indigenous inhabitants were racially ‘inferior’ and in some instances that they were closer to ‘apes’ than to humans (Diamond, 2006). Such violence justified by an erroneous view of ‘race’ is in many ways merely an extension of an underlying attitude of speciesism involving a long history of killing and enslavement of non-human species by humans. Such a connection between the two histories of inter-human violence (via the mythical notion of differing human ‘races’) and interspecies violence, is well expressed in Isaac Bashevis Singer’s comment that whereas humans consider themselves “the crown of creation”, for animals “all people are Nazis” and animal life is “an eternal Treblinka” (Singer, 1968, p.750). Certainly many organisms use ‘force’ to survive and thrive at the expense of their others. Humans are not special in this regard. However humans, due a particular form of self-awareness and ability to plan for the future, have the capacity to carry out highly organised forms of violence and destruction (i.e. the Holocaust; the massacre and enslavement of indigenous peoples by Europeans) and the capacity to develop forms of social organisation and communal life in which harm and violence are organised and regulated. It is perhaps this capacity for reflection upon the merits of harm and violence (the moral reflection upon the good and bad of violence) which gives humans a ‘special’ place within the food chain. Nonetheless, with these capacities come responsibility and our proposal of global suicide is directed at bringing into full view the issue of human moral responsibility.
Anthropocentrism Impact: Extinction

1. Failure to address root causes risk the earth’s destruction


George W. Bush’s feel-good talk of progress and democracy, given an endless and uncritical airing by mainstream corporate media, masks the fact that we live in an unprecedented era of social and ecological crisis. Predatory transnational corporations such as ExxonMobil and Maxxam are pillaging the planet, destroying ecosystems, pushing species into extinction, and annihilating indigenous peoples and traditional ways of life. War, globalization, and destruction of peoples, species, and ecosystems march in lockstep: militarization supports the worldwide imposition of the “free market” system, and its growth and profit imperatives thrive though the exploitation of humans, animals, and the earth (see Kovel 2002; Tokar 1997; Bannon and Collier 2003). Against the mindless optimism of technophiles, the denials of skeptics, and complacency of the general public, we depart from the premise that there is a global environmental crisis which is the most urgent issue facing us today. If humanity does not address ecological problems immediately and with radical measures that target causes not symptoms, severe, world-altering consequences will play out over a long-term period and will plague future generations. Signs of major stress of the world’s eco-systems are everywhere, from shrinking forests and depleted fisheries to vanishing wilderness and global climate change. Ours is an era of global warming, rainforest destruction, species extinction, and chronic resource shortages that provoke wars and conflicts such as in Iraq. While five great extinction crises have already transpired on this planet, the last one occurring 65 million years ago in the age of the dinosaurs, we are now living amidst the sixth extinction crisis, this time caused by human not natural causes. Human populations have always devastated their environment and thereby their societies, but they have never intervened in the planet’s ecosystem to the extent they have altered climate. We now confront the “end of nature” where no natural force, no breeze or ripple of water, has not been affected by the human presence (McKibben 2006). This is especially true with nanotechnology and biotechnology. Rather than confronting this crisis and scaling back human presence and aggravating actions, humans are making it worse. Human population rates continue to swell, as awakening giants such as India and China move toward western consumer lifestyles, exchanging rice bowls for burgers and bicycles for SUVs. The human presence on this planet is like a meteor plummeting to the earth, but it has already struck and the reverberations are rippling everywhere.

2. Humanity is headed towards extinction along its current path—multiple problems prove


The answer is shockingly clear. Since April 22, 1970, there is more population growth, consumerism, cars and highways, pollution, clear-cutting, desertification, habitat loss, and species extinction, in addition to the new threat of global warming. Consider a few facts: * Human beings are adding to their current population of over 6 billion at the rate of 100 million new people a year * Human consumption levels currently exceed the planet’s regenerative capacity by 20 percent * Industries have chopped down half of the world’s rainforests, destroyed a quarter of shallow coral reefs, and depleted or overfished 70% of the major fisheries * The average surface temperature of the planet may rise by as much as ten degrees Celsius within a century, killing massive numbers through heat and disease * In a warming world, ice is rapidly melting in the Polar Regions, Greenland, and mountain and alpine glaciers, destroying habitat collapse for artic animals and creating millions of environmental refugees through rising sea levels * We are in the midst of the planet’s sixth great extinction crisis. Unlike past extinction events, the current one is caused not by natural phenomena such as meteor strikes but rather by human actions such as habitat destruction. Human-induced changes are driving species extinction at 1,000 to 10,000 times faster than the natural rate that prevailed since the demise of the dinosaurs. Conservation biologists predict that by the middle of the century, one third to one half of all existing plant and animal species may become extinct. Currently, 5,500 animal species are threatened with extinction, including the Great Ape, the Florida panther, the panda bear, the gray wolf, the California condor, and the black rhino. Overpopulation, species extinction, habitat devastation, deforestation, desertification, global warming, Ebola, Mad Cow Disease, foot and mouth disease, SARS, Asian bird flu, genetic mutations in frogs and other animals, and hormone disruption in human beings are major indicators that human society is out of joint with the natural order and has embarked on a mad, unsustainable path of existence.
**Anthropocentrism Impact: Oppression—General**

1. **The domination of nature is the root cause of domination of all other beings**

   Steven Best, Associate Professor, Humanities and Philosophy, University of Texas, El Paso, Review of “The Eternal Treblinka: Our Treatment of Animals and the Holocaust” by Charles Patterson, JOURNAL FOR CRITICAL ANIMAL STUDIES v. 5 n. 2, 2007, www.criticalanimalstudies.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/JCAS-Vol-5-Issue-2-2007.pdf, accessed 4-28-14. While a welcome advance over the anthropocentric conceit that only humans shape human actions, the environmental determinism approach typically fails to emphasize the crucial role that animals play in human history, as well as how the human exploitation of animals is a key cause of hierarchy, social conflict, and environmental breakdown. A core thesis of what I call “animal standpoint theory” is that animals have been key driving and shaping forces of human thought, psychology, moral and social life, and history overall. More specifically, animal standpoint theory argues that the oppression of human over human has deep roots in the oppression of human over animal. In this context, Charles Patterson’s recent book, The Eternal Treblinka: Our Treatment of Animals and the Holocaust, articulates the animal standpoint in a powerful form with revolutionary implications. The main argument of Eternal Treblinka is that the human domination of animals, such as it emerged some ten thousand years ago with the rise of agricultural society, was the first hierarchical domination and laid the groundwork for patriarchy, slavery, warfare, genocide, and other systems of violence and power. A key implication of Patterson’s theory is that human liberation is implausible if disconnected from animal liberation, and thus humanism -- a speciesist philosophy that constructs a hierarchal relationship privileging superior humans over inferior animals and reduces animals to resources for human use -- collapses under the weight of its logical contradictions.

2. **Anthropocentrism is used to justify the exploitation of other humans**

   Anne C. Bell and Constance R. Russell, “Beyond Human, Beyond Words: Anthropocentrism, Critical Pedagogy, and the Poststructuraltist Turn,” CANADIAN JOURNAL OF EDUCATION v. 25 n. 3, 2000, pp. 188-203, p. 193. This tension is symptomatic of anthropocentrism. Humans are assumed to be free agents separate from and pitted against the rest of nature, our fulfillment predicated on overcoming material constraints. This assumption of human difference and superiority, central to Western thought since Aristotle (Abram, 1996, p. 77), has long been used to justify the exploitation of nature by and for humankind (Evernden, 1992, p. 96). It has also been used to justify the exploitation of human groups (e.g., women, Blacks, queers, indigenous peoples) deemed to be closer to nature – that is, animalistic, irrational, savage, or uncivilized (Gaard, 1997; Haraway, 1989, p. 30; Selby, 1995, pp. 17–20; Spiegel, 1988).

3. **Human domination over animals undergirds other oppressions**

   Steven Best, Associate Professor, Humanities and Philosophy, University of Texas, El Paso, Review of “The Eternal Treblinka: Our Treatment of Animals and the Holocaust” by Charles Patterson, JOURNAL FOR CRITICAL ANIMAL STUDIES v. 5 n. 2, 2007, www.criticalanimalstudies.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/JCAS-Vol-5-Issue-2-2007.pdf, accessed 4-28-14. It is little understood that the first form of oppression, domination, and hierarchy involves human domination over animals. Patterson’s thesis stands in bold contrast to the Marxist theory that the domination over nature is fundamental to the domination over other humans. It differs as well from the social ecology position of Murray Bookchin that domination over humans brings about alienation from the natural world, provokes hierarchical mindsets and institutions, and is the root of the long-standing western goal to “dominate” nature. In the case of Marxists, anarchists, and so many others, theorists typically don’t even mention human domination of animals, let alone assign it causal primacy or significance. In Patterson’s model, however, the human subjugation of animals is the first form of hierarchy and it paves the way for all other systems of domination such as include patriarchy, racism, colonialism, anti-Semitism, and the Holocaust. As he puts it, “the exploitation of animals was the model and inspiration for the atrocities people committed against each other, slavery and the Holocaust being but two of the more dramatic examples.” Hierarchy emerged with the rise of agricultural society some ten thousand years ago. In the shift from nomadic hunting and gathering bands to settled agricultural practices, humans began to establish their dominance over animals through “domestication.” In animal domestication (often a euphemism disguising coercion and cruelty), humans began to exploit animals for purposes such as obtaining food, milk, clothing, plowing, and transportation. As they gained increasing control over the lives and labor power of animals, humans bred them for desired traits and controlled them in various ways, such as castrating males to make them more docile. To conquer, enslave, and claim animals as their own property, humans developed numerous technologies, such as pens, cages, collars, ropes, chains, and branding irons. The domination of animals paved the way for the domination of humans. The sexual subjugation of women, Patterson suggests, was modeled after the domestication of animals, such that men began to control women’s reproductive capacity, to enforce repressive sexual norms, and to rape them as they forced breeding in their animals. Not coincidentally, Patterson argues, slavery emerged in the same region of the Middle East that spawned agriculture, and, in fact, developed as an extension of animal domestication practices. In areas like Sumer, slaves were managed like livestock, and males were castrated and forced to work along with females.
Anthropocentrism Impact: Oppression—General [cont’d]

4. Speciesism parallels and informs racism and sexism


There are important parallels between speciesism and sexism and racism in the elevation of white male rationality to the touchstone of moral worth. The arguments European colonialists used to legitimate exploiting Africans – that they were less than human and inferior to white Europeans in ability to reason – are the very same justifications humans use to trap, hunt, confine, and kill animals. Once western norms of rationality were defined as the essence of humanity and social normality, by first using non-human animals as the measure of alterity, it was a short step to begin viewing odd, different, exotic, and eccentric peoples and types as non- or sub-human. Thus, the same criterion created to exclude animals from humans was also used to ostracize blacks, women, and numerous other groups from “humanity.” The oppression of blacks, women, and animals alike was grounded in an argument that biological inferiority predestined them for servitude. In the major strain of western thought, alleged rational beings (i.e., elite, white, western males) pronounce that the Other (i.e., women, people of color, animals) is deficient in rationality in ways crucial to their nature and status, and therefore are deemed and treated as inferior, subhuman, or nonhuman. Whereas the racist mindset creates a hierarchy of superior/inferior on the basis of skin color, and the sexist mentality splits men and women into greater and lower classes of beings, the speciesist outlook demeans and objectifies animals by dichotomizing the biological continuum into the antipodes of humans and animals. As racism stems from a hateful white supremacism, and sexism is the product of a bigoted male supremacism, so speciesism stems from and informs a violent human supremacism – namely, the arrogant belief that humans have a natural or God-given right to use animals for any purpose they devise or, more generously, within the moral boundaries of welfarism and stewardship, which however was Judaic moral baggage official Christianity left behind.

5. Anthropocentrism spills over to other oppressions


It would be an all-too-common mistake to construe the task at hand as one of interest only to environmentalists. We believe, rather, that disrupting the social scripts that structure and legitimize the human domination of nonhuman nature is fundamental not only to dealing with environmental issues, but also to examining and challenging oppressive social arrangements. The exploitation of nature is not separate from the exploitation of human groups. Ecofeminists and activists for environmental justice have shown that forms of domination are often intimately connected and mutually reinforcing (Bullard, 1993; Gaard, 1997; Lahar, 1993; Sturgeon, 1997). Thus, if critical educators wish to resist various oppressions, part of their project must entail calling into question, among other things, the instrumental exploitive gaze through which we humans distance ourselves from the rest of nature (Carlson, 1995).
**Anthropocentrism Impact: Oppression—Colonialism**

1. **Anthropocentric justifications for eco-preservation just replicate imperialism in the environmental realm**


   The conflict between differing kinds of goods leads directly to the problem or dilemma of justice. This problem is a classic, long-standing difficulty in normative ethics. It arises in the context of environmental and economic policy decisions because of the exclusive use of narrowly defined anthropocentric and instrumental goods. Theoretical human goods and harms (the type discussed in the previous section) are not adequate as a basis for the determination of environmental policy, because global environmental policy cannot be determined in isolation from geopolitical concerns. The history and politics of power relations cannot be ignored. Third World nations, recently freed from political colonization, see the development of indigenous natural resources as a means of attaining economic freedom. The newly formed policies of nondevelopment and preservation appear to be a subtle form of the old imperialism. The wealthy industrialized nations of the world, having developed their own natural resources, and having “stolen” the natural resources of the Third World, now are planning to prevent any further development, so that the ecological basis of humanity can be preserved—a policy which clearly limits the economic and social development of the poorer, non-industrialized nations. These complaints of “preservationist imperialism” are difficult to answer, and open-minded environmentalists must feel uneasy about the dilemma. Nevertheless, it is our contention (in this and the next section) that if the policies of nondevelopment and preservation continue to be justified by instrumental arguments regarding the ecological value of nature for human survival, then the charges of imperialism and domination remain unassailable. Only by rejecting anthropocentrism and developing a framework of direct value for natural entities and systems, can one avoid the charges of imperialism in Third World preservation policy. Why is anthropocentrism a critical part of the problem of justice? The simple answer is that anthropocentric arguments emphasize merely human goods, which simultaneously ignore a direct concern for environmental preservation and create insurmountable problems of balance and equity. Anthropocentric and instrumental arguments result in a merely contingent connection between human satisfaction and the maintenance of the natural environment. If the final goal of our policy is the maximization of human satisfaction, then the preservation of nature only occurs when there is a congruence of interests between humanity and nature. In practical terms, thus, any discussion of policy alternatives—development, preservation, resource conservation—involves a comparison and trade-off of human goods, and only human goods. Viewed in this way, the preservation of a natural ecosystem or an endangered species becomes merely one benefit in an entire array of possible human satisfactions. For an environmentalist policy to be adopted, the results of preservation have to outweigh the results of development. Broadly speaking, the cost-benefit ratio has to favor the nondevelopment of the natural environment.

2. **Limiting our notion of justice to solely the human level propagates environmental imperialism**


   It is here that the problems of the utility calculation noted above in section three lead to the dilemma of environmental justice. Third World nations can claim that the benefits of preserving, e.g., the Amazon rain forest, are spread out thinly across the entire human race, while the costs (in this case, the cost of lost economic opportunity) are borne primarily by Brazilians and other local human populations. Development of the rain forest, however, provides benefits for the local population while spreading the costs across the rest of humanity. Demanding that Brazil and other Third World countries limit development, therefore, violates basic and intuitive notions of equity and justice. The Third World is being asked to pay for the industrialized world’s profligate use of natural resources. Having been denied the benefits of past development, they are now being asked to pay for the preservation of the biosphere. This issue of justice arises because the policy discussion has been limited to a consideration of human interests. If the criterion for policy decisions is the maximization of human satisfactions or benefits, then it becomes appropriate—even mandatory—to ask questions about the distribution of these benefits. In this way, issues of justice, in general, serve to limit and complement teleological criteria for the determination of policy. In the context of Third World environmental development, however, considerations of justice override any plausible account of benefits resulting from the preservation of the natural environment. The need for economic development seems so great that the hypothetical long-term effects on global warming appear trivial. If we restrict our analysis of policy to the maximization of human welfare and to the creation of just social institutions, then we cannot escape the problem created by the Third World’s need for economic development. Conceived as a problem in maximizing and balancing human goods, the scales incline toward policies of development. The demand for anthropocentric justice dooms the preservation of the natural environment.

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**Anthropocentrism Impact: Oppression—Human**

1. **Human oppression is rooted in hierarchies—those hierarchies begin with animal/human dualism**


   In many cases, technological, ideological, and social forms of hierarchy and oppression of human over human began with the domestication, domination, and enslavement of humans over animals. In her compelling book, The Dreaded Comparison: Human and Animal Slavery, Marjorie Spiegel shows that the exploitation of animals provided a model, metaphors, and technologies and practices for the dehumanization and enslavement of blacks. From castration and chaining to branding and ear cropping, whites drew on a long history of subjugating animals to oppress blacks. Once perceived as beasts, blacks were treated accordingly. In addition, by denigrating people of color as “beasts of burden,” an animal metaphor and exploitative tradition facilitated and legitimated the institution of slavery. The denigration of any people as a type of animal is a prelude to violence and genocide. Many anthropologists believe that the cruel forms of domesticking animals at the dawn of agricultural society ten thousand years ago created the conceptual model for hierarchy, statism, and the exploitation treatment of other human beings, as they implanted violence into the heart of human culture. From this perspective, slavery and the sexual subjugation of women is but the extension of animal domestication to humans. James Patterson, author of Eternal Treblinka Our Treatment of Animals and the Holocaust, reveals the common roots of Nazi genocide and the industrialized enslavement and slaughter on non-human animals.” Patterson, Jim Mason, and numerous other writers concur that the exploitation of animals is central to understanding the cause and solution to the crisis haunting the human community and its troubled relationship to the natural world.

2. **Human/nature dualism is the root of all forms of western oppression**

   Dr. Steven Best, Associate Professor of Philosophy and Humanities, University of Texas, El Paso, “The Coming Crisis: Environmental Disaster, the Global Meat Culture, and Your Health,” updated 5—14—12, http://www.drstevebest.org/TheComingCrisis.htm, accessed 4-27-14.

   But there is another aspect of western culture that we don’t like to think about, another face that is ugly and scarred, a dark side of the light of reason; here we find a culture bent on the domination and exploitation of all forms of life. Side by side with the bible, Greek philosophy, the discovery of new worlds, the declaration of independence, and brilliant medical and technological advances we find slavery, authoritarianism, inquisitions, imperialism, genocide, an appalling abuse of animals, and the rape of the natural world. This dark side of western culture has brought us to the brink of disaster -- ecologically, socially, economically, spiritually, and in our very bodies. Ancient eastern cultures were founded on the principle of ahimsa -- the absence of desire to do harm; this entails a profound respect for life, a deep sense of connection with living processes, and a way of life in harmony with the world. Western culture, however, especially in modern form, is founded on the desire to control; it is informed by an arrogance that separates human beings from everything natural; in fact, it is a nature-hating culture. The western mind is built on a sharp distinction between culture and nature; culture is the domain of reason, to which men alone belong, and where they exercise rationality as a means of control; women, seen to be full of emotion and passion, but lacking reason, were relegated to the sphere of nature and hence, with animals and the natural world, were targeted as objects to be subdued and controlled. The doubly unfortunate result of this dualism is that culture has been separated from natural history, as reason has been estranged from the emotions, while the living things of “nature,” both animals and women, have been reduced to mere biology and denied a complex subjective life. In a word, or maybe two, western culture is patriarchal and anthropocentric, male-dominated and human-centered; man, literally, is the measure of all things -- he alone deems what is of value and values accordingly; man places himself at the apex of creation, second only to god, and sees all other things as mere means to his ends, having only instrumental value, devoid of intrinsic value.
Anthropocentrism Impact: Oppression—Non-Human Animals

1. Human/animal dichotomy is responsible for the torture and enslavement of countless animals

   Dr. Steven Best, Associate Professor of Philosophy and Humanities, University of Texas, El Paso, “The New Abolitionism: Capitalism, Slavery and Animal Liberation,” 2012, http://www.drstevebest.org/TheNewAbolitionism.htm, accessed 4-27-14. Whereas the racist mindset creates a hierarchy of superior/inferior on the basis of skin color, the speciesist mindset demeans and objectifies animals by dichotomizing the evolutionary continuum into human and nonhuman life. As racism stems from a hateful white supremacism, so speciesism draws from a violent human supremacism, namely, the arrogant belief that humans have a natural or God-given right to use animals for any purpose they devise. Both racism and speciesism serve as legitimating ideologies for slavery economies. After the civil war, the Cotton Economy became the Cattle Economy as the nation moved westward, slaughtered millions of Indians and sixty million buffalo, and began intensive operations to raise and slaughter cattle for food. Throughout the twentieth century, as the US shifted from a plant-based to a meat-based diet, meat and dairy industries became giant economic forces. In the last few decades, pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies have become major components of global capitalist networks, and their research and testing operations are rooted in the breeding, exploitation, and killing of millions of laboratory animals each year. Of course, as soon as Homo erectus began making tools nearly three million years ago, hominids have killed and appropriated animals for labor power, food, clothing, and innumerable other resources, and animal exploitation has been crucial to human economies. But whatever legitimate reasons humans had for using animals to survive in past hunting and gathering societies, subsistence economies, and other low-tech cultures, these rationales are now obsolete in a modern world rife with alternatives to using animals for food, clothing, and medical research. Furthermore, however important the exploitation of animals might be to modern economies, utilitarian apologies for enslaving animals are as invalid as arguments used to justify human slavery or experimentation on human beings at Auschwitz or Tuskegee. Rights trump utilitarian appeals; their very function is to protect individuals from being appropriated for someone else’s or a “greater good.”

2. Human violence towards animals and the environment is self-defeating—ultimately hurt us too

   Dr. Steven Best, Associate Professor of Philosophy and Humanities, University of Texas, El Paso, “Rethinking Revolution: Animal Liberation, Human Liberation, and the Future of the Left,” updated 5—14—12, http://www.drstevebest.org/RethinkingRevolution.htm, accessed 4-27-14. Since the fates of all species on this planet are intricately interrelated, the exploitation of animals cannot but have a major impact on the human world itself. When human beings exterminate animals, they devastate habitats and ecosystems necessary for their own lives. When they butcher farmed animals by the billions, they ravage rainforests, turn grasslands into deserts, exacerbate global warming, and spew toxic wastes into the environment. When they construct a global system of factory farming that requires prodigious amounts of land, water, energy, and crops, they squander vital resources and aggravate the problem of world hunger. When humans are violent toward animals, they often are violent toward one another, a tragic truism validated time and time again by serial killers who grow up abusing animals and violent men who beat the women, children, and animals of their home. The connections go far deeper, as evident if one examines the scholarship on the conceptual and technological relations between the domestication of animals at the dawn of agricultural society and the emergence of patriarchy, state power, slavery, and hierarchy and domination of all kinds.

3. Human/nature split justifies mastery of the rest of the world—produces exploitation and destruction

   Michael E. Zimmerman, Professor, Philosophy, Tulane University, “Humanity's Relation to Gaia: Part of the Whole, or Member of the Community?” THE TRUMPETER v. 20 n. 1, 2004, p. 4. One of the most important issues in contemporary environmental discourse concerns how to define humankind’s relation to the non-human natural world. According to a number of environmental philosophers, modern Western humankind has often conceived of itself as dramatically other to, and far more valuable than, the non-human natural world. Modern humans define themselves as free subjects standing over against causally-determined objects, that is, the interlocking totality of phenomena in the non-human natural world. Sharply distinguishing between history (domain of freedom) and nature (domain of causal necessity), many moderns (capitalists and communists alike) have regarded non-human nature as nothing more than raw material for human purposes. According to John Locke and Karl Marx, value accretes to natural raw material only when humans mix with it their productive labour. Natural things, then, have no inherent or intrinsic value, but instead their value is determined primarily in terms of their use value, or of the price they fetch on the market. Viewing non-human nature in a wholly instrumental manner invites the kind of exploitation that has generated so many environmental problems, ranging from urban pollution to destruction of wildlife habitat.
**Anthropocentrism Impact: Oppression—Race**

1. **Speciesism is a root cause of racism**


While the intersection of race and gender is often acknowledged in understanding the etiology of justificatory narratives for war, the presence of species distinctions and the importance of the subhuman are less appreciated. Yet, the race (and gender) thinking that animates Razack’s argument in normalizing violence for detainees (and others) is also centrally sustained by the subhuman figure. As Charles Patterson notes with respect to multiple forms of exploitation: Throughout the history of our ascent to dominance as the master species, our victimization of animals has served as the model and foundation for our victimization of each other. The study of human history reveals the pattern: first, humans exploit and slaughter animals; then, they treat other people like animas and do the same to them. Patterson emphasizes how the human/animal hierarchy and our ideas about animals and animality are foundational for intra-human hierarchies and the violence they promote. The routine violence against beings designated subhuman serves as both a justification and blueprint for violence against humans. For example, in discussing the specific dynamics of the Nazi camps, Patterson further notes how techniques to make the killing of detainees resemble the slaughter of animals were deliberately implemented in order to make the killing seem more palatable and benign. That the detainees were made naked and kept crowded in the gas chambers facilitated their animalization and, in turn, their death at the hands of other humans who were already culturally familiar and comfortable with killing animals in this way. Returning to Razack’s exposition of race thinking in contemporary camps, one can see how subhuman thinking is foundational to race thinking. One of her primary arguments is that race thinking, which she defines as “the denial of a common bond of humanity between people of European descent and those who are not”, is “a defining feature of the world order” today as in the past. In other words, it is the “species thinking” that helps to create the racial demarcation.

2. **Human domination of other humans is rooted in animal domination**


In many cases, technological, ideological, and social forms of hierarchy and oppression of human over human began with the domestication, domination, and enslavement of humans over animals. In her compelling book, The Dreaded Comparison: Human and Animal Slavery, Marjorie Spiegel shows that the exploitation of animals provided a model, metaphors, and technologies and practices for the dehumanization and enslavement of blacks. From castration and chaining to branding and ear cropping, whites drew on a long history of subjugating animals to oppress blacks. Once perceived as beasts, blacks were treated accordingly. In addition, by denigrating people of color as “beasts of burden,” an animal metaphor and exploitative tradition facilitated and legitimated the institution of slavery. The denigration of any people as a type of animal is a prelude to violence and genocide. Many anthropologists believe that the cruel forms of domesticating animals at the dawn of agricultural society ten thousand years ago created the conceptual model for hierarchy, statism, and the exploitation treatment of other human beings, as they implanted violence into the heart of human culture. From this perspective, slavery and the sexual subjugation of women is but the extension of animal domestication to humans. James Patterson, author of Eternal Treblinka Our Treatment of Animals and the Holocaust, reveals the common roots of Nazi genocide and the industrialized enslavement and slaughter on non-human animals.” Patterson, Jim Mason, and numerous other writers concur that the exploitation of animals is central to understanding the cause and solution to the crisis haunting the human community and its troubled relationship to the natural world.
Anthropocentrism Impact: Policymaking

1. Rejecting anthropocentrism is key to effective policymaking


We argue for the rejection of an anthropocentric and instrumental system of normative ethics. Moral arguments for the preservation of the environment cannot be based on the promotion of human interests or goods. The failure of anthropocentric arguments is exemplified by the dilemma of Third World development policy, e.g., the controversy over the preservation of the Amazon rain forest. Considerations of both utility and justice preclude a solution to the problems of Third World development from the restrictive framework of anthropocentric interests. A moral theory in which nature is considered to be morally considerable in itself can justify environmental policies of preservation, even in the Third World. Thus, a nonanthropocentric framework for environmental ethics should be adopted as the basis for policy decisions.

2. Nonanthropocentrism is key to effective environmental policy—overcomes justice, utility problems and creates a case for preservation as valuable in its own right


When the nonanthropocentric framework is introduced, it creates a more complex situation for deliberation and resolution. It complicates the already detailed discussions of human trade-offs, high-tech transfers, aid programs, debt-for-nature swaps, sustainable development, etc., with a consideration of the moral obligations to nonhuman nature. This complication may appear counterproductive, but as in the case of Smith, Jones, and Green, it actually serves to simplify the decision. Just as a concern for Green made the contract dispute between Smith and Jones irrelevant, the obligation to the rain forest makes many of the issues about trade-offs of human goods irrelevant. It is, of course, unfortunate that this direct obligation to the rain forest can only be met with a cost in human satisfaction—some human interests will not be fulfilled. Nevertheless, the same can be said of all ethical decisions, or so Kant teaches us: we are only assuredly moral when we act against our inclinations. To summarize, the historical forces of economic imperialism have created a harsh dilemma for environmentalists who consider nature preservation in the Third World to be necessary. Nevertheless, environmentalists can escape the dilemma, as exemplified in the debate over the development of the Amazon rain forest, if they reject the axiological and normative framework of anthropocentric instrumental rationality. A set of obligations directed to nature in its own right makes many questions of human benefits and satisfactions irrelevant. The Amazon rain forest ought to be preserved regardless of the benefits or costs to human beings. Once we move beyond the confines of human-based instrumental goods, the environmentalist position is thereby justified, and no policy dilemma is created. This conclusion serves as an indirect justification of a nonanthropocentric system of normative ethics, avoiding problems in environmental policy that a human-based ethic cannot.
3. Environmental policies justified on anthropocentric grounds fail—are caught up in notions of utility that are too open to dispute


The first problem is empirical: there is uncertainty about the calculation of benefits and harms to be derived from alternative policies of development or preservation. In part, the problem is a traditional one encountered with any consequentialist analysis of normative action; however, in this particular case, Amazon rain forest development, we believe that the problem is acute. Although the benefits and harms to be determined are solely those of the affected human populations, the relevant populations are clearly distinct from one another, and the level and kinds of benefits and harms appear to be incommensurable. If a policy of preservation is adopted, the benefits to be derived are those associated with the continued maintenance of the biosphere as the basis of human life: production of oxygen, consumption of atmospheric carbon, preservation of potentially useful species, etc. If a policy of development is adopted, the benefits to be derived are primarily local and economic: increased agricultural and livestock production, industry, and exports. The costs and harms within each policy are determined by the failure to achieve the alternative benefits. A policy of preservation limits economic gain; a policy of development limits the goods of a functioning natural ecosystem. Although the choices appear clear, we lack the kind of data that would make the utility calculations possible. Is there a quantifiable good in the preservation of x amount of rain forest acreage that can be expressed in terms of biospherical maintenance and then compared to the loss of economic gains by indigenous local populations? Can we determine a quantifiable good in various methods of rain forest development, which then can be compared to losses in ecological function? It seems unlikely that these kinds of comparisons could ever be made; they are not being made now. In a recent survey of land use and management by indigenous peoples, Jason W. Clay warns: “Until now, few researchers have examined the ways indigenous inhabitants of tropical rain forests use and sustain their region’s resources.” Clay is saying that we do not know what the economic benefits and costs are in alternative policies of preservation and development. If viewed in this way, utility calculations become impossible as a basis of policy. Our complaint is not merely with the traditional difficulties of performing real-life utility calculations. The deeper issue is the anthropocentric framework that limits ethical and policy discussions. The primary concern for human interests or benefits—anthropocentrism—creates an irreconcilable conflict between two goods that are supposedly advocated by anthropocentric policies, i.e., the ecosystem which preserves the atmosphere, thus, preserving human life, and the economic use of the land by the indigenous population. We are faced with a classic case of a conflict between a long-term support system and short-term usable goods. This conflict cannot be resolved unless we expand the framework of discussion beyond the limits of anthropocentric instrumental reasoning.
Anthropocentrism Impact: Turns Case / Comes First

1. None of our problems can be solved until we adopt an ecocentric perspective

Dr. Ted Mosquin, formerly of University of Alberta and University of California-Berkeley and Stan Rowe, Emeritus Professor, University of Saskatchewan, "A Manifesto for Earth," BIODIVERSITY v. 5 n. 1, 2004, p. 3-4.

Everyone searches for meaning in life, for supportive convictions that take various forms. Many look to faiths that ignore or discount the importance of this world, not realizing in any profound sense that we are born from Earth and sustained by it throughout our lives. In today’s dominating industrial culture, Earth-as-home is not a self-evident percept. Few pause daily to consider with a sense of wonder the enveloping matrix from which we came and to which, at the end, we all return. Because we are issue of the Earth, the harmonies of its lands, seas, skies and its countless beautiful organisms carry rich meanings barely understood. We are convinced that until the Ecosphere is recognized as the indispensable common ground of all human activities, people will continue to set their immediate interests first. Without an ecocentric perspective that anchors values and purposes in a greater reality than our own species, the resolution of political, economic, and religious conflicts will be impossible. Until the narrow focus on human communities is broadened to include Earth’s ecosystems – the local and regional places wherein we dwell – programs for healthy sustainable ways of living will fail. A trusting attachment to the Ecosphere, an aesthetic empathy with surrounding Nature, a feeling of awe for the miracle of the Living Earth and its mysterious harmonies, is humanity’s largely unrecognized heritage. Affectionately realized again, our connections with the natural world will begin to fill the gap in lives lived in the industrialized world. Important ecological purposes that civilization and urbanization have obscured will re-emerge. The goal is restoration of Earth’s diversity and beauty, with our prodigal species once again a cooperative, responsible, ethical member.

2. Social stresses from ecological decay will cause industrial society to collapse in upon itself--no affirmative offense

Frederic Bender, philosophy instructor, University of Colorado, "On the Importance of Paul Shepard's Call for Post-Historic Primitivism and Paleolithic Counter-Revolution against Modernity," THE TRUMPETER v. 23 n. 3, 2007, p. 4.

Headlines from the IPCC focus on sea levels and global warming. Rising sea levels are related to global temperature rise not just because of melting polar ice caps, but also because of the ocean’s own coefficient of expansion. Since water expands as heat is added, global temperature rise means that the oceans will expand for “more than a millennium.” The predictable consequences for millions of humans living at or near current sea level are dire. Even with Herculean efforts to halt the increase of atmospheric CO2, future ecological refugees from low-lying coastal regions and islands will dwarf the suffering caused by Hurricane Katrina or the annual flooding of Bangladesh. Ecological change cannot be discussed without also addressing accompanying social stresses. Prevalent social networks, especially those associated with the globalization of capitalist industrial society, very likely will undergo non-linear abrupt changes of their own. Social breakdown, violence, and migrations on an unprecedented scale; widespread famine due to desertification, flooding or other causes of loss of agricultural fertility in many parts of the globe; the spread of disease as insect and other vectors migrate into territory for which they were formerly unfit; collapse of governments and crises of confidence in other institutions of civil society, are just a few of global warming’s predictable effects during the present century.
Anthropocentrism Alt: Active Resistance

1. Active resistance is key—violence prevails otherwise

Dr. Steven Best, Associate Professor of Philosophy and Humanities, University of Texas, El Paso, “Crisis and the Crossroads of History: The Need for a Radicalized Citizenry,” updated 5-14-12, http://www.drstevebest.org/CrisisAndTheCrossroads.htm, accessed 4-27-14.

Not all causes are good causes, of course, as fascism, totalitarianism, imperialism, genocide, racism, speciesism, and environmental destruction are causes that corporations, governments, and many people have affirmed in thought and action. In fact, it’s the prevalence of bad causes that make it urgent that as many people as possible struggle for justice and ecology. As noted by Edmund Burke, “All that is necessary for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing.” If we define “evil” as the willful exercise of violence, destruction, and domination, I think it is quite apparent that evil forces prevail over those that seek to establish peace, cooperation, democracy, and respect for life and the earth. The hegemony of Thanatos over Eros is manifest in rainforest destruction, species extinction, global warming, factory farming, genocide, military build-ups, nuclear proliferation, the G8, NAFTA, the WTO, ExxonMobil, Pat Robertson, Ann Coulter, and, of course: Bush, Rove, Rumsfeld, Cheney, Rice and their neo-con, Manifest Destiny agenda of “regime change” and spreading “democracy” to the world. Burke is right. It’s not enough not to do harm, one has to actively work to bring about the good, which means struggling against forces that oppress and destroy life and the earth. Good intentions and good will mean nothing unless put into action.

2. Humans are not more important—we need to act for all beings


When taking a wider view of history, one which focuses on the relationship of humans towards other species, it becomes clear that the human heritage – and the propagation of itself as a thing of value – has occurred on the back of seemingly endless acts of violence, destruction, killing and genocide. While this cannot be verified, perhaps ‘human’ history and progress begins with the genocide of the Neanderthals and never loses a step thereafter. It only takes a short glimpse at the list of all the sufferings caused by humanity for one to begin to question whether this species deserves to continue into the future. The list of human-made disasters is ever-growing after all: suffering caused to animals in the name of science or human health, not to mention the cosmetic, food and textile industries; damage to the environment by polluting the earth and its stratosphere; deforesting and overuse of natural resources; and of course, inflicting suffering on fellow human beings all over the globe, from killing to economic exploitation to abusing minorities, individually and collectively. In light of such a list it becomes difficult to hold onto any assumption that the human species possesses any special or higher value over other species. Indeed, if humans at any point did possess such a value, because of higher cognitive powers, or even because of a special status granted by God, then humanity has surely devalued itself through its actions and has forfeited its claim to any special place within the cosmos. In our development from higher predator to semi-conscious destroyer we have perhaps undermined all that is good in ourselves and have left behind a heritage best exemplified by the images of the gas chamber and the incinerator. We draw attention to this darker and pessimistic view of the human heritage not for dramatic reasons but to throw into question the stability of a modern humanism which sees itself as inherently ‘good’ and which presents the action of cosmic colonisation as a solution to environmental catastrophe. Rather than presenting a solution it would seem that an ideology of modern humanism is itself a greater part of the problem, and as part of the problem it cannot overcome itself purely with itself. If this is so, what perhaps needs to occur is the attempt to let go of any one-sided and privileged value of the ‘human’ as it relates to moral activity. That is, perhaps it is modern humanism itself that must be negated and supplemented by a utopian antihumanism and moral action re-conceived through this relational or dialectical standpoint in thought.
Anthropocentrism Alt: Animal Rights

1. Sustainable forms of social organization are not possible without first liberating animals


The fight for animal liberation demands radical transformations in the habits, practices, values, and mindset of all human beings as it also entails a fundamental restructuring of social institutions and economic systems predicated on exploitative practices. The goal of ecological democracy is inconceivable so long as billions of animals remain under the grip of despotic human beings. The philosophy of animal liberation assaults the identities and worldviews that portray humans as conquering Lords and Masters of nature, and it requires entirely new ways of relating to animals and the earth. Animal liberation is a direct attack on the power human beings—whether in pre-modern or modern, non-Western or Western societies—have claimed over animals since Homo sapiens began hunting them over two million years ago and which grew into a pathology of domination with the emergence of agricultural society. The new struggle seeking freedom for other species has the potential to advance rights, democratic consciousness, psychological growth, and awareness of biological interconnectedness to higher levels than previously achieved in history.

2. Embracing the cause of animal rights solves


The most important objective of the book, indeed, to promote a new ethics and mode of perception. Eternal Treblinka affects a radical shift in the way we understand oppression, domination, power, and hierarchy. It is both an effect of these changes, and, hopefully, a catalyst to deepen political resistance to corporate domination and hierarchy in all forms. Given its broad framing that highlights the crucial importance of human domination over animals for slavery, racism, colonialism, and anti-Semitism, Eternal Treblinka could and should revolutionize fields such as Holocaust studies, colonial and postcolonial studies, and African American studies. But this can happen only if, to be blunt, humanists, “radicals,” and “progressives” in academia and society in general remove their speciesist blinders in order to grasp the enormity of animal suffering, its monumental moral wrong in needless and unjustifiable exploitation of animals, and the larger structural matrix in which human-over-human domination and human-over-animal domination emerge from the same prejudiced, power-oriented, and pathological violent mindset. Political resistance in western nations, above all, will advance a quantum leap when enough people recognize that the movements for human liberation, animal liberation, and earth liberation are so deeply interconnected that no one objective is possible without the realization of the others. A truly revolutionary social theory and movement seeks to emancipate members of one species from oppression, but rather all species and the earth itself from the grip of human domination and colonization. A future “revolutionary movement” worthy of the name will grasp the ancient roots of hierarchy, such as took shape with the emergence of agricultural societies, and incorporate a new ethics of nature that overcomes instrumentalism and hierarchies of all forms. Humanism is a form of prejudice, bias, bigotry, and destructive supremacism; it is a stale, antiquated, immature, and dysfunctional dogma; it is a form of fundamentalism, derived from the Church of “Reason” and, in comparison with the vast living web of life still humming and interacting, however tattered and damaged, it is, writ large, a tribal morality – in which killing a member of your own “tribe” is wrong but any barbarity unleashed on another tribe is acceptable if not laudable. Ultimately, humanism is pseudo-universalism, a Kantian quackery, a hypocritical pretense to ethics, a dysfunctional human identity and cosmological map helping to drive us ever-deeper into an evolutionary cul-de-sac.

3. Animal liberation is a precondition to radical change


Animal liberation is by no means a sufficient condition for democracy and ecology, but it is for many reasons a necessary condition of economic, social, cultural, and psychological change. Animal welfare/rights people promote compassionate relations toward animals, but their general politics and worldview can otherwise be capitalist, exploitative, sexist, racist, or captive to any other psychological fallacy. Uncritical of the capitalist economy and state, they hardly promote the broader kinds of critical consciousness that needs to take root far and wide. Just as Leftists rarely acknowledge their own speciesism, so many animal advocates reproduce capitalist and statist ideologies.
Anthropocentrism Alt: Animal Rights [cont’d]

4. Animal liberation is key to our moral progress


The next great step in moral evolution is to abolish the last acceptable form of slavery that subjugates the vast majority of species on this planet to the violent whim of one. Moral advance today involves sending human supremacy to the same refuse bin that society earlier discarded much male supremacy and white supremacy. Animal liberation requires that people transcend the complacent boundaries of humanism in order to make a qualitative leap in ethical consideration, thereby moving the moral bar from reason and language to sentience and subjectivity. Animal liberation is the culmination of a vast historical learning process whereby human beings gradually realize that arguments justifying hierarchy, inequality, and discrimination of any kind are arbitrary, baseless, and fallacious. Moral progress occurs in the process of demystifying and deconstructing all myths -- from ancient patriarchy and the divine right of kings to Social Darwinism and speciesism -- that attempt to legitimate the domination of one group over another. Moral progress advances through the dynamic of replacing hierarchical visions with egalitarian visions and developing a broader and more inclusive ethical community. Having recognized the illogical and unjustifiable rationales used to oppress blacks, women, and other disadvantaged groups, society is beginning to grasp that speciesism is another unsubstantiated form of oppression and discrimination. The gross inconsistency of Leftists who champion democracy and rights while supporting a system that enslaves billions of other sentient and intelligent life forms is on par with the hypocrisy of American colonists protesting British tyranny while enslaveing millions of blacks.

5. Animal liberation is vital to our moral progress, ending oppression


Just as nineteenth century abolitionists sought to awaken people to the greatest moral issue of the day, so the new abolitionists of the 21st century endeavor to enlighten people about the enormity and importance of animal suffering and oppression. As black slavery earlier raised fundamental questions about the meaning of American “democracy” and modern values, so current discussion regarding animal slavery provokes critical examination into a human psyche damaged by violence, arrogance, and alienation, and the urgent need for a new ethics and sensibility rooted in respect for all life. Animal liberation is not an alien concept to modern culture; rather it builds on the most progressive ethical and political values Westerners have devised in the last two hundred years -- those of equality, democracy, and rights -- as it carries them to their logical conclusion. Whereas ethicists such as Arthur Kaplan argue that rights are cheapened when extended to animals, it is far more accurate to see this move as the redemption of rights from an arbitrary and prejudicial limitation of their true meaning. The next great step in moral evolution is to abolish the last acceptable form of slavery that subjugates the vast majority of species on this planet to the violent whim of one. Moral advance today involves sending human supremacy to the same refuse bin that society earlier discarded much male supremacy and white supremacy. Animal liberation requires that people transcend the complacent boundaries of humanism in order to make a qualitative leap in ethical consideration, thereby moving the moral bar from reason and language to sentience and subjectivity. Animal liberation is the culmination of a vast historical learning process whereby human beings gradually realize that arguments justifying hierarchy, inequality, and discrimination of any kind are arbitrary, baseless, and fallacious. Moral progress occurs in the process of demystifying and deconstructing all myths -- from ancient patriarchy and the divine right of kings to Social Darwinism and speciesism -- that attempt to legitimate the domination of one group over another. Moral progress advances through the dynamic of replacing hierarchical visions with egalitarian visions and developing a broader and more inclusive ethical community. Having recognized the illogical and unjustifiable rationales used to oppress blacks, women, and other disadvantaged groups, society is beginning to grasp that speciesism is another unsubstantiated form of oppression and discrimination.

6. Liberating animals is vital to the cause of liberation humans


The project to emancipate animals is integrally related to the struggle to emancipate humans and the battle for a viable natural world. To the extent that animal liberationists grasp the big picture that links animal and human rights struggles as one, and seeks to uncover the roots of oppression and tyranny of the Earth, they can be viewed as a profound new liberation movement that has a crucial place in the planetary struggles against injustice, oppression, exploitation, war, violence, capitalist neoliberalism, and the destruction of the natural world and biodiversity.
1. Deep ecology is most effective in making an ethical case when it embraces deep anthropocentrism

Despite the rejection of non-anthropocentric ethics, I believe that the deep ecological ontological commitment does have merit. However, intrinsic in deep ecologists’ failure to develop a viable environmental ethic, I believe, is a lack of understanding of the derivation of ethics from ontology. As Heidegger claims, ‘Before we attempt to determine more precisely the relationship between “ontology” and “ethics” we must ask what “ontology” and “ethics” themselves are’. In pursuing this question it becomes apparent that ontology itself is derivative of what Heidegger calls fundamental ontology. Fundamental ontology offers the recognition that we, as humans, have no ontological access except through our own understanding of what it is to ‘be’. For this reason I believe that, to meet deep ecology’s ontological conception, a distinction needs to be made between shallow and deep anthropocentrism. Like its namesake, deep anthropocentrism is suggestive of a deeper connection between humans and the world, a connection that has its roots in the human condition. Such a connection can be contrasted with ‘shallow’ or ‘formal’ anthropocentrism, the idea that we necessarily view the world from a human perspective. The need for a deep anthropocentric distinction follows the conception that ontology itself is not possible outside a fundamental human standpoint.

2. Deep anthropocentrism is the best way to address our link arguments

Deep anthropocentrism reflects the deep ecological conception that seeks to find the underlying or ontological causes for the widespread anti-environmental behaviour exhibited by humans. The search for such causes raises ontological questions that cannot, I believe, be asked outside of a human-centred context. This, it must be noted, is not the claim of formal anthropocentrism, of perceiving and interpreting the world from a necessary human vantage point. Rather, it is the thought that in ontological matters only humans have the required access to both questions and answers. The development of a deep anthropocentric distinction addresses the much-overlooked question of how an ontological shift is to be inaugurated. In his introductory overview of environmental ethics, Des Jardins claims that, ‘any call for a radical change in people’s worldview immediately faces a major challenge. How do we even begin to explain the alternative if, by definition, it is radically different from the starting point? How do we step outside our personal and cultural worldview or ideology to compare it with something radically different?’ In answering these questions it becomes apparent that we need to examine the conditions for the possibility of ontology itself, conditions made manifest through an examination of deep anthropocentrism.

3. There is no non-anthropocentric ethics—they ultimately result in question-begging

Hand-in-hand with this ontological commitment, however, is the belief that this holistic ontology entails a non-anthropocentric ethic. Within the literature this entailment is almost universally accepted, so much so that deep ecology is often characterised by its non-anthropocentric stance. It is my contention, however, that such an entailment is misbegotten. The development of a non-anthropocentric ethic is a problematic task that must be aborted. The debate between those advocating and those opposing a non-anthropocentric ethic has been one of the most prominent and long-running debates within environmental philosophical circles. Supporters of a non-anthropocentric or ecocentric ethic seek to locate intrinsic value in the non-human world, thus providing all creatures an equal right to ‘live and blossom’. However, in this endeavour, such ethicists fail to recognise the essentially practical nature of ethics and the consequent impossibility of separating human concern and value from any environmental ethical consideration. Invariably, non-anthropocentrists, at least those who wish to avoid the inherent misanthropic consequences of a consistent application of non-anthropocentric ethics, develop a hierarchy of needs to solve this problematic practical application. These hierarchies, however, lead ultimately to a question-begging ethical preference for the human species.
1. **Rejection of hierarchy is vital to ending violence**


In countless ways, the exploitation of animals rebounds to create crises within the human world itself. The vicious circle of violence and destruction can end only if and when the human species learns to form harmonious relations – non-hierarchical and non-exploitative -- with other animal species and the natural world. Human, animal, and earth liberation are interrelated projects that must be fought for as one. This essay asserts the need for more expansive visions and politics on both sides of the human/animal liberation equation, as it calls for new forms of dialogue, learning, and strategic alliances. Each movement has much to learn from the other. In addition to gaining new insights into the dynamics of hierarchy, domination, and environmental destruction from animal rights perspectives, Leftists should grasp the gross inconsistency of advocating values such as peace, non-violence, compassion, justice, and equality while exploiting animals in their everyday lives, promoting speciesist ideologies, and ignoring the ongoing holocaust against other species that gravely threatens the entire planet. Conversely, the animal rights community generally (apart from the ALM) is politically naive, single-issue oriented, and devoid of a systemic anti-capitalist theory and politics necessary for the true illumination and elimination of animal exploitation, areas where it can profit great from discussions with the Left.

2. **Hierarchies are the root of the problem—create a dominator culture that destroys the environment, justified by philosophies that reduce the world to nothing beyond its use value**


Human colonialism created its perfect vehicle in capitalism. Capitalism reinforces the Western instrumental prejudice by reducing all value to exchange value for profit. Capitalism provides many liberties and brings goodies to those with money. But it is a colonialist system that grows only through devouring human beings, cultures, species, and nature. Its logic is grow or die, accumulate and expand endlessly or implode and collapse. The origin of the environmental crisis lies not directly in capitalism or modern sciences and technologies, but rather has deep roots in Western culture. In her provocative book, The Chalice & the Blade (1987), Riane Eisler traces the origins and effects of a monumental shift in human social organization that began seven thousand years ago. Eisler describes how a peaceful and egalitarian “partnership model” of social organization was gradually eclipsed by a violent and hierarchical “dominator model” imposed by nomadic bands onto the Neolithic cultures in the Near East. Jim Mason’s book, An Unnatural Order: Uncovering the Roots of Our Domination of Nature and Each Other (1993), traces the origins of such a “dominator model” further back to the demise of hunting and gathering cultures and the rise of agricultural society ten thousand years ago. In his essay, “The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis” (1967), Lynn White grounds the roots of the ecological crisis in Christianity, but clearly the Judeo-Christian worldview – which White fails to note contains many positive views of our relation and responsibilities to nature – is a reflection of prior changes already in place that emphasize social hierarchy, human separation from nature and the will to power over the earth and its life forms. One finds unambiguous views of dominating nature in ancient Greece. As best elaborated by Aristotle, many Greeks believed there is a natural hierarchy where beings of lesser intelligence exist to serve those of greater intelligence. The same instrumental model that justified placing slaves and women beneath free Greek men situated animals below humans. As a general principle, Greek, Roman, medieval, and modern philosophers avowed human supremacy over animals and the earth by virtue of God-like powers of language and reason. Beginning in the seventeenth century, modern science declared the world to be mere matter in motion, devoid of any living spirit or holistic complexity, reducible to mathematical laws subject to human manipulation. Key architects of the modern worldview such as Rene Descartes and Francis Bacon championed technical domination over nature and saw reverence for life as superstition and “a discouraging impediment to the empire of man over the inferior creatures of god” (Robert Boyle). Mother Earth became a machine as capitalist society began to engineer a factory civilization. Through religion, philosophy, and science, individuals in Western culture have learned to objectify the natural world, to see it as devoid of value unless it is useful and transformed to suit human purposes. Culprits of this conceptual imperialism behold a cow and see steak, observe a tree and think timber. They speak of “wilderness” in ignorance that what they see as empty or useless is a complex ecosystem teeming with life and intricate biological relationships.
Anthropocentrism Alt: Human / Nature Split Rejection

1. We need to overcome the hubris that places humans at the center of the world--the alternative is a literal ecological hell on Earth

Klaus Klostermaier, former head, Department of Religion, University of Manitoba, "Bypassing the Triple Gate to Ecological Hell." THE TRUMPETER v. 25 n. 1, 2009, p. 100-101.

The analysis of the (self)-destructive tendencies of humans, which have to be counteracted by positive action, is a valid starting point for a discussion of the roots of the ecological crisis and of possible remedies. In the so-called developed countries the overexploitation of natural resources is not necessitated by real needs and basic requirements but by an insatiable appetite for luxuries and indulgence. Only a fraction of our industries caters to basic necessities—a much larger portion is busily creating new and artificial needs that it is then prepared to satisfy at the expense largely of the environment. Similarly, it is fairly evident that anger and hatred, directed against humans and against nature, is responsible for much environmental depredation. The wars that have been fought in our century, and in which most of the world was or is involved, have caused not only hundreds of millions of human casualties, but have also inflicted untold damage to the environment. Not only are vast areas of forests and fields directly ruined through technological warfare, the production, storage and disposition of vast amounts of weaponry depletes non-renewable resources, destroys nature and often leaves irreparable damage—as with chemical and atomic weaponry—to areas set aside for military exercises. Aside from such vast and evident destruction caused by hatred of humans against each other, there is a curious hatred against nature evident in the wanton destruction of young trees by school children, the damage done to forests by arsonists, the churning up of meadows and fields by bikers and motor-racers, and many other instances of not only careless dealing with nature but of active and deliberate destruction. For the Naiyayikas, moha is the root of the other two "defects." The specific self-delusion under which modernity suffers is the belief that humankind owns the earth and that science would transform the planet into a paradise for the exclusive enjoyment of humans. Whether one traces that delusion to a literalist reading of Genesis I, 28 (establishing the dominion of humankind over nature) or to a Baconian hubris (suggesting that nature's only purpose is to serve human purposes) does not make much of a difference. The extension of this analysis would suggest that if we are not counteracting these moral/spiritual defects (dosas) individually and collectively we might find ourselves soon not only in an ecological crisis but in an ecological hell, which some places on earth already appear to resemble. Traditional Indian ethicists were not content, however, with describing a bad situation and predicting worse to come, but they offered advice on how to get out of it and to establish, if not paradise on earth, at least a condition conducive to the pursuit of human life in dignity. They assumed that the overcoming of delusion, hatred and lust for luxuries would in and by itself bring about an orientation towards a life that is guided by higher principles. It would be a life lived in "fearlessness, purity of mind, steadfastness in knowledge and concentration, clarity, self-control, study, austerity and uprightness." (BG XVI, 1) The people would practice "non-violence, truth, compassion for all living beings." Free from anger, covetousness and malice they would be gentle, modest, and vigorous.

2. We need to reject human-centered ethical claims to actualize eco-centric ethics


Morality and ethical action involve choices, with fundamental values providing the standard. Comprehension of Earth as the generative source of Life and the carrier of Primary Values shifts ethical emphasis from people-centeredness (homocentrism) to Earth-centeredness (ecocentrism). Thus to protect and perpetuate the creativity of Earth's ecosystems, ecocentric people will reject many of the traditional cultural norms and practices of homocentric society. They will replace the concept of the autonomous individual with the ecological individual, enlarge the idea of "communal society" to the "ecosystem society," reclassify "progress" as whatever is conducive to sustainable participation in Earth's ecosystems, and redirect science and technology to the same end. In action they will limit both their population numbers and the per capita energy-use multiplier that makes the "ecological footprint" in high-tech nations so large and damaging. By placing limits on the consumption of Earth's components, waste products and pollution will also be decreased. Situating the primary ethical standard outside the human race -- asking "Is it good for Earth?" -- will facilitate solution of such human dilemmas as global versus regional trade, appropriate technology, population numbers, and abortion. The latter topic appropriately raises the question of life's source -- in fused sex cells and/or in their ambience -- the human mother and Mother Earth.
3. **Rethinking our human-centeredness is key—we need to 'think like a mountain' to radically alter our consciousness**


In this way, we can begin to reclaim our ecological identity as we remember who we are at a fundamental level; We remember that our bodies are largely made out of water, that the carbon that makes up all life forms is one and the same in us as in all living beings, that the food we eat, the air we breathe, become a part of us before returning to the Earth and we are only as healthy and well as they are. It is this sort of shift in consciousness that deep ecology espouses, from a human centred perspective to an Earth community worldview one imbued with the values of respect and care. As deep ecologist John Seed says, "Deep ecology is the search for a viable consciousness. Surely consciousness emerged and evolved according to the same laws as everything else. Molded by environmental pressures, the mind of our ancestors must time and again have been forced to transcend itself. To survive our current environmental pressures, we must consciously remember our evolutionary and ecological inheritance. We must learn to think like a mountain." This idea of thinking like a mountain reminds us of the inspiration of well known naturalist, Aldo Leopold. Leopold, recounts a story when in his hunting days he killed an old she-wolf. As he reached the old wolf, he arrived just in time to watch a fierce green fire dying in her eyes. He was a young man then, and full of what he calls trigger-itch but he thought that because fewer wolves meant more deer, that no wolves would mean hunters' paradise. But after seeing the green fire in the wolf’s eyes die, he sensed that neither the wolf nor the mountain agreed with such a view. And so he became a naturalist. It is this sort of radical transformation of consciousness that deep ecology points us towards. While certainly vast changes are needed in the economic, social and political structures and institutions, without a shift in values and beliefs those changes that we put in place at the institutional level will not be binding. Fortunately, this transformation is not too much to ask. We’re the survivors of a long slew of species that didn’t survive. Over 99.9 percent of all the species that ever lived on the planet did not make it through the extinction sieves to be still living now. Only one in a thousand species have managed to survive through all previous extinctions – and one of these species is us. That’s a really proud history that you and I have, that we have managed to make it. We’re one of the adaptable, flexible beings that are still here. We can rest assured that it’s within our capacity and our intelligence to figure out what needs to happen so that we can go on. Teetering on the brink as we stand right now, this invites us to go deeper into that intelligence that has led us to be here today. To discover an Earth ethic that begins to shape a future that we are proud to pass down to our children and our children’s children.

4. **We need to overcome our egoism and learn to identify with the entire world**


Deep ecology is founded on two basic principles: one is a scientific insight into the interrelatedness of all systems of life on Earth, together with the idea that anthropocentrism – human-centeredness – is a misguided way of seeing things. Deep ecologists say that an ecocentric attitude is more consistent with the truth about the nature of life on Earth. Instead of regarding humans as something completely unique or chosen by God, they see us as integral threads in the fabric of life. They believe we need to develop a less dominating and aggressive posture towards the Earth if we and the planet are to survive. The second component of deep ecology is what Arnie Naess calls the need for human self-realization. Instead of identifying with our egos or our immediate families, we would learn to identify with trees and animals and plants, indeed the whole ecosphere. This would involve a pretty radical change of consciousness, but it would make our behavior more consistent with what science tells us is necessary for the well-being of life on Earth. We just wouldn’t do certain things that damage the planet, just as you wouldn’t cut off your own finger.

5. **Collective consciousness is key—we need to transcend the egoism in the human/nature binary**


Other visionary writers hypothesize that as a species Homo sapiens is evolving toward a planetary civilization that " . . . will come from the synergy of the collective experience and wisdom of the entire human family—the entire species. The world has become so interdependent that we must make it together, transcending differences of race, ethnicity, geography, religion, politics, and gender. It is the human species that must learn to live together as a civilized and mutually supportive community. To focus on the development of civility among the human species is not to inflate unduly the importance of humanity within the ecosystem of life on Earth; rather it is to recognize how dangerous the human race is to the viability of the Earth's ecosystem. Humanity must begin consciously to develop a planetary-scale, species-civilization that is able to live in a harmonious relationship with the rest of the web of life" (Elgin 1993, 14). Philosopher Thomas Berry calls this project the "great work" of humans. Berry concludes that humans live in a "moment of grace" as we move into the 21st century which enables humanity to "be present to the planet in a mutually beneficial way" (Berry 1999). Others believe that Gaia herself, a conscious, self-organizing system, will regulate such an unruly species as Homo sapiens. The Gaia hypothesis has stimulated not only controversy among scientists but also has stimulated numerous religious, mystical, and feminist responses that indicate a yearning for integration with the "Earth Mother."
Anthropocentrism Alt: Imagining Global Suicide

1. We should imagine global suicide—best way to rethink human/nature relations


How might such a standpoint of dialectical, utopian anti-humanism reconfigure a notion of action which does not simply repeat in another way the modern humanist infliction of violence, as exemplified by the plan of Hawking, or fall prey to institutional and systemic complicity in speciesist violence? While this question goes beyond what it is possible to outline in this paper, we contend that the thought experiment of global suicide helps to locate this question – the question of modern action itself – as residing at the heart of the modern environmental problem. In a sense perhaps the only way to understand what is at stake in ethical action which responds to the natural environment is to come to terms with the logical consequences of ethical action itself. The point operates then not as the end, but as the starting point of a standpoint which attempts to reconfigure our notions of action, life-value, and harm. For some, guided by the pressure of moral conscience or by a practice of harm minimisation, the appropriate response to historical and contemporary environmental destruction is that of action guided by abstention. For example, one way of reacting to mundane, everyday complicity is the attempt to abstain or opt-out of certain aspects of modern, industrial society: to not eat non-human animals, to invest ethically, to buy organic produce, to not use cars and buses, to live in an environmentally conscious commune. Ranging from small personal decisions to the establishment of parallel economies (think of organic and fair trade products as an attempt to set up a quasi-parallel economy), a typical modern form of action is that of a refusal to be complicit in human practices that are violent and destructive. Again, however, at a practical level, to what extent are such acts of nonparticipation rendered banal by their complicity in other actions? In a grand register of violence and harm the individual who abstains from eating non-human animals but still uses the bus or an airplane or electricity has only opted out of some harm causing practices and remains fully complicit with others. One response, however, which bypasses the problem of complicity and the banality of action is to take the non-participation solution to its most extreme level. In this instance, the only way to truly be non-complicit in the violence of the human heritage would be to opt-out altogether. Here, then, the modern discourse of reflection, responsibility and action runs to its logical conclusion – the global suicide of humanity – as a free-willed and ‘final solution’.

2. This is the most possible moral act


While we are not interested in the discussion of the ‘method’ of the global suicide of humanity per se, one method that would be the least violent is that of humans choosing to no longer reproduce. The case at point here is that the global suicide of humanity would be a moral act; it would take humanity out of the equation of life on this earth and remake the calculation for the benefit of everything nonhuman. While suicide in certain forms of religious thinking is normally condemned as something which is selfish and inflicts harm upon loved ones, the global suicide of humanity would be the highest act of altruism. That is, global suicide would involve the taking of responsibility for the destructive actions of the human species. By eradicating ourselves we end the long process of inflicting harm upon other species and offer a human-free world. If there is a form of divine intelligence then surely the human act of global suicide will be seen for what it is: a profound moral gesture aimed at redeeming humanity. Such an act is an offer of sacrifice to pay for past wrongs that would usher in a new future. Through the death of our species we will give the gift of life to others.

3. This is a productive thought experiment—we are not actually advocating suicide


From the outset it is important to make clear that the argument for the global suicide of humanity is presented as a thought experiment. The purpose of such a proposal in response to Hawking is to help show how a certain conception of modernity, of which his approach is representative, is problematic. Taking seriously the idea of global suicide is one way of throwing into question an ideology or dominant discourse of modernist-humanist action. By imagining an alternative to the existing state of affairs, absurd as it may seem to some readers by its nihilistic and radical ‘solution’, we wish to open up a ground for a critical discussion of modernity and its negative impacts on both human and non-human animals, as well as on the environment. In this respect, by giving voice to the idea of a human-free world, we attempt to draw attention to some of the asymmetries of environmental reality and to give cause to question why attempts to build bridges from the human to the non-human have, so far, been unavailing.
Anthropocentrism Alt: Imagining Global Suicide [cont’d]

4. The suicide is not forced—it is a productive imaginary


It should be noted nonetheless that our proposal for the global suicide of humanity is based upon the notion that such a radical action needs to be voluntary and not forced. In this sense, and given the likelihood of such an action not being agreed upon, it operates as a thought experiment which may help humans to radically rethink what it means to participate in modern, moral life within the natural world. In other words, whether or not the act of global suicide takes place might well be irrelevant. What is more important is the form of critical reflection that an individual needs to go through before coming to the conclusion that the global suicide of humanity is an action that would be worthwhile. The point then of a thought experiment that considers the argument for the global suicide of humanity is the attempt to outline an anti-humanist, or non-human-centric ethics. Such an ethics attempts to take into account both sides of the human heritage: the capacity to carry out violence and inflict harm and the capacity to use moral reflection and creative social organisation to minimise violence and harm. Through the idea of global suicide such an ethics reintroduces a central question to the heart of moral reflection: To what extent is the value of the continuation of human life worth the total harm inflicted upon the life of all others? Regardless of whether an individual finds the idea of global suicide abhorrent or ridiculous, this question remains valid and relevant and will not go away, no matter how hard we try to forget, suppress or repress it.

5. Imagining global suicide is vital to re-orienting our ethics


Finally, it is important to note that such a standpoint need not fall into a version of green or eco-fascism that considers other forms of life more important than the lives of humans. Such a position merely replicates in reverse the speciesism of modern humanist thought. Any choice between the eco-fascist and the humanist, colonial-speciesist is thus a forced choice and is, in reality, a non-choice that should be rejected. The point of proposing the idea of the global suicide of humanity is rather to help identify the way in which we differentially value different forms of life and guide our moral actions by rigidly adhered to standards of life-value. Hence the idea of global suicide, through its radicalism, challenges an ideological or culturally dominant idea of life-value. Further, through confronting humanist ethics with its own violence against the non-human, the idea of global suicide opens up a space for dialectical reflection in which the utopian ideals of both modern humanist and anti-humanist ethics may be comprehended in relation to each other. One possibility of this conflict is the production of a differing standpoint from which to understand the subject and the scope of moral action. From the outset, global suicide throws into question the linkage between life-value and the subject of moral action. It proposes a moral question, the first moral question, which must accompany every human action: Is my life, and its perpetuation, worth the denial of life to others?
Anthropocentrism Alt: Radical Democracy

- Revolutionary environmentalism, including a commitment to radical democracy, is the only way we can survive


Revolutionary environmentalism is based on the realization that politics as usual just won’t cut it anymore. We will always lose if we play by their rules rather than invent new forms of struggle, new social movements, and new sensibilities. The defense of the earth requires immediate and decisive: logging roads need to be blocked, driftnets need to be cut, and cages need to be emptied. But these are defensive actions, and in addition to these tactics, radical movements and alliances must be built from the perspective total liberation. A new revolutionary politics will build on the achievements of democratic, libertarian socialist, and anarchist traditions. It will incorporate radical green, feminist, and indigenous struggles. It will merge animal, earth, and human standpoints in a total liberation struggle against global capitalism and its omnicidal grow-or-die logic. Radical politics must reverse the growing power of the state, mass media, and corporations to promote egalitarianism and participatory democratization at all levels of society – political, cultural, and economic. It must dismantle all asymmetrical power relations and structures of hierarchy, including that of humans over animals and the earth. Radical politics is impossible without the revitalization of citizenship and the re-politicization of life, which begins with forms of education, communication, culture, and art that anger, awaken, inspire, and empower people toward action and change. This is a pivotal time in history, a crossroads for the future of life. Windows of opportunity are closing. The actions that human beings now collectively take or fail to take will determine whether the future is hopeful or bleak. While the result is horrible to contemplate, our species may not meet this challenge and drive itself into the same oblivion as it drove countless other species. There is no economic or technological fix for the crises we confront, the only solution lies in radical change at all levels. Clearly, there is no guarantee that Homo sapiens will survive in the near future, as the dystopian visions of films such as Mad Max or Waterworld may actually be realized. But nor is there is any promise that revolutionary environmentalism can or will arise, given problems such as the factionalism and egoism that typically tears political groups apart and/or the fierce political repression always directed against resistance movements. Amidst so many doubts and uncertainties, there is nonetheless no question whatsoever that the quality of the future—if humanity and other imperiled species have one—depends on the strength of global resistance movements and the possibilities for revolutionary change.
Anthropocentrism Alt: Re-enchant Nature

1. We need to embrace the crisis and overcome our disconnect from the natural world


To overcome the current ecological crisis our species must first recognize it as one. Much of humanity does not grasp the crisis as anything but a bump on the highway to technoutopia for two fundamental reasons. First, they have no intellectual understanding of ecological laws and processes and so cannot appreciate the misguided and destructive nature of the dominator paradigm. Human beings are accustomed to viewing the world as comprised of discrete parts they can manipulate and control without consequence. They fancy that the impact of their actions is partial, limited, and manageable. They presume the earth is a cornucopia of unlimited resources that can fuel endless growth. They fantasize that in a tug-of-war contest between economic imperatives (rapid growth for short-term gains) and ecological laws (long-term balance, harmony, and sustainability) they will emerge the victor. They are blithely unaware of the complexity of living relationships, the fragility of ecosystems, and the Dr. Strangelove nature of their technological existence. But the problem goes deeper than what people know or do not know intellectually, involving the lack of emotional bonds to the earth and a paralysis of the will to act. For too many, nature is an abstraction whereas media worlds, virtual reality systems, entertainment spectacles, and commodity fantasies are far more real. Few people break out of their sterile technoprisons (or bitter poverty) to see dolphins swim, hear running streams and mountain winds, or smell carpets of wildflowers. Through mass production, mass consumption, compulsive labor, and repressive policies such as the Patriot Act, the US holds its citizens captive to fragmented and privatized existence, as the values, practices, and institutions of democracy continue their steep decline.

2. Viewing nature as sacred is vital to challenging its capitalistic instrumentalization


Another reason is to make it possible to recognise and address contemporary capitalism as what, in this context, it actually is: a crypto-religion. Many if not most of its strongest supporters, both of consumerism and of managerialism, worship the modern anthropocentric god of Progress, and subscribe with what is in effect a religious fervour to the doctrine of economic growth without end as the sole means to its realisation. These are ultimate values, ungroundable in their own terms as rational or scientific without question-begging; so to accept these adherents’ self-description as “rational” uncritically is wrong-headed and debilitating. Conversely, when people value nature strongly enough to act to protect it, they also do so in a way that is in effect religious – that is, again in terms of their ultimate values – and the effect is correspondingly stronger than mere respect. It has to be, in order to resist the all-too-available blandishments of utilitarian appeals to rational self-interest. That is why acolytes of homo economicus call such opponents “sentimental”, “nostalgic”, “emotional” and other, not coincidentally, gendered epithets: in a word, “irrational”. Therefore, just as recognition of the intrinsic value of the more-than-human natural world (in both theory and practice) is needed to prevent an all-too-human lapse into short-term instrumental exploitation, so too is a shared respect for the dimension of that value which is appropriately and validly described as sacred. It is an irreplacable bulwark against the capture of nature, and the death of the wild, at the hands of scientific and corporate naturalists.

3. We need to re-sacralize our existence--can only be accomplished by rejecting western philosophy


Many deep ecologists call their perspective alternatively “ecocentrism” or “biocentrism” (to convey, respectively, an ecosystem-centered or life-centered value system). As importantly, they believe humans have so degraded the biosphere that its life-sustaining systems are breaking down. They trace this tragic situation to anthropocentrism (human-centeredness), which values nature exclusively in terms of its usefulness to humans. Anthropocentrism, in turn, is viewed as grounded in Western religion and philosophy, which many deep ecologists believe must be rejected (or a deep ecological transformation of consciousness within them must occur) if humans are to learn to live sustainable on the earth. Thus, deep ecologists generally believe that only by “resacralizing” our perceptions of the natural world can we put ecosystems above narrow human interests and thereby avert ecological catastrophe by learning to live harmoniously with the natural world. It is a common perception within the deep ecology movement that the religions of indigenous cultures, the world’s remnant and newly revitalized or invented pagan religions, and religions originating in Asia (especially Taoism, Buddhism, and Hinduism), provide superior grounds for ecological ethics, and greater ecological wisdom, than do Occidental religions. Theologians such as Matthew Fox and Thomas Berry, however, have shown that Western religions such as Christianity may be interpreted in ways largely compatible with the deep ecology movement.
Anthropocentrism Alt: Solves—Capitalism / Ethics

1. Anti-anthropocentrism challenges the root of capitalism—the animal-industrial complex

Steven Best, Associate Professor, Humanities and Philosophy, University of Texas, El Paso, “Rethinking Revolution: Animal Liberation, Human Liberation, and the Future of the Left,” INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF INCLUSIVE DEMOCRACY v. 2 n. 3, 6—06, www.inclusivedemocracy.org/journal/vol2/vol2_no3_Best_rethinking_revolution.htm, accessed 4-28-14. New social movements play out in a postindustrial capitalist society where the primary economic dynamics no longer involve processing of physical materials but rather consumerism, entertainment, mass media, and information. Transnational corporations such as Microsoft, Monsanto, and Novartis demonstrate the importance of science and research for the postindustrial economy. Although not recognized as such, a second way of viewing the ALM is to recognize that it is part of the contemporary anti-capitalist and anti/alter-globalization movement that attacks the corporate-dominated “globalization from above” from democratic visions manifest in the struggle for “globalization from below.” To the extent that postindustrial capital is anchored in a global science/knowledge complex, and this is driven by animal experimentation, animal liberation challenges global capitalism, in the form of what I will call the Global Vivisection Complex (GVC). More specifically, I will identify this new oppositional force the direct action anti-vivisection movement (DAAVM). This movement has emerged as a serious threat to biomedical research industries. In the UK, for example, pharmaceutical, biotechnology, and medical research industries are the third largest contributor to the economy; an attack on this science complex is an attack on the UK state and global capital in general. To date, the ALM in the UK and US has shut down numerous animal breeders, stopped construction of a number of major research centers, and forced HLS off the New York Stock Exchange. Clearly, the ALM is a major social force and political force. If the Left does not yet recognize this, transnational research capital and the UK and US governments certainly do, for they have demonized the ALM as a top domestic terrorist threat and are constructing police states to wage war against it. The GVC is a matrix of power-knowledge reflecting the centrality of science in postindustrial society. It is comprised of pharmaceutical industries, biotechnology industries, medical research industries, universities, and testing laboratories. All these institutions use animals to test and market their drugs; animals are the gas and oil without which corporate science machines cannot function. As corporations like Huntingdon Life Sciences and Chiron are global in scope and have clients throughout the world, animal liberation groups such as the ALF and Stop Huntington Animal Cruelty (SHAC) are also global in their resistance. A seemingly local group like Stop Newchurch Guinea Pigs (NSGP), which waged aggressive war in an English village against a family who breed guinea pigs for research in England, is also part of the anti-globalization movement because the family they attacked —and ultimately shut down— supplied animals to the GVC. Whatever the political views of anti-vivisectionist —whether libertarian, free market, socialist, or anarchist— they are monkey-wrenching globalization from above. The DAAVM disrupts corporate supply chains, thwarts their laboratory procedures, and liberates their captive slaves. Besides the economic threat of the DAAVM, it also poses a strong philosophical and ideological threat by attacking the ideological legitimacy of animal-based “science.” The powerful, fact-based assault on the legitimacy of vivisection mounted by the DAAVM and animal rights movements is an assault on the authority of Science itself, an attack on the modern Church of Reason. The anti-vivisection movement exposes the fallacies of vivisection and reveals how science serves the interests of corporations such that objectivity is something to be bought and sold (e.g., junk science and falsified data to dispute global warming was funded by energy corporations such as Exxon-Mobil).

2. Recognizing value outside ourselves is vital to our moral evolution

Dr. Steven Best, Associate Professor of Philosophy and Humanities, University of Texas, El Paso, “From Earth Day to Ethical Society,” 2004, http://www.drstevebest.org/FromEarthDay.htm, accessed 4-27-14. Consider the old philosophical riddle: If a tree falls in the forest and there is no one there to hear it, does it make a sound? This is but a pseudo-riddle one can take seriously only through an impoverished human-centered perspective. For the animals surely the tree falls, and its drop has an impact on what is living within and around it. A key part of moral evolution is recognizing value outside of oneself — as it relates to other individuals, cultures, species, and the natural world as a whole. Just as within patriarchal and racist cultures, individuals began to learn that women do not exist for men and blacks were not made to serve whites, so human beings must awaken to the realization that animals and the natural world have value and beauty for their own purposes that have nothing to do with human aims.
Anthropocentrism Alt: Solves—Environment / Extinction

1. Deep ecology challenges consumerism and offers a way out of environmental disaster


In the same vein, a mystical identification—or deep relationship—with the natural world allows us to orient political struggle away from entitlement and rage—and in a direction not tied (or at least less tied) by a psychic addiction to the very social system that destroys us. As Marcuse observed, consumer society binds its subjects to the principles of ever increasing production and consumption by rooting personal identity in the ownership of things. The recognition of spiritual values in general and the value(s) of nature in particular gives us a way out of the ecocidal cul-de-sac of the endless mall. We develop, in short, an alternative sense of self. This alternative allows the possibility of a withdrawal of psychic energy from a cultural and economic system that threatens all those subject to it.

2. Deep ecology counters the instrumentalization of nature and ecological disaster


Thus, Deep Ecology highlights the limitations of a purely instrumental attitude towards nature, an attitude that reduces non-human nature to quantities of stuff to be measured, mastered, and commodified. As a philosophy based in powerful emotional experiences, Deep Ecology expresses simply and directly what many people feel: a love and concern for the natural world. As more familiar mystical experiences might alter our attitudes towards death, our fear of the unknown, or our petty insecurities, realization of our kinship with the earth confirms the need to question any unquestioned trashing of what surrounds us. Its insights can teach us to see the familiar in a new way, challenging our taken-for-granted beliefs, practices, and institutions.

3. The alternative is necessary to ensure that we survive the imminent industrial collapse

Frederic Bender, philosophy instructor, University of Colorado, "On the Importance of Paul Shepard's Call for Post-Historic Primitivism and Paleolithic Counter-Revolution against Modernity," THE TRUMPETER v. 23 n. 3, 2007, p. 4-5.

To mitigate the worst of such effects, humans will have to learn very rapidly to reframe their role on planet Earth and modify basic belief systems, behaviours, and institutions accordingly. Addressing this pending collapse of the legitimacy of the industrial paradigm is perhaps the most important role for deep ecology theory today. To the extent that deep ecology supporters can posit feasible and desirable post-industrial ways of life suitable for a destabilized planet, they can contribute a uniquely important perspective as ecosystemic breakdown unfolds. If we can develop the deep ecological wisdom with which to ameliorate some of the most dire of industrialization’s effects, then we may reasonably hope to cope with collapse. To the extent that collapse spirals out of control, deep ecology, I would suggest, can also help address issues related to how survivors might best pick up the pieces in the face of unimaginable suffering.
Anthropocentrism Alt: Solves—Leftist Politics

1. Leftist politics needs to incorporate animal liberation to be effective

Steven Best, Associate Professor, Humanities and Philosophy, University of Texas, El Paso, “Rethinking Revolution: Animal Liberation, Human Liberation, and the Future of the Left,” INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF INCLUSIVE DEMOCRACY v. 2 n. 3, 6—06, www.inclusivedemocracy.org/journal/vol2/vol2_no3_Best_rethinking_revolution.htm, accessed 4-28-14. This essay asserts the need for more expansive visions and politics on both sides of the human/animal liberation equation, as it calls for new forms of dialogue, learning, and strategic alliances. Each movement has much to learn from the other. In addition to gaining new insights into the dynamics of hierarchy, domination, and environmental destruction from animal rights perspectives, Leftists should grasp the gross inconsistency of advocating values such as peace, non-violence, compassion, justice, and equality while exploiting animals in their everyday lives, promoting speciesist ideologies, and ignoring the ongoing holocaust against other species that gravely threatens the entire planet. Conversely, the animal rights community generally (apart from the ALM) is politically naive, single-issue oriented, and devoid of a systemic anti-capitalist theory and politics necessary for the true illumination and elimination of animal exploitation, areas where it can profit great from discussions with the Left.

2. The Left needs to embrace animal liberation in order to be politically effective

Steven Best, Associate Professor, Humanities and Philosophy, University of Texas, El Paso, “Rethinking Revolution: Animal Liberation, Human Liberation, and the Future of the Left,” INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF INCLUSIVE DEMOCRACY v. 2 n. 3, 6—06, www.inclusivedemocracy.org/journal/vol2/vol2_no3_Best_rethinking_revolution.htm, accessed 4-28-14. Animal liberation is the next necessary and logical development in moral evolution and political struggle. Animal liberation builds on the most progressive ethical and political advances human beings have made in the last 200 years and carries them to their logical conclusions. It takes the struggle for rights, equality, and nonviolence to the next level, beyond the artificial moral and legal boundaries of humanism, in order to challenge all prejudices and hierarchies including speciesism. Martin Luther King’s paradigmatic humanist vision of a “worldhouse” devoid of violence and divisions, however laudable, remains a blood-soaked slaughterhouse until the values of peace and equality are extended to all animal species. Animal liberation requires that the Left transcend the comfortable boundaries of humanism in order to make a qualitative leap in ethical consideration, thereby moving the moral bar from reason and language to sentience and subjectivity. Just as the Left once had to confront ecology, and emerged a far superior theory and politics, so it now has to engage animal rights. As the confrontation with ecology infinitely deepened and enriched Leftist theory and politics, so should the encounter with animal rights and liberation.
Anthropocentrism Alt: Solves—Oppression / Equity

1. The alternative is key to solving other forms of oppression


“[P]rotecting the richness and diversity of life on Earth” (Naess, 1995a, in 2005v10, p. 65) is the central thrust or ultimate aim of deep ecology. It’s also a hypothesis about the preconditions for meeting the intertwined goals and expectations of the twentieth century’s three great movements—peace, social justice, and ecological sustainability (Naess, 1995b, in 2005v10)—and realizing our highest potentials as a species. As Gandhi presciently noted, “The difference between what we do and what we are capable of doing would suffice to solve most of the world’s problems”. This Gandhian premise is not only a central underpinning of Naess’s philosophy of deep ecology and his other work in applied philosophy—it is key to his view of human nature. The critical insight is that, today, all people—and, because of us, all living beings—are in the same precarious little lifeboat, whether we recognize it or not. Existing social, political, and resource use arrangements, however, are by no means fixed or inevitable. The oars can still be refashioned and the rowers can be retrained. The situation is dire, but not yet tragic. As Naess remarked, “Our species is not destined to be the scourge of the Earth. If it is bound to anything, perhaps it is to be the conscious, and joyful, appreciator of this planet as an even greater whole in its immense richness. This may be its ‘evolutionary potential’ or an ineradicable part of it” (2005v10, p. 187).

2. The cause of animal liberation challenges human oppression


If the ALM can be seen as a new social movement, and as an anti-capitalist and alter-globalization movement, it can also be viewed in a third way I have emphasized, namely that it is a contemporary anti-slavery and abolitionist movement. Just as nineteenth century abolitionists sought to awaken people to the greatest moral issue of the day involving the slavery of millions of people in a society created around the notion of universal rights, so the new abolitionists of the 21st century endeavor to enlighten people about the enormity and importance of animal suffering and oppression. As black slavery earlier raised fundamental questions about the meaning of American “democracy” and modern values, so current discussion regarding animal slavery provokes critical examination into a human psyche damaged by violence, arrogance, and alienation, and the urgent need for a new ethics and sensibility rooted in respect for all life. Animals in experimental laboratories, factory farms, fur farms, leather factories, zoos, circuses, rodeos, and other exploitative institutions are the major slave and proletariat force of contemporary capitalist society. Each year, throughout the globe, they are confined, exploited, and killed—“murdered”—by the billions. The raw materials of the human economy (a far greater and more general domination system than capitalism), animals are exploited for their fur, flesh, and bodily fluids. Stolen from the wild, bred and raised in captivity, held in cages and chains against their will and without their consent, animals literally are slaves, and thereby integral elements of the contemporary capitalist slave economy (which in its starkest form also includes human sweatshops and sex trades). Abolitionists often view welfarism as a dangerous ruse and roadblock to moral progress, and often ground their position in the philosophy of rights. 19th century abolitionists were not addressing the slave master’s “obligation” to be kind to the slaves, to feed and clothe them well, or to work them with adequate rest. Rather, they demanded the total and unqualified eradication of the master-slave relation, the freeing of the slave from all forms of bondage. Similarly, the new abolitionists reject reforms of the institutions and practices of animal slavery as grossly inadequate and they pursue the complete emancipation of animals from all forms of human exploitation, subjugation, and domination.

3. Biocentrism embraces the cause of social justice and wealth redistribution


Supporters of the DEM recognize the need to address the great disparity between the opportunities of people living in the Third World to sustain their vital needs and people living in Japan, the United States, Canada, and the European Union. Much effort has been given by supporters of the DEM to addressing issues of environmental justice raised by a globalizing economy and the impact of free trade treaties such as NAFTA (and the WTO) on our ability to speak for the protection of wild species and their habitat, as well as the impact that global financial structures have on the lives of ordinary people around the world (Mander 1991).
4. **Long-range sustainability is the best focus for people in the global south**

Bill Devall, Professor Emeritus, Sociology, Humboldt State University, “The Deep, Long-Range Ecology Movement, 1960-2000—A Review,” ETHICS & THE ENVIRONMENT v. 6 n. 1, 2001, pp. 18-41. Some critics assume that the DEM is inappropriate for the Third World because the Third World must address problems of militarism, poverty, food supply, and demands for gender equality (Guha 1989). On the contrary, supporters of the DEM conclude it is most appropriate for the Third World because of its emphasis on long-range sustainability of natural systems within which humans as well as all other species must dwell (Naess 1995; Cafaro 1998).

5. **Radical ecology effectively challenges oppressive hierarchies within human societies—social justice is only possible with the alternative**

Dr. Ted Mosquin, formerly of University of Alberta and University of California-Berkeley and Stan Rowe, Emeritus Professor, University of Saskatchewan, “A Manifesto for Earth,” BIODIVERSITY v. 5 n. 1, 2004, p. 6-7. Many of the injustices within human society hinge on inequality. As such they comprise a subset of the larger injustices and inequities visited by humans on Earth’s ecosystems and their species. With its extended forms of community, ecocentrism emphasizes the importance of all interactive components of Earth, including many whose functions are largely unknown. Thus the intrinsic value of all ecosystem parts, organic and inorganic, is established without prohibiting their careful use. “Diversity with Equality” is the standard: an ecological law based on Nature’s functioning that provides an ethical guideline for human society. Social ecologists justly criticize the hierarchical organization within cultures that discriminates against the powerless, especially against disadvantaged women and children. The argument that progress toward sustainable living will be impeded until cultural advancement eases the tensions arising from social injustice and gender inequality, is correct as far as it goes. What it fails to consider is the current rapid degradation of Earth’s ecosystems that increases inter-human tensions while foreclosing possibilities for sustainable living and for the elimination of poverty. Social justice issues, however important, cannot be resolved unless the hemorrhaging of ecosystems is stopped by putting an end to homocentric philosophies and activities.

6. **Eco-centrism is necessary to end all forms of oppression**

Michael E. Zimmerman, Professor, Philosophy, Tulane University, “Introduction to Deep Ecology,” interviewed by Alan Atkisson, GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE, Summer 1989, o. 24+. But humanity is part of nature too, and the development of our awareness and our human freedom is an important step in ending the environmental crisis. I would say that deep ecology is part of the great liberation movement that culminated in the Enlightenment and now is trying to move beyond the Enlightenment’s limitations. It’s not just about freeing white men from the control of the king, and it’s not just about freeing women or blacks anymore. It’s about freeing all beings from unnecessary kinds of control and exploitation.

7. **Deep questioning is necessary to overcome our cultural drive to dominate**

Eccy de Jonge, Lecturer, Middlesex University, SPINOZA AND DEEP ECOLOGY, 2004, p. 11-12. Concentrating on Lynn White Jr’s first position - that anthropocentrism arose due to Western imperialism - the deep ecologists, Bill Devall and George Sessions, identify anthropocentrism as the dominant worldview of technocratic-industrialized societies. Devall and Sessions argue that our understanding of human nature has been strongly conditioned by the paradigm of domination - a paradigm which regards human beings as isolated) and fundamentally separate from nature and superior to the rest of nature. As a result, anthropocentrism has come to include all aspects of domination, for example, masculine over feminine, the powerful over the poor, Western cultures over non-Western cultures, and so on. They maintain that the obsession with domination derives from self-alienation, which can only be resolved through seeing ‘beyond our narrow contemporary cultural assumptions and values, and the conventional wisdom of our time and place [which] is best achieved by the meditative deep questioning process'. The meditative deep questioning process aims to lead us to examine the very nature of reality, who we are, what it means to be human, and how we relate to the natural world. As Devall and Sessions state, ‘we need to question whether humans are separate or superior to the rest of Nature and whether it is our role or destiny to dominate and control the rest of Nature.'
Anthropocentrism Alt: Answers to “Anti-Human / Misanthropic”

1. Deep ecologists are not anti-human—is incompatible with its philosophical tenets


No supporters of the deep ecology movement are anti-human, as is sometimes alleged. Some vociferous environmentalists who claim to be supporters of the movement have said and written things which are misanthropic in tone. They have not explained how such statements are consistent with commitment to platform principle number one, which recognizes the inherent worth of all beings, including humans. Supporters of the deep ecology movement deplore antihuman statements and actions. They support Gandhian nonviolence in word and deed. Arne Naess says that he is a supporter of the ecofeminist, social ecology, social justice, bioregional, and peace movements. The platform principles of the deep ecology movement are broad enough to be this inclusive.

2. Biocentrism is not anti-human—it simply seeks to change human-centered behaviors while celebrating the existence of humanity


The failure to pinpoint certain individuals and groups - rather than humanity as a whole - as being anthropocentric has led to the accusation that deep ecologists are misanthropic - seeking to privilege the non-human world over the human, equating all interhuman concerns with anthropocentrism. Fox responds by calling such criticism ‘the fallacy of misplaced misanthropy’. He argues that ‘the target of the deep ecologists’ critique is not human beings per se (i.e. a general class of social factors) but rather human-centredness (i.e. a legitimating ideology). As Fox says, ‘deep ecology's constructive task is to encourage an egalitarian attitude on the part of humans toward all entities in the ecosphere-including humans ... deep ecologists are among the first to highlight and draw inspiration from the fact that not all humans have been human-centered either within the Western tradition or outside it. Far from being misanthropic, deep ecologists celebrate the existence of these human beings.

3. The politics of most deep ecologists are entirely divorced from any fascist impulses


Critics have latched onto the fact that on one or two occasions, certain deep ecologists have called for very Draconian measures to save the planet from destruction at the hands of human beings. The danger that social ecologists and others see is that what these deep ecologists envision will become a new kind of a totalitarianism or "eco-fascism" – in other words, some kind of world government which would compel people to change their social practices and totally control their behavior to make it consistent with the demands of the ecosphere. But most deep ecologists talk about the need for decentralization, bioregions, the breakdown of the totalizing impulse of industrialism, an end to authoritarianism, and the development of a much more fragmented society with new kinds of relationships. This seems far closer to the truth about deep ecology, and none of it seems consistent with the possibility of totalitarianism.

4. Earth First! does not represent deep ecology—it is not inherently violent

George Sessions, “Review: [Untitled],” ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY v. 2 n. 3, 7—97, pp. 368-370.

Lee is adamant that Deep Ecology has been the philosophy of Earth First! although she admits that most EF'ers read very little Deep Ecology philosophy, and that specific mention of Deep Ecology did not appear in the E. E! Journal until 1984. It is rather painful to read about some of the shocking positions taken by Dave Foreman, Christopher Manes and others in the E.E! Journal. For example, argued in one piece that even a nuclear war would not be that damaging to the earth and would hasten the end of industrial society. Since many, but not all, of these articles appeared under various pseudonyms, this leads to speculation as to whether Foreman, Manes, and the others were merely exercising their rights as individuals to the free expression of radical and shocking (and perhaps misanthropic) ideas; whether these ideas were meant to express the philosophy of Earth First!; or whether they thought they were expounding ideas which were the natural outcome of Deep Ecology philosophy. If the latter, they were radically mistaken in their understanding of Deep Ecology philosophy as espoused by Arne Naess and other Deep Ecology theorists.
Anthropocentrism Alt: Answers to “Cede the Political”

1. Biocentrism produces better politics—overcomes our divisions


In more strategic political terms concern for nature is a value that can provide the basis for a new kind of solidarity. We might remember that whatever else divides us as human beings, we all need to breathe. And virtually all of our hearts rejoice to the sounds of spring. These commonalities may save us when the divisions of race, class, gender, ethnicity, or sexuality leave us deeply suspicious of each other. While those getting very rich off of pollution are not likely to be convinced, as well as many of those whose most immediate livelihood depends on exploitation of their surroundings, we have already seen multi-class, multi-race, and multi-nationality coalitions doing serious political work. An enormous dam project slated for India-supported by the World Bank and liable to destroy the habitat of endangered species and indigenous people alike—was stopped by a transcontinental alliance of local people, environmental activists, lawyers, and concerned citizens from India, Switzerland, and the U.S. (Rich:44-47). In Wisconsin white activists have helped Native Peoples fend off multinational mining interests (Gedicks). These are but a few examples of arenas of cooperation based in the joint concern for the human and the non-human worlds.

2. Biocentrism fosters the activist, nonviolent ethos necessary to overcome the ecological crisis


Naess concludes that the DEM has a special role in political life. "For one, it rejects the monopoly of narrowly human and short-term argumentation patterns in favor of life-centered long-term arguments. It also rejects the human-in-environment metaphor in favor of a more realistic human-in-ecosystems and politics-in-ecosystems one. It generalizes most ecopolitical issues: from 'resources' to 'resources for . . . '; from 'life quality' to 'life quality for . . . '; from 'consumption' to 'consumption for . . . '; where 'for . . . ' is, we insert 'not only humans, but other living beings'. Supporters of the Deep Ecology movement have, as a main source of motivation and perseverance, a philosophical/ecological total view (an ecosophy) that includes beliefs concerning fundamental goals and values in life which it applies to political argumentation. That is, it uses not only arguments of the usual rather narrow kind, but also arguments from the level of a deep total view and with the ecological crisis in mind. But supporters of the Deep Ecology movement do not consider the ecological crisis to be the only global crisis; there are also crises of social justice, and of war and organized violence. And there are, of course, political problems which are only distantly related to ecology. Nevertheless, the supporters of the Deep Ecology movement have something important to contribute to the solution of these crises: they provide an example of the nonviolent activism needed in the years to come" (in Sessions 1995, 452).
Anthropocentrism Alt: Answers to “Humans Are Superior / Special”

1. No basis for anthropocentrism

Dr. Patrick Curry, Lecturer, Religious Studies, University of Kent, "Green Ethics and the Democratic Left," SOUNDINGS v. 35, 2007, pp. 66-75.

The belief that other animals, lacking language, are therefore not subjects of their own lives which (not who) cannot really know or suffer – are in fact, to borrow Descartes’s icy phrase, bêtes machines – is patently special pleading of the kind sometimes described as ‘speciesism’. (The same is true, incidentally, of those who would deny moral consideration to non-human animals since they lack rational moral agency; presumably they would then agree to withdrawing such consideration from children, the senile, the insane, the mentally handicapped and so on…) However, the term for the more comprehensive attitude that only humanity has value, and is therefore uniquely privileged, is ‘anthropocentrism’. And as I have already said, it is nothing more or less than a prejudice, akin to those poisoning gender, class and race; or, from another perspective, another version of sectarianism.

2. Humanity has no value or meaning except as part of a larger ecosphere

Stan Rowe, Emeritus Professor, University of Saskatchewan, "What on Earth is Environment," THE TRUMPETER, v. 6 n. 4, 1989, pp. 123-126.

The immediate reality for people on Earth is the layered skin of the planet, no less miraculous for appearing commonplace and simple in composition. It consists of a thin gaseous stratum resting on liquid and solid strata, with organisms concentrated at the phase boundaries. The gaseous layer is the atmosphere, the liquid is the hydrosphere, the solid is the soil-and-sediment bearing lithosphere. Within this three-way matrix, organisms and their surrounds are often said to comprise a communal fourth sphere, the biosphere—a term apt to mislead by suggesting the preeminence of organisms. Actually all four constituents—air, water, earth, and organisms—are essential parts of the one homeostatic whole, the Ecosphere: literally the Home-sphere. This word for the planetary ecosystem has the double advantage of reminding humanity where it is domiciled, while expressing no prejudice in favour of organisms, hence no denigration of earth, water and air as less than organisms, as merely their environment. It implies equal importance among all components, while also implying that everything existing within the Ecosphere, including the human race, is a product of it, a subdivision of it, a part of it, and therefore less important than it. The Whole Home is the prime reality; all else within is fragmentary, disarticulated, lost, and meaningless until conceived and experienced in the context of the Ecosphere. The derivations of the words 'art' and 'religion' suggest that their functions are to seek ways of joining and binding together. Both human quests can fruitfully ponder the questions that ecological insight into the Ecosphere/people relationship poses for articulators and healers: Who in the World are you? What on Earth are you doing?

3. We are no more important that our ecosphere–we are totally dependent on it

Stan Rowe, Emeritus Professor, University of Saskatchewan, "What on Earth is Environment," THE TRUMPETER, v. 6 n. 4, 1989, pp. 123-126.

The implications of the idea that the whole globe is an ecological entity—the Ecosphere—of which people as individuals and as communal groups in their built environments are parts, remains to be assimilated. This is today's primary task. A beginning is to perceive humanity as one kind of dependent deep air animal, living at the bottom of the atmosphere in a confined solarium, despoiling the renewable means of its sustenance, crying "more growth, more growth," injecting unnatural resources from underground into the life-space, roiling up the sediments, rendering the surroundings murky, denaturing the paradise that produced it, and all in the name of human welfare. People exist within and as parts of the Ecosphere that over eons produced them, nourished them, sustained them, regenerated them, and will continue so to do as long as its healthy functioning is unimpaired. People stand in the same relationship to the Ecosphere as the fetus to the woman; the welfare of both are interdependent but the priority of importance clearly rests with the mother, with the larger surrounding and nourishing system. Matter (mater) comes first. Re-conceiving vague "environment" as something real and substantial, as the enveloping four-dimensional Ecosphere, gives new meaning to environmental protection. It confers intrinsic values not only on all organisms but equally on air, soil, water, and on the unity of these. It casts two-dimensional land-as-area in the perspective of three dimensional ecosystems that interact locally, regionally, and globally, providing insights to the intrinsic worth of the planet's surface. Most importantly, the concept of Ecosphere as the prime reality can begin the cure of the disease of homocentrism by turning attention outward, ecocentrically. It lifts the human imagination above the slough of despond that is the outcome and heritage of philosophies and religions selfishly turned in on the human species, fixated on nothing greater than individuals, societies, communities, cultures. It provides a new standard against which human ideas, moralities, and activities can be evaluated. Do they sustain the natural systems and processes of the World that themselves sustain all life? It offers a choice: Is humanity to be the protector of the planet or its despoiler, its cosmetician or its cancer? No longer can the one and only question be, Is this particular technology, science, art, culture, development, good for humanity? A more momentous question takes precedence: Is it good for the Ecosphere? This in the future must be the ethical test of public policy and of individual intent.
1. We need to embrace a new, anti-establishment politics to address the eco-crisis


Although there is diversity in unity, there must also be unity in diversity. Solidarity can emerge in recognition of the fact that all forms of oppression are directly or indirectly related to the values, institutions, and system of global capitalism and related hierarchical structures. To be unified and effective, however, anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist alliances require mutual sharing, respectful learning, and psychological growth, such that, for instance, black liberationists, ecofeminists, and animal liberationists can help one another overcome racism, sexism, and speciesism. New social movements and Greens have failed to realize their radical potential. They have abandoned their original demands for radical social change and become integrated into capitalist structures that have eliminated “existing socialist countries” as well as social democracies in a global triumph of neoliberalism. A new revolutionary force must therefore emerge, one that will build on the achievements of classical democratic, libertarian socialist, and anarchist traditions; incorporate radical green, feminist, and indigenous struggles; synthesize animal, Earth, and human liberation standpoints; and build a global social-ecological revolution capable of abolishing transnational capitalism so that just and ecological societies can be constructed in its place.

2. We need to politicize our environmental ethics—local organization and direct action is key to political effectiveness, not making appeals to political leaders


People must leave their comfort zone of change in two key ways. First, on the principle that the personal is political, individuals must examine their lifestyle choices. Yes, we need to xeriscape, recycle, and use hybrid cars, but the most profound change an individual can make is to shift from a meat-based to a plant-based diet. The Global Meat Culture is damaging the planet more than any other factor. While corporations like Exxon and Texaco exact massive tolls on the earth, the creme de la creme of corporate destruction are the meat and dairy industries. Raising animals in giant livestock farms and on massive feedlots is a principle cause of rainforest destruction, desertification, global warming, species extinction, food and water waste, and air, land, and water pollution. But, second, people need to reach outside their personal lives and lifestyle choices to become political animals. Capitalist selves seek individualistic solutions to problems that are deeply social and political; they confuse the meaning of citizen with their role as consumer, voter, and taxpayer. No significant change of any kind is possible until citizens create a counter-force to corporate power through grass roots organizations that defend the environment as they empower individuals politically. The environmental crisis is a social crisis; it is fundamentally a crisis in democracy whereby the elite minority imposes its will upon the vast majority of people because they monopolize power. Hence, there must be a strong social, political, and democratic thrust to a new environmental movement. People must shift from writing letters and working for legislative change to involvement in local organizations that focus on direct action.

3. Playing by the rules of the established political order ensures that pro-environment activism will fail

Dr. Steven Best, Associate Professor of Philosophy and Humanities, University of Texas, El Paso, “Crisis and the Crossroads of History: The Need for a Radicalized Citizenry,” updated 5-14-12, http://www.drstevebest.org/CrisisAndTheCrossroads.htm, accessed 4-27-14.

A new revolutionary politics will build on the achievements of democratic, libertarian socialist, and anarchist traditions. It will incorporate radical green, feminist, and indigenous struggles. It will merge animal, earth, and human standpoints in a total liberation struggle against global capitalism and domination of all kinds. Radical politics must reverse the growing power of the state, mass media, and corporations in order to promote egalitarianism and participatory democratization at all levels of society—economic, political, and cultural. It dismantles all asymmetrical power relations and structures of hierarchy, including that of humans over animals and the earth. It is impossible without the revitalization of citizenship and re-politicization of life, which begins with forms of education, communication, culture, and arts that anger, awaken, inspire, and empower people toward action and change.
Anthropocentrism Alt: Answers to “We’re Good Leftists/Radicals Too”

1. Simply adding eco-centrism to traditional leftist concerns fails--needs to be the center of progressive politics


Perhaps as a consequence of dealing with such a comprehensive phenomenon, when human beings’ attention spans, in various ways, are relatively limited, people trying to get ecology onto the agenda often find themselves obliged to point out embarrassingly obvious if inconvenient points. For example: the existential fact that everything which human beings do, need and want is made possible by the Earth. I mean in a primary and fundamental sense; for us, it’s a case of: no Earth, no anything. And given that our biological constitution is far from infinitely elastic – even granted its technological extensions and our extraordinary adaptability – such provision must be within certain ranges as well. Next, there is the political point which follows: any progressive programme, for anything (from food and housing to education, rights of any kind, etc.), depends utterly upon a sufficiently healthy ecology. Now granting this, it might nonetheless be objected, ‘Ok, but why can’t we just assume that and get on with what we are really supposed to be doing?’ But obviously, again, such a thing can no longer be assumed. And even short of relatively utter ecological disaster, how could collapsing “resources” – not just less of them but what remains being damaged and possibly damaging – fail to jeopardize the goods, from the most material to the most cultural, which the left wants to encourage? Admitting that the left must therefore involve itself with ecology, however, still seems to leave open the reluctant add-on option, with its instrumentalism: nature is not really our proper concern, but we must pay some attention to it because otherwise we won’t be able to do the other things the left should be doing. But this is just where green ethics makes itself felt. As I have already suggested, there are cogent reasons why ecology should be central to the politics of the democratic left.

2. Successful Leftist politics depend upon first rejecting anthropocentrism


There are also powerful strategic reasons for ecocentrism – namely, that without it, a healthy humanity, and all the more so a progressive politics, faces a very bleak future. To put it another way, if the health of the Earth’s non-human natural ecosystems is approached with anthropocentric ethics alone, it will fail. The reason is not hard to find: endemic human susceptibility to short-term and narrow perspectives, largely dictated by perceived self-interest and easily corrupted by greed – which, of course, is just what commodity capitalism is so expert at exploiting and orchestrating. The paradox is this: to the extent that human beings take a genuine interest in non-human nature, and enable it to survive and flourish, success will enable their own flourishing far beyond what self-interest could accomplish. There are other vital strategic considerations which will undoubtedly raise excite some leftist reflexes. One is that science alone cannot save either us or nature. Anyone who thinks science is still principally about disinterested inquiry into the nature of reality stopped paying attention quite a while ago, when it became several other things as well: (1) inextricably entangled with hypermodern technology and at the same time (2) thoroughly enmeshed with transnational capital and political state power, as the three big gears of the engine of modernity; and as such, (3) a major extension of anthropocentric ‘rational’ self-interest.

3. Leftist positions are unable to understand non-economic forms of oppression


The Left traditionally has been behind the curve in its ability to understand and address forms of oppression not directly related to economics. It took decades for the Left to recognize racism, sexism, nationalism, religion, culture and everyday life, ideology and media, ecology, and other issues into its anti-capitalist framework, and did so only under the pressure of various liberation movements. The tendency of the Marxist Left, in particular, has been to relegate issues such as gender, race, and culture to “questions” to be addressed, if at all, only after the goals of the class struggle are achieved. Such exclusionist and reductionist politics prompted Rosa Luxemburg, for one, to defend the importance of culture and everyday life by exclaiming, “If I can’t dance, I don’t want to be a part of your revolution!”
**Anthropocentrism Alt: Answers to “We’re Good Leftists/Radicals Too” [cont’d]**

4. **Leftist politics are just as prone to speciesism as are other, more mainstream political perspectives**


Speciesism is the belief that nonhuman species exist to serve the needs of the human species, that animals are in various senses inferior to human beings, and therefore that one can favor human over nonhuman interests according to species status alone. Like racism or sexism, speciesism creates a false dualistic division between one group and another in order to arrange the differences hierarchically and justify the domination of the “superior” over the “inferior.” Just as society has discerned that it is prejudiced, illogical, and unacceptable for whites to devalue people of color and for men to diminish women, so it is beginning to learn how utterly arbitrary and irrational it is for human animals to position themselves over nonhuman animals because of species differences. Among animals who are all sentient subjects of a life, these differences—humanity’s false and arrogant claim to be the sole bearer of reason and language—are no more ethically relevant than differences of gender or skin color, yet in the unevolved psychology of the human primate they have decisive bearing. The theory—speciesism—informs the practice—unspeakably cruel forms of domination, violence, and killing. The prejudice and discriminatory attitude of speciesism is as much a part of the Left as the general population and its most regressive elements, calling into question the “radical,” “oppositional,” or “progressive” nature of Left positions and politics. While condemning violence and professing rights for all, the Left fails to take into account the weighty needs and interests of billions of oppressed animals. Although priding themselves on holistic and systemic critiques of global capitalism, Leftists fail to grasp the profound interconnections among human, animal, and earth liberation struggles and the need to conceived and fight for all as one struggle against domination, exploitation, and hierarchy.

5. **Shallow Leftist ecology has found itself unable to embrace the cause of animal liberation—it is thoroughly speciesist**


Critiques of human arrogance over and alienation from nature, calls for a “re-harmonization” of society with ecology, and emphases on a “new ethics” that focus solely on the physical world apart from the millions of animal species it contains are speciesist, myopic, and inadequate. It’s as if everyone can get on board with respecting rivers and mountains but still want to eat, experiment on, wear, and be entertained by animals. Left ecological concerns stem not from any kind of deep respect for the natural world, but rather from a position of “enlightened anthropocentrism” (a clear oxymoron) that understands how important a sustainable environment is for human existence. It is a more difficult matter to understand the crucial role animals play in sustaining ecosystems and how animal exploitation often has dramatic environmental consequences, let alone more complex issues such as relationships between violence toward animals and violence to other human beings. Moreover, it is far easier to “respect nature” through recycling, planting trees, or driving hybrid cars than it is to respect animals by becoming a vegan who stops eating and wearing animal bodies and products. Much more so than a shift in how one views the inorganic world, it is far more difficult, complex, and profound -- for both philosophical and practical reasons -- to revolutionize one’s views toward animals and adopt ethical veganism. In short, the modern “radical” tradition -- whether, Marxist, socialist, anarchist, or other “Left” positions that include anti-racism and feminism -- stands in continuity with the entire Western heritage of anthropocentrism, and in no way can be seen as a liberating philosophy from the standpoint of the environment and other species on this planet. Current Left thought is merely Stalinism toward animals.
**Anthropocentrism: Affirmative Answers**

1. **Humans occupy a privileged position—should be the center of our values**


   My aim, however, is not to bury anthropocentrism, but to defend it, at least in a qualified form. My claim is that if we attempt to step too far outside the scale of the recognizably human, rather than expanding and enriching our moral horizons we render them meaningless, or at least almost unrecognizable. The grand perspective of evolutionary biology provides a reductio ad absurdum of the cluster of nonanthropocentric ethics which can be found under the label 'deep ecology'. What deep ecology seeks to promote, and what deep ecologists seek to condemn, needs to be articulated from a distinctively human perspective. And this is more than the trivial claim that our perspectives, values and judgements are necessarily human perspectives, values and judgements. Within the moral world we do occupy a privileged position.

2. **It is possible for us to value the world from an anthropocentric starting point**


   That we habitually assume characteristically anthropocentric perspectives and values is claimed by deep ecologists to be a defect. And as a corrective to this parochialism, we are invited to assume an 'ecocentric' or 'biocentric' perspective. I am not persuaded, however, that it is intelligible to abandon our anthropocentric perspective in favour of one which is more inclusive or expansive. We should certainly abandon a crude conception of human needs which equates them (roughly) with the sort of needs which are satisfied by extravagant resource use. But the problem with so-called 'shallow' views lies not in their anthropocentrism, but rather with the fact that they are characteristically short-term, sectional, and self-regarding. A suitably enriched and enlightened anthropocentrism provides the wherewithal for a satisfactory ethic of obligation and concern for the nonhuman world. And a genuinely non-anthropocentric view delivers only confusion.

3. **They misanalyse the current environmental crisis—it is a uniquely human problem**


   great deal of hyperbole has been deployed in articulating the claims of deep ecology. It is common, for example, to encounter claims that destructive human activity -- and in particular human technology -- is threatening life on the planet; that we are disrupting the delicate fabric of the ecosphere, and driving it towards collapse. Such claims are exaggerated. There have been far more traumatic disruptions to the planet than any we can initiate. From a long-term planetary perspective, this is alarmist nonsense. However from an anthropocentric point of view such fears may be well founded. If the concerns for humanity and nonhuman species raised by advocates of deep ecology are expressed as concerns about the fate of the planet, then these concerns are misplaced. From a planetary perspective, we may be entering a phase of mass extinction of the magnitude of the Cretaceous. For planet Earth that is just another incident in a four and a half billion year saga. Life will go on -- in some guise or other. The arthropods, algae and the ubiquitous bacteria, at least, will almost certainly be around for a few billion years more. And with luck and good management, some of the more complex and interesting creatures, such as ourselves, may continue for a while longer as well. Of course our present disruptive and destructive activities are, or should be, of great concern to us all. But that is a quite properly human concern, expressing anthropocentric values from an anthropocentric perspective. Life will continue; but we should take steps to maintain and preserve our sort of living planet; one that suits us and, with a few exceptions, our biotic co-existents.

4. **Deep ecology threatens the destruction of modern civilization**


   By contrast, ecofundamentalism, or “deep ecology,” sees nature as paramount. Humanity is a part of nature, and we have to follow her laws, not tinker with them and turn them to our own advantage. The problem with this is that it threatens modern civilization and its way of life. Humanity has long since outgrown its place in the pristine ecology of the planet. We have been able to do this because we have changed our surroundings beyond recognition to grow our food. We have uprooted the plants that used to grow on the land and replaced them with vast monocultures, aided by fertilizers and pest control. We have selectively bred our domesticated animals to suit our needs, and few if any of them would survive in nature on their own. Living in harmony with nature, as the deep ecologists suggest, is utterly incompatible with this. Nevertheless, many if not most of the high priests of deep ecology seem quite happy to avail themselves of the fruits of modern civilization; they fly around the world to confer with the like-minded, they eat what they can buy in the supermarket, and live in comfortable dwellings with heating or cooling, or both, depending on where they are.
5. **There can be no center of value unless we sneak in some anthropocentric viewpoints—value can only exist from an anthropocentric perspective**


Other natural properties -- such as biodiversity, beauty, harmony, stability, and integrity -- have been proposed to provide a non-anthropocentric basis for value. But unless we smuggle in some anthropocentric bearings, they fare no better than the property of being the outcome of a natural process in providing an intuitively plausible ordering of better and worse states of the world. For example, if biodiversity is taken as a basic value-giving characteristic, then the state of the planet just after the Cambrian explosion (about 570 million years ago) would be rated much more highly than the world of the present, as it was far richer in terms of the range and diversity of its constituent creatures. Most biology textbooks recognize between twenty and thirty extant animal phyla -- the phylum being the fundamental design plan of an organism (and the second broadest classification, following 'kingdom', in biological taxonomy). Yet the Burgess Shale, one small quarry in British Columbia dating back some 530 million years, contains the remains of fifteen to twenty organisms so unlike one another, or anything now living, as to each constitute a separate phylum. In terms of basic diversity, a far greater range of radically different anatomical types existed at that epoch of evolutionary development. These examples disclose a serious difficulty for a view such as Goodin's which seeks a non-anthropocentric naturalistic basis for value? The fundamental problem is that we can rank preferences only given some anthropocentric bearings. An austerity ecocentric or biocentric perspective delivers no determinate answer as to which of the abundant and wonderfully various unfolding planetary biotas should be preferred.

6. **There can be no values outside of anthropocentric viewpoints—the alternative is nonsensical**


The attempt to provide a genuinely non-anthropocentric set of values, or preferences seems to be a hopeless quest. Once we eschew all human values, interests and preferences we are confronted with just too many alternatives, as we can see when we consider biological history over a billion year time scale. The problem with the various non-anthropocentric bases for value which have been proposed is that they permit too many different possibilities, not all of which are at all congenial to us. And that matters. We should be concerned to promote a rich, diverse and vibrant biosphere. Human flourishing may certainly be included as a legitimate part of such a flourishing. The preoccupations of deep ecology arise as a result of human activities which impoverish and degrade the quality of the planet's living systems. But these judgements are possible only if we assume a set of values (that is, preference rankings), based on human preferences. We need to reject not anthropocentrism, but a particularly short term and narrow conception of human interests and concerns. What's wrong with shallow views is not their concern about the well-being of humans, but that they do not really consider enough in what that well-being consists. We need to develop an enriched, fortified anthropocentric notion of human interest to replace the dominant short-term, sectional and self-regarding conception. Our sort of world, with our sort of fellow occupants is an interesting and engaging place. There is every reason for us to try to keep it, and ourselves, going for a few more cosmic seconds.

7. **Environmentalism is anti-science in most of its manifestations**


There is another way in which socialism and environmentalism differ from one another. Socialism is a child of the Enlightenment. It sprang from a belief in science as a vehicle for human progress, from an understanding that science and technology would provide the material abundance needed to lift humanity from misery. That notwithstanding, it turned out to be gravely mistaken. Nevertheless, it is to the scientists and philosophers of the Enlightenment that we owe the replacement of superstition with scientific inquiry and the use of science for human progress; indeed we are still drawing on that inheritance. Environmentalism is of a different kind. Even if it is often dressed up in scientific garb, its most extreme variety incorporates deep skepticism toward science, taking its cue from nature mysticism. This skepticism manifests itself in skepticism about any interference with nature; it is as if nature knows best. Reduced to its absurd consequences, this type of environmentalism tells us that humanity should never have entered the stone age and made tools; we should still be gathering fruit and killing animals we could handle with our bare hands. Presumably no one in his right mind would want to go that far, but it is entirely unclear where to draw the line. Should we still be hunters and gatherers, but using stone tools? Should we just have avoided artificial fertilizer? Or pesticides? Or coal and oil?
8. Most strains of radical environmentalism are anti-human


But there is more to it than that. Many environmentalists, and certainly the most outspoken ones, would be outraged by having themselves described as advocates for wise use of nature. For them, nature is above human civilization; man has to find his place in nature (the most politically correct among them would probably say woman has to find her place in nature), and nothing would be worse than trying to tinker with the processes of nature in order to carve out a greater living space. This is the worldview of the ecofundamentalists. In this worldview, curiously, science has taken the place of the unscientific and supernatural. Rather than using our scientific knowledge to improve our living conditions, as humanity has traditionally done, we are supposed to use it as a tool for the opposite, for letting the processes of nature run their course, for not cutting down trees to build our homes and make our furniture, for leaving plants and animals alone rather than cultivate those that best suit our needs, to say nothing of extracting oil and minerals. This is not a caricature; these are indeed the tenets of the most extreme form of environmentalism, what has become known as “deep ecology.” Anyone will be hard put to find anything more antihuman than this set of ideas. These conceptions are sufficiently widespread to have generated a market for publications such as Alan Weisman’s book The World without Us, which deals with how the world would return to its pristine state once humanity had been taken out.

9. Ecofundamentalisms are a threat to civilization


So we seem to be dealing with an ideology which has some of the characteristics of religion, not in the sense of being otherworldly and relying on supernatural forces, but in making nature herself and her workings sacred and a barrier to human efforts. Just as ideologies such as socialism and the great religions of the world, environmentalism covers a wide area of views and a vast number of people, all of whom may disagree strongly among themselves on many things having to do with the environment, just as the socialists disagree on economic policy and Christians and Muslims on many matters related to their holy books. But just as the ideology of socialism can lead people to go for silly economic policies and the great religions can entice their followers to commit atrocities in the name of their prophets, so environmentalism can encourage irrational policies and even entice their followers to commit sabotage that may lead to manslaughter to safeguard what suits them to call rights of nature. Environmentalism of the ecofundamentalist type is not just a folly which adds color to the gray shades of our daily life (some environmentalist publications are good substitutes for the theater of the absurd), it can be a serious impediment to human progress. In its most extreme variants it is thoroughly anti-human. Listen to this sermon by one of the icons of ecofundamentalism and founder of the Sierra Club, John Muir, addressing alligators: “Honorable representatives of the great saurians of older creation, may you long enjoy your lilies and rushes, and be blessed now and then with a mouthful of terror-stricken man by way of a dainty.” 13 I would like to believe that this was said tongue in cheek, but one’s sense of humor may speak volumes about one’s values and outlook. However that may be, numerous poor fishermen and water-fetching women in Africa are killed every year by crocodiles, a species the protection of which is eagerly sought by urban environmentalists in rich countries. And here is another one, from David M. Graber, a biologist: Human happiness, and certainly human fecundity, are not as important as a wild and healthy planet. I know social scientists who remind me that people are part of nature, but it isn’t true. Somewhere along the line— at about a billion years ago, maybe half that— we quit the contract and became a cancer. We have become a plague upon ourselves and upon the earth. . . . Until such a time as Homo sapiens should decide to rejoin nature, some of us can only hope for the right virus to come along. 14 In the light of this it is perhaps superfluous to ask how dangerous environmentalism is as an ideology. George Reisman, after using both of the above quotations, refers to it as “pure, unadulterated poison,” expressing “ideas and wishes which, if acted upon, would mean terror and death for enormous numbers of human beings.” 15 This may sound intemperate, but the sad thing is that these words are not entirely out of place given the quoted pronouncements and similar ones by other ecofundamentalists. The very least one can say is that environmentalism in its most extreme version is outrightly hostile to economic growth and material well-being. It sees nature as above humanity, to be interfered with as little as possible. A mind-set of this kind could put up barriers against economic development and possibly move developed countries backward. It is indeed the latter that is most likely, as environmentalism has its greatest following in affluent societies. But can ideologies tear down societies? They surely can put them on an unfortunate path, as witnessed by the communist experiments of the twentieth century.
10. Embracing extremist environmentalism risks destroying western civilization


These two theses illustrate the controversy over the power of ideas versus objective forces in shaping the fate of civilization. Climate change is an objective force with a potential to bring down a civilization. As it ran its course, it may indeed have shaped the ceremonial culture and affected how the climate change played out in Mayan society. By contrast, ascribing the collapse of Mayan society to the demands of its ceremonial class is to give primacy to ideas. Ideas inappropriate in the sense of overburdening the productive activities that support them are thought to be powerful enough on their own to bring a civilization down; for this no climate change would be needed. If we ascribe such power to ideas, it is not far-fetched to imagine environmentalism in its most extreme form as bringing down western civilization. The use of fossil energy and nuclear energy would be abandoned. Hydroelectric power and wind might be tolerated, although by the most extreme environmentalists only reluctantly. Given that less than 10 percent of our primary energy comes from renewable sources and given the pervasive role energy plays in modern society the effect of this on society is simply beyond imagination. But a more likely candidate as an ideology causing a collapse is an excessively cuddly welfare state, sapping the energies of the productive class. It could be compared with the demands of an excessive priesthood.

11. Deep ecology is fundamentally anti-civilization


The rhetoric of extreme environmentalism postulates that humans are just a part of the ecology and that the “problem” is that we have far outgrown the place the ecological balance would put us in. It is difficult to find a position that would be more at odds with human history and achievements, not just since the industrial revolution but indeed since our ancestors began to experiment with agriculture. This is not a rhetorical exaggeration; Dave Foreman, a deep ecologist and one-time board member of the Sierra Club, has said that the “nascency of agriculture” about 10,000 years ago set us “apart from the natural world” and resulted in the evils of “city, bureaucracy, patriarchy, war and empire.” Even back in the stone age humanity was somewhat out of kilt with the ecological balance; our ancestors made tools to enhance their chances of survival. Then came selective breeding of plants and domestication of animals, all interfering with the pristine ecological balance. But the industrial revolution topped it all by far. In fact, “industrial” revolution is a bit of a misnomer; what happened was that muscle power, both from humans and animals, was replaced by power from fossil fuels, via the steam engine. Even if the steam engine has run its course, literally and metaphorically, we still are critically dependent on fossil fuels for our way of life and likely to remain so for the foreseeable future, as will be discussed in a later chapter.
Managerialism Kritik: First Negative

A. The affirmative plan and its justifications are embedded with and extend the project of reducing Nature to objects and resources to be managed—our education systems are critical to this process


Before scientific disciplines and industrial technologies turn its' matter and energy into products, nature must be transformed by discursive processes into natural resources. Once nature is rendered intelligible through such practices, it is used to legitimize many political projects. I think one site for generating, accumulating, and circulating such knowledge about nature, as well as determining which human beings will be to society, is the modern research university, where we sit. As a primary structure for credentialing individual learners and legitimating collective teaching, universities help to construct our understanding of the natural world. Over the past generation, advanced study in environmental sciences on many university campuses, especially in the United States, has become a key source of key representations for the environment, as well as the home base of those scientific disciplines that generate analyses of nature's meanings. These educational operations also produce eco-managerialists, or those professional technical workers with specific knowledge as it has been scientifically or organizationally validated, and the operational power as it is institutionally constructed in governments at various levels, to cope with "environmental problems" on what are believed to be sound scientific and technical grounds. Professional technical experts working on and off campus create disciplinary articulations of various knowledge to generate performative techniques of power over, but also within and through, what is worked up as nature in the managerial structures of modern economies and societies. These institutionalized attempts to capture and contain the forces of nature underpin the strategies of eco-managerialism. Techno-scientific knowledge about the environment, however, is and always has been evolving with changing interpretive fashions, shifting political agendas, developing scientific advances. Such variations, as Foucault asserts designate a will to knowledge that is anonymous, polymorphous, and susceptible to regular transformations, and determined by the play of identifiable dependencies. What are some of these dependencies and perhaps some of these transformations? In this polymorphous combination of anonymous scientific environmental knowledge, with organized market and state power, as Foucault indicates, we find that it traverses and produces things. It needs to be considered as a productive network which runs through the whole social body, much more than a negative instance, whose function is repression. Schools of environmental studies and colleges of natural resources often provide the networks in which the relations of this productive power set the categories of knowledge and the limits of professional practice through the training of eco-managerialism. In accord with the prevailing regimes of truth within science, academic centres of environmental studies reproduce these bodies of practice and types of discourse, which in turn the executive personnel managing contemporary state and social institutions, what they regard as objective, valid, or useful, to facilitate economic growth. From these discourses, one can define, as Foucault suggests, the way in which individuals or groups represent words to themselves, utilize their forms and meanings, compose real discourse, reveal and conceal it in what they are thinking or saying, perhaps unknown to themselves, more or less than they wish, but in any case leaving massive verbal traces of those thoughts which must be deciphered and restored as far as possible in their representative vivacity. So given these tendencies, might we look at the workings of eco-managerialism? Where life, labour, and language can join in a discourse of environmental studies, one finds another formation of power knowledge which shows how man and his being can be concerned with the things he knows, and know the things that in positivty determine his mode of being in highly vocalized academic constructions of "the environment." Instead, the environment emerges in part as a historical artifact of expert management that is constructed by these kinds of scientific interventions. And in this network of interventions, there is a simulation of spaces and intensification of resources and incitement of discoveries, and a formation of special knowledges that strengthen the control that can be linked to one another as the impericities of nature for academic environmental sciences and studies. And probably in many ways, the key impericity here I would say, is the process of what I call the resourcification of nature. How does nature get turned into resources? The new impericities behind eco-managerialism more or less presumes that the role of nature is one of a rough and ready resourcification for the global economy and national society. That is, the earth must be re-imagined to be little more than a standing reserve, a resource supply centre, a waste reception site. Once presented in this fashion, nature then provides human markets with many different environmental sites for the productive use of resourcified flows of energy, information, and matter, as well as the sinks, dumps, and wastelands for all of the by-products that commercial products leave behind. Nature then is always a political asset. Still, its fungibilization, its liquidification, its capitalization, and eco-managerialism cannot occur without the work of experts whose resourcifying activities prep it, produce it, and then provide it in the global marketplace. The trick in natural resources or environmental affairs education is to appear to be conservationist, while moving in fact, many times, very fast to help fungibilize, liquefy, or capitalize natural resources for a more thorough, rapid, and perhaps intensive utilization.
Managerialism Kritik: First Negative [cont’d]

B. Managerial logics undergird the worst atrocities we have committed—they must be rejected

Matt Szabo, PhD Candidate, Geography, University of Manchester, “Managerial Ecology: Zygmunt Bauman and the Gardening Culture of Modernity,” ENVIRONMENTS v. 30 n. 3, 12—02, pp. 55-69, Expanded Academic ASAP.

The leitmotif of Bauman’s book Modernity and the Holocaust is that the Holocaust and the Soviet Gulag were not caused by a breakdown in Enlightenment values, nor did they represent a relapse into pre-modern or ‘pre-civilised’ barbarism. Rather, the efficiency and vision required to kill and dispose of so many people in such a short space of time was an application of processes more usually accepted as both normal and necessary components of a well-managed, modern society: [a] The two most notorious and extreme cases of modern genocide did not betray the spirit of modernity. They did not deviously depart from the main track of the civilizing process. They were the most consistent, uninhibited expressions of that spirit... They showed that the rationalizing, designing, controlling dreams and efforts of modern civilization are able to accomplish if not mitigated, curbed or countered... [b] Like everything else done in the modern - rational, planned, scientifically informed, expert, efficiently managed, co-ordinated - way, the Holocaust left behind and put to shame all its allegedly pre-modern equivalents, exposing them as primitive and wasteful by comparison... It towers above the past genocidal episodes in the same way as the modern industrial plant towers above the craftsman's cottage workshop, or the modern industrial farm... towers above the peasant farmstead (Bauman [a]1989:93, [b] 1989:89). Having dropped his bombshells, Bauman is careful to point out that while the Holocaust was a manifestation of modern technics being taken to an extreme end, living in the modern world is generally not a Holocaust-like experience. Rather, the Holocaust is one of various possibilities that modernity offers. Industrialised genocide represents one ‘shadow’ of modernity which cannot be divorced from its more celebrated triumphs. As Beilharz observes: [Modern] civilization both creates and destroys. This contradiction, however, is exactly what is missing from most of the sociology of modernity, which identifies either dynamic progress or barbarism but not both, together (Beilharz 2000:91).

C. The alternative is to refuse management—this is a prerequisite to solving

Andrew McMurray, Assistant Professor, English, University of Waterloo, “Management and Ignorance,” ENVIRONMENTS v. 30 n. 3, 12—02, Expanded Academic ASAP.

In the case of environmental and resources management, already we have seen long-reigning modern values (that gave us wise usage, prudent stewardship, and steady-state modeling) giving way before postmodern perspectives, which relieve managers of the obligation of being All-Seeing Eyes but at the same time open up the troubling possibility that sometimes the best management strategy is no management at all. More searchingly, resources management has turned reflexively on itself and discovered, belatedly, that to manage resources means that one has already determined that they are to be used. Management becomes like the doctor who rushes everywhere to help victims of an epidemic - only to discover that he himself is the plague-carrier. Therefore, the paradigm shift required is not about doing this or that function better or applying a new and improved set of yardsticks to the problems at hand. Rather, it is about stepping back from a world we reduce in complexity by our every intervention; it is about combating those forces within management that make it an instrument not of environmental health but of human avarice. To renounce instrumental reason goes against the grain: it may entail knowing but not doing, or not knowing but still doing. Either way, management as a predictive science has become much more risky. But in bowing to its own ignorance it gives up its pose of mastery, which is the very worst standpoint from which to manage the world.
Managerialism Link: Conservation—Biodiversity / Resources

1. Biodiversity conservation is biopolitical—reduces the world to statistical indicators and baselines


This distinction between disciplinary and neoliberal forms of governmentality has intriguing implications for our understanding of conservation practice that have yet to be extensively explored (for preliminary applications to environmental governance in general see Oels 2005). Efforts to conserve biodiversity, of course, have been described as an exercise of biopower, in that: 1) interventions are commonly justified in terms of their role in nurturing and sustaining life, both human and that of other organisms (even the whole of life) as well (Luke 1999a); and 2) interventions' object is commonly 'populations' (both human and non-) as a whole, seeking to maximise the total area of protected forest and amount of land under forest cover minimise, the quantity of extinct species, etc. As Youatt (2008) observes, the United Nations Environmental Program's (UNEP) Global Biodiversity Assessment can be seen as a paradigmatic biopolitical approach to conservation, endeavouring to appraise the total health of global life according to a set of statistical indicators and thereby establish a baseline upon which to intervene in order to manipulate these indicators (reducing the rate of fish depletion, for instance) so as to augment and sustain this life-as-a-whole.

2. Conservation is “green governmentality”—aimed at disciplining populations in the name of resource management and the environment


As with a more conventional, human-centred exercise of biopower, biopolitical conservation policy, while aimed at populations, is actually applied to individual human bodies, often through disciplinary techniques intended to alter their natural resource use (Borgerhoff Mulder & Coppolillo 2005). In this respect, conservation has often been described as a form of ‘green’ governmentality aimed to inculcate an environmental ethic by means of which people will self-regulate their behaviour in conservation friendly ways (e.g., Luke 1999a, 1999b; Rutherford 1999; Neumann 2001; Peluso & Watts 2001; Sundar 2001; Agrawal 2005a, 2005b). Agrawal (2005b: 162), for instance, building upon Luke (1999a, 1999b), describes an 'environmentality' aimed at the creation of 'environmental subjects-people who care about the environment'. Environmental education would constitute a paradigmatic example of this environmentality in action, whereby, through diverse decentralised institutions (state schools, NGO trainings, community workshops, ecotourism excursions, etc.), norms intended to encourage in situ natural resource preservation are advocated. Agrawal's (2005a, 2005b) environmentality describes a disciplinary form of conservation governmentality. Neoliberal governmentality, as described above, implies a much different approach to natural resource policy. Rather than attempting to inculcate ethical norms vis-à-vis the environment, within a neoliberal framework conservationists would simply endeavour to provide incentives sufficient to motivate individuals to choose to behave in conservation-friendly ways. In this perspective as well, 'environmental problems cease to be discussed in moral terms and are now addressed as issues that require cost-benefit-analyses' (Oels 2005: 196). Finally, neoliberal policy would be directed first and foremost towards encouraging economic growth as the means to include concerns for social justice within conservation policy. This, of course, is the essence of the approach termed neoliberal conservation described at the outset. Hence, we might describe neoliberal conservation as the expression of a novel 'neoliberal environmentality' in natural resource policy, an effort to combat environmental degradation in the interest of biopower through the creation of incentive structures intended to influence individuals' use of natural resources by altering the cost-benefit ratio of resource extraction so as to encourage in situ preservation.
Managerialism Link: Control of Nature

1. Managerialism dominates environmental policymaking—rooted in a belief in the necessity of human control of nature

Matt Szabo, PhD Candidate, Geography, University of Manchester, “Managerial Ecology: Zygmunt Bauman and the Gardening Culture of Modernity,” ENVIRONMENTS v. 30 n. 3, 12—02, pp. 55-69, Expanded Academic ASAP.

Bavington (this volume) identifies three paradigms that have been utilised in the field of environmental management/managerial ecology: management as control, management as careful use, and management as coping. Due to fundamental changes in ecological thinking, current eco-managerial thinking shifts the focus of environmental management away from wildly unpredictable ecological systems onto the realms of human and human-ecosystem interaction - where some propose "control is viable" (Holling and Meffe, 1996: 335). However, despite evolving managerial paradigms and a shift of the managerial focus from ecosystem to social system, Bavington observes that the underlying equation 'management = control' remains essentially unchallenged, with obvious political and ethical ramifications. The political and ethical costs of social-engineering or social management have been explored in some detail by the sociologist Zygmunt Bauman. He pinpoints the Enlightenment as the principle source of control-oriented science and philosophy, which validates and endorses modern calls to 'manage' (i.e. control or order) human beings for the sake of the environment, or, indeed, the environment for the sake of human beings. The chief insight offered by Bauman's thinking viz. managerial ecology may be an elaborated understanding of order in two senses: Firstly, Bavington's paper considers how certain control-oriented aspirations of managerial ecology have disturbing implications when transported to the human realm. Via a little re-ordering, Bauman offers a similar insight in reverse: already tested forms of managing human beings have ominous implications for humans, non-humans, and the wider environment alike. Secondly, within any management programme, irrespective of intended targets - humans, ecosystems, both simultaneously or others - control/ordering remains a central motif. Via the managerial application of these twin concepts, a variety of issues regarding ethics, power, and politics emerges.

2. The affirmative is an attempt to impose order upon the chaos of the natural world

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Bauman argues that similar sentiments were also apparent - nay, rampant - in the science and moral philosophy of the Enlightenment era. It is the unification of all three voices under a common, rubric of control which binds ostensibly independent discourses - philosophical, political, and scientific - together in a common alliance geared-up for control. The human weeds of the Holocaust, the spiritual weeds of the Church, and the communal weeds of lay-wisdom, were all waste-products or victims of bifurcating systems of ordering classification, or, to return to Bauman's metaphor, gardening. Each of the respective weeds exists within a dualistic framework which assumes a dichotomy between approved elements for inclusion and disapproved elements for exclusion: healthy plant and weed, good rational thoughts and bad irrational thoughts. According to Bauman's master-key, all the preceding dichotomies can be collapsed into one fundamental cleavage: order and disorder. The ordering procedure creates or 'discovers' disorder via the process of classification. Furthermore, order utilises this production of disorder to justify its own definitive standing as order i.e., order requires a binary opposite to confirm its own status. The voice of ordering procedure inevitably becomes a voice of power in that it must decide where to draw the boundary between who or what is acceptable and who or what needs to be controlled or erased.

3. Reducing the world to items that serve humanity is the epitome of management and control

Dean Bavington, PhD Candidate, Geography and Environmental Studies, Wilfrid Laurier University, “Managerial Ecology and Its Discontents: Exploring the Complexities of Control, Careful Use and coping in Resource and Environmental Management,” ENVIRONMENTS v. 30 n. 3, 12—02, pp. 3-21, Expanded Academic ASAP.

Managerial ecology, or the unquestioned faith in management as the solution to deep seated ecological and social problems, is founded on the belief in, and desirability of, control (Everden 1985, Ehrenfeld 1991, Luke 1997). Despite laudable attempts at redefinition, in an age of rampant capitalist globalization, progress continues to be equated with the ability of human beings to increasingly control external biophysical nature and internal human nature through scientific understanding and technological organization (Parker 2002: 3). The Progressive Era (1890-1920) in the United States, which gave birth to the conservation movement, and later the field of resource management, embraced the vision of efficient and effective control projects (Hays 1974). Gifford Pinchot, the American father of conservation, promoted managerial ecology in direct opposition to the ideas of John Muir and the preservationists who advocated versions of moral ecology. John Muir and the preservationist movement emphasized the importance of aesthetic and spiritual appreciation of nature. Their movement was based on deontological arguments focussed on the intrinsic value of the natural world. Pinchot's conservation movement was founded on a consequentialist, or utilitarian ethic, which emphasized the instrumental, economic and functional value of nature conceptualized as a collection of natural goods and services (Oelschlaeger 1991). The managerial essence of Progressive Conservation is perhaps best illustrated in Pinchot's insistence that "the first duty of the human race is to control the earth it lives upon" (1967: 45).
Managerialism Link: Development / Economic Growth

1. Development and exploration are part of a system of biopolitical control under the rubric of “the environment”


Environments then emerged with bio-power as part and parcel of the regulation of life via biopolitics, and, for nearly a century, ecology apparently remained another ancillary correlate of biopower, inhabiting discourses about species extinction, resource conservation, and overpopulation. Until the productive regime of biopolitics became fully globalized (because Nature itself is not entirely encircled), ecology was a fairly minor voice in the disciplinary chorus organizing development and growth. Things changed, however, once the extensive expansionist strategies of development and growth employed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries collapsed around 1914, promoting conservationist ethics in Europe and North America that fretted over conserving resources for resource-driven intensive modes of production. And, as new mediations of development and growth were constructed after 1945, the geo-power/eco-knowledge nexus of environmentalization came to comfortably supplement the high technology, capital intensive development strategies that have since been implemented. Thus, the environment, if one follows Foucault's line of reasoning (105-06), must not be understood as the naturally given sphere of ecological processes which human powers try to keep under control, nor should it be viewed as a mysterious domain of obscure terrestrial events which human knowledge works to explain. Instead, it emerges as a historical artifact that is openly constructed, not an occluded reality that is difficult to comprehend. In this great network, the simulation of spaces, the intensification of resources, the incitement of discoveries, the formation of special knowledges, the strengthening of controls, and the provocation of resistances can all be linked to one another.

2. Focusing on economic growth is the hallmark of neoliberal governmentality


In Foucault's (2003) analysis, governmentality (in the disciplinary sense) functions as one of the principle means by which the state (as well as other actors) exercises biopower. That is, the disciplinary techniques that constitute this governmentality compel individuals to internalize the social values and norms by means of which they will self-regulate their behaviour in ways consistent with the state's goals vis-à-vis the overarching population-reducing or increasing their fertility to alter the aggregate birth rate, visiting doctors and taking medicine to enhance their health and thus diminish the death rate, and so forth. Neoliberalism, by contrast, constitutes a novel approach to the exercise of biopower, prescribing very different methods of influencing subjects' behaviour in accordance with state goals vis-à-vis the population as a whole. While Foucault does not spend much time describing what a neoliberal approach to biopower would actually look like, at the end of his Biopolitics lectures [which ostensibly sought to address this question, but which instead were 'devoted entirely to what should have been only its introduction' (Foucault 2008: 317)-namely, the origins of neoliberalism] Foucault suggests this as a new area for future analysis. He states: What should now be studied, therefore, is the way in which the specific problems of life and population have been posed within a technology of government which, although far from always having been liberal, since the end of the eighteenth century has been constantly haunted by the question of liberalism (2008: 324). How would the exercise of biopower in terms of a neoliberal governmentality differ from a disciplinary approach? First, a neoliberal perspective would likely focus less on subjects' internal states than on the external structures within which they act. Second, interventions would be framed less in terms of morality than cost-benefit characteristics. Third, a neoliberal governmentality would likely place less emphasis on nurturing and sustaining life directly than on supporting economic growth, which Foucault calls neoliberalism's 'one true and fundamental social policy', observing, "Economic growth and only economic growth should enable all individuals to achieve a level of income that will allow them the individual insurance, access to private property, and individual or familial capitalization with which to absorb risks" (2008: 144). In neoliberal discourse, in other words, economic growth is the chief mechanism through which the aims of biopower are pursued. Limiting economic growth is implicitly construed as a threat to human life, and thus to the exercise of biopower as well.
Managerialism Link: Eco-Crisis Discourse

1. Efforts to head off catastrophe and save the planet necessitate that we manage it


Not surprisingly, then, the various power/knowledge systems of instituting a Worldwatch environmentality appear to be a practical materialization of panoptic power. The Worldwatch Institute continually couches its narratives in visual terms, alluding to its mission as outlining "an ecologically defined vision" of "how an environmentally sustainable society would look" in a new "vision of a global economy." As Foucault claims, "whenever one is dealing with a multiplicity of individuals on whom a particular form of behavior must be imposed, the panoptic schema may be used" (Discipline and Punish 205) because it enables a knowing center to reorganize the disposition of things and redirect the convenient ends of individuals in environmentalized spaces. As organisms operating in the energy exchanges of photosynthesis, human beings can become environed on all sides by the cybernetic system of biophysical systems composing Nature. Worldwatching, in turn, refixes the moral specification of human roles and responsibilities in the enclosed spaces and segmented places of ecosystemic niches. And, in generating this knowledge of environmental impact by applying such powers of ecological observation, the institutions of Worldwatch operate as a green panopticon, enclosing Nature in rings of centered normalizing super-vision where an eco-knowledge system identifies Nature as "the environment." The notational calculus of bioeconomic accounting not only can, but in fact must reequilibrate individuals and species, energy and matter, inefficiencies and inequities in an integrated panel of globalized observation. The supervisory gaze of normalizing control, embedded in the Worldwatch Institute's panoptic practices, adduces "the environmental," or enclosed, segmented spaces, "observed at every point, in which the individuals are inserted in a fixed place, in which the slightest movements are supervised, in which all events are recorded, in which an uninterrupted work of writing links the centre and periphery, in which power is exercised without division, according to a continuous hierarchical figure, in which each individual is constantly located, examined, and distributed among the living beings, the sick and the dead" (Foucault, Discipline and Punish 197). To save the planet, it becomes necessary to environmentalize it, enveloping its system of systems in new disciplinary discourses to regulate population growth, economic development, and resource exploitation on a global scale with continual managerial intervention.

2. Crisis-based justifications lock-in technocratic solutions and ideologies

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In technocratic formulations, objective, scientific, and (typically) quantitative analyses are employed to identify the policies that society as a whole needs in order to restore order or ensure its sustainability or survival - policies which individuals, citizens, and countries should then submit to in their own best interests. In contrast, moralistic formulations reject coercion and instead rely on appeals to individuals to change their values and actions so as to maintain valued social or natural qualities of life. Yet, in many senses appeals for technocratic planning and moral change are allied. To command people's attention, exponents invoke the severity of the crisis and the threat to the social or natural order. They appeal to common, undifferentiated interests as a corrective to inadequate governance that stems either, in the technocratic view, from scientifically ignorant leaders or, in the moral view, from corrupt, self-serving or naive ones [...] By emphasizing people's common interests in remedial environmental efforts, these views steer attention away from the difficult politics that result from differentiated social groups and nations having different interests in causing, and different interests in alleviating, environmental problems. Dominant social groups are spared scrutiny; their agency is thus privileged. At a more subtle level...special places are reserved in the proposed social transformations for their exponents - the technocrat would be the analyst or policy advisor; the moralist, the guide, educator, or leader (Taylor 2002: 12).
Managerialism Link: Eco-Crisis Discourse [cont’d]

3. Crisis-justified policies fuel environmental colonialism

This command to go anywhere at anytime to defend the cause of survival may direct enviro-discipline to pursue other equally problematic values on a global level with the full force of state power and positive science: namely, stability, diversity and interdependence. A powerful nation-state is no longer empowered simply to defend its territory to protect its population. As Clinton and Gore claim, it must now also identify and police the surroundings in all of its many operational environments, to guarantee ecological stability, biological diversity and environmental interdependence. Because some states are more sustainable than others, their survival imperatives may become guide-lines for environmental colonialism. In order to survive, the state may choose to impose the status of a green belt, forest preserve, nature reservation or environmental refuge upon other societies as part of its Strategic Environmental Initiatives. To serve and protect the values of the ecosystem, Gates claims that the ecological ethic of stability as ‘a steady state’ will not result in ‘stagnation’. Such an outcome would, of course, offend the growth fixations of consumers and citizens living in liberal capitalist democracies. On the contrary, he believes that it would mean ‘directing growth and change in nondestructive ways, generated within the standing pattern that supports life’ (Gates 1989: 152). But who directs growth and change for whom? Is there a standing pattern that directs life? Does anyone really know enough about it to direct growth in accord with it? In practice, Global Marshall Planners in Washington could use ecological criteria to impose their sustainable development of economic growth at home as they also force an ecological steady state upon others abroad. If India’s hundred millions stay on foot or bicycles, then Germany’s tens of millions would stay in their cars. If Indonesia keeps growing trees, then Japan can keep consuming lumber. And if Brazil’s ranchers keep turning rain forest into cattle ranges, then America’s suburbanites will get their cheeseburgers.

4. Seeing the Earth as fragile / in-crisis justifies its regulation and management

Nature was never high on Foucault’s list of priorities – in fact, he indicated a definite distaste for it. In one biographical account, he is said to have shunned a natural vista pointed out by a friend, saying, ‘My back is turned to it’ (Éribon in Darier, 1999: 6). This might give some indication as to why nature was rarely included in Foucault’s analyses. Rutherford (2002) reminds us, however, that the government of population must include the very environment from which humanity subsists. Indeed, nature – claims on the land, the construction of wilderness, ideas of human nature, human/non-human interaction – is one area in which the messy politics of representation, articulation, essentialism and discursive construction come to the fore, making it a particularly interesting site to interrogate the exercise of power (Moore et al., 2003). The ways in which the environment is constructed as in crisis, how knowledge about it is formed, and who then is authorized to save it become important for understanding the ways that the truth about the environment is made, and how that truth is governed. The saving of nature is often taken for granted as an innocent endeavor, never implicated in relations of power and a noble exercise for the good of all life. Often underpinned by ‘the one-world discourse’, the basis of this assertion is the notion that we are all connected through our intertwined ecological fate (King, 1997: 1). Thus, what emerges is a ‘dominant storyline of the “fragile earth” under stress from human action and in need of care and protection from an imagined global community’ (Macnaghten, 2003: 65). This way of producing the environment and its resources as bounded elicits the discourse of the limits of the earth, a central tenet of environmental politics (Dobson, 1990). The production of this kind of truth about nature necessitates its regulation, management and governing.
Managerialism Link: Environmental Risk

- Environmental risk assessment facilitates managerialism and the globalization of capitalism


As Ulrich Beck suggests, this is now an integral part of the self-critical projection and reproduction of globally thinking but locally acting capitalism. Environmental science trains experts to conceptually contain, actuarially assess, and then cautiously calculate the many dimensions of ecological risk in the disciplines of eco-toxicology, environmental assessment, or eco-remediation. The assumptions of such modeling techniques only constitute a scientized first take for the sweep of such corporate reflexivity, but nonetheless it is done. Combining practical laboratory experiences and field studies, risk managerialism suggests that all areas of ecological oversight must become risk analysis centred concerns: like integrated resource management, conservation biology, and environmental risk analysis. A more quantitative approach to surveillance and evaluation focuses risk analysis on probabilistic models of our most preferred futures, outcomes, or practices. Risk management presumes its calculations are based upon a spatially, temporally, and socially circumscribed accident definition, or that its analyses truly do estimate and legitimate the potential for catastrophe of modern large-scale technologies and industries. Super Fund site after super tanker spill after super stacked bubble, however, indicate that this degree of scientific knowledge is precisely what risk management studies fail to advance so they are often falsifications. They can be criticized and reformed in accordance, however to their own claims or rationality, which makes risk managerialism so exciting for so many. This trend of developing a fully self-conscious risk managerialism grounded in economistic tradeoffs, also surfaces in new kinds of ecological management. Such visions of environmental science recapitulate the logic of technical networks as they work for the world's states and markets. Rather than an environment surrounding humanity, it is now the friction-free global marketplace of trans-national capital that envelopes nature. From its metabolism, humanity produces eco-toxins, biohazards, hydro-contaminants, aero-particulates, and enviro-poisons, whose impacts generate inexorably lots of risks. The policy problematic that enfolds here is on a global scale, because trans-national markets have colonized so many more sites on the planet as part and parcel of global business's vision of sustainable development. Well trained environmental professionals must go out there to measure, monitor, or manage these risks, and leave the rational operations of fast capitalism wholly intact as risks accepted for their owners and beneficiaries, while risk analysis performed by environmental practitioners cope with all of the victims of risk denied.
Managerialism Link: Environment / Preservation

1. Environmental preservation creates fields of intervention for managerial logics


If we take seriously these notions on the exercise and circulation of power, then we can see that the art of governing is a complex business, operating though assemblages to produce the governable and the normalized. Examining power in this way opens up the field of possibility to talk about particular kinds of environmentalism, for example, as a site for the exercise of certain kinds of power. One such form that had received the bulk of attention in the literature on green governmentality is disciplinary power. As Luke has noted, disciplinary power undergirds the environmentalist project where places are reconfigured and reimagined as sites in need of intervention (Luke, 1998). He offers the example of the Worldwatch Institute, which he asserts operates through the production of discourses of global sustainable development and functions as one of the main actors, in concert with government and business, in the formation of green governmentality (Luke, 1997a). Producing a document every year entitled ‘The State of the World’, Worldwatch gathers statistics on global population trends, biodiversity loss, environmental security, and climate change (among many others), producing an authoritative measurement, assessment and forecast of the earth’s resources (cf. Renner, 2005). This is knowledge of the population at its zenith. King (1997) echoes Luke’s observations, pointing to the panoptic nature of the green project, where the monitoring of particular populations (often of the Global South) has become a key feature in the establishment of notions of global environmental security. From these examples, geographers can take a number of insights about the operation of modern power. We can see that power is capillary and diffused, not only rooted in the state but found in global think tanks, environmental organizations and even corporations. Further, they show the ways in which dichotomies between power and resistance in environmental politics are facile, and point to how they can, and often are, co-produced. Finally, that power is not only about repression but also about productivity – the power to produce knowledge about the environment is key in formulating the terms of its management. But this is not a power which operates outside of spatiality. Indeed, what the Worldwatch Institute, among other organizations, does is produce the truth of a global environment under threat, rescaling the debate upward to erase specificity and difference.

2. ‘Environment’ discourses aim to enclose and control the world around us


Even so, this inversion of one thing, like an organism or society, into everything, or the environment, might disclose the nature of the environment only in relation to this one thing. After all, environmental analysis must reduce “everything” to measures of “anything” available for measurement (like temperature levels, gas concentrations, molecular dispersions, resource variations, or growth rates) to track variations in “something” (like an organism’s, a biome’s, or a river’s responses to these factors). But is it “the environment” that is being understood here, or is its identity being evaded in reducing it to a subset of practicable measurements? Does this vision of “environment” really capture the actual quality or true quantity of all human beings’ interrelations with all of the terrains, waters, climates, soils, architectures, technologies, societies, economies, cultures, or states surrounding them? In its most expansive applications, then, the environment becomes a strong but sloppy force: it is anything out there, everything around us, something affecting us, nothing within us, but also a thing upon which we act. Despite its formal definitions, however, the environment is not, in fact, everything. Many environmental discourses look instead at particular sites or at peculiar forces. The discursive variations and conceptual confrontations of the “environment” really begin to explode when different voices accentuate this or that set of things in forming their environmental analysis. On the one side, they may privilege forces in the ecosphere, or, on the other side, they might stress concerns from the technosphere. But in either case, each rhetoric which operates as an agency protecting “the environment” struggles to site “the environmental” as a somewhere affected by or coming from everything. Perhaps the early origins of “the environment” as a concept its historical emergence and original applications—might prove more helpful. In its original sense, which is borrowed by English from Old French, an environment is an action resulting from, or the state of being produced by a verb: “to environ.” And environing as a verb is, in fact, a type of strategic action. To environ is to encircle, encompass, envelop, or enclose. It is the physical activity of surrounding, circumscribing, or ringing around something. Its uses even suggest stationing guards around, thronging with hostile intent, or standing watch over some person or place. To environ a site or a subject is to beset, beleaguer, or besiege that place or person. An environment, as either the means of such activity or the product of these actions, now might be read in a more suggestive manner. It is the encirclement, circumscription, or beleaguerment of places and persons in a strategic disciplinary policing of space. An environmental act, in turn, is already a disciplining move, aimed at constructing some expanse of space—a locale, a biome, a planet as biospherical space, or, on the other hand, some city, any region, the global economy in technospherical territory—in a discursive envelope. Within these enclosures, environmental expertise can arm environmentalists who stand watch over these surroundings, guarding the rings that include or exclude forces, agents, and ideas.

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Managerialism Link: Environment / Preservation [cont’d]

3. Environmental preservation discourses extend the logic of biopower to all life


Unlike his earlier work in Discipline and punish (1995) where he concerns himself the construction of docile bodies, it is in Foucault’s later work in The history of sexuality, vol. 1 and his lectures at the Collège de France where he turns his attention to the concept of biopolitics. In contrast to disciplinary power, biopower takes root through the regulatory controls of the population (rather than the individual) through the management of life – birth rates, life expectancy, health and wellbeing – all indicators of the population which began to increasingly matter to those who govern (1990). As Rabinow states, biopolitics ‘brought life and its mechanisms into the realm of explicit calculations and made knowledge-power an agent of the transformation of human life’ (1984: 17). It is through this management of the conditions of life that those who govern can shape how the population conducts itself to the best end for the continuation of that government. It is important to recognize that, even though there is this distinction between disciplinary and biopower, they work in tandem: one individualizing and the other totaling – governing the conduct of each and all. Green governmentality theorists propose that Foucault’s work can be centrally important in analyzing the production and circulation of discourses of nature if we extend the concept of biopower to include all life. As Darier (1999) has argued, biopolitics can be reframed as ‘ecopolitics’ where concern for the conditions of the national population is subsumed under more intensified attempt to manage the planet’s environment. The most telling way that biopolitics has been operationalized is through the use of science to tell the truth of the environment – its characteristics, its usefulness and, eventually, its crisis.

4. Managerial ecology is aimed at the control of human degradation

Dean Bavington, PhD Candidate, Geography and Environmental Studies, Wilfrid Laurier University, “Managerial Ecology and Its Discontents: Exploring the Complexities of Control, Careful Use and coping in Resource and Environmental Management,” ENVIRONMENTS v. 30 n. 3, 12—02, pp. 3-21, Expanded Academic ASAP.

Throughout Larkin’s comments we see the Enlightenment goal of becoming the masters and possessors of biophysical nature lying exposed and debunked - humans may be able to unravel the web of life, but there is no guarantee they can restore it as if they were putting a Newtonian machine back together. When Larkin considers the nature of fishermen however, he finds something stable, simple, certain and hopeful. In the nature of the fishermen Larkin finds a manageable object, something controllable and amenable to mapping, a calculating rational-choice actor, easily guided, manipulated and controlled, able to be carefully used and paternalistically looked after. What Larkin presents as a discovery, however, is actually a complex statement of values and assumptions. He assumes that all fishers have become and always have been homo economicus, rational choice actors who respond to economic carrots and sticks. This "discovery" is valued and coded as hopeful and positive. Without the manageable fisher, Larkin would be hard pressed to discuss management as control or careful use with reference to the world's fisheries. What is evident in Larkin's comments are the multiple meanings of management and the strong desire to maintain the belief in control and careful use in the face of expansive management failures that are literally out of control. When impotence and enforced coping is all that is left there are strong desires on the part of managers to restore certainty, control and the possibility of careful use. While ecossocial complexity is often recognized by contemporary resource and environmental management scholars, underlying theories of human motivation, behaviour, values and beliefs remain narrowly focussed on the rational choice actor in resource management theory and practice. When compared to the complexity of global markets and biophysical systems under stress, human values, attitudes, behaviours, motives and beliefs appear relatively simple. Economic globalization, the commodification of social relations and capital expansion in the service sector have simplified and degraded human beings, their societies, communities, cultures, and the overall context in which decisions must be made. What is troubling is that from the perspective of managerial ecology's desire for certainty and control this human degradation comes to be seen as an opportunity instead of a horrifying threat.
5. ‘Environments’ become spaces that we enclose, supervise, and police


If one thinks about it, this original use of "the environment" is an accurate account of what is, in fact, happening in many environmental practices today. Environmentalized places become sites of supervision, where environmentalists see from above and from without through the enveloping designs of administratively delimited systems. Encircled by enclosures of alarm, environments can be disassembled, recombined, and subjected to the disciplinary designs of expert management. Enveloped in these interpretive frames, environments can be redirected to fulfill the ends of other economic scripts, managerial directives, and administrative writs. Environing, then, engenders "environmentality," which embeds instrumental rationalities in the policing of ecological spaces.

6. Invoking ‘the environment’ is an exercise in the extension of human control over the world


These reflections on "the environment" reframe its meanings in terms of the practices of power, allowing us to turn to Michel Foucault for additional insight. The bio-power formation described by Foucault was not historically closely focused upon the role of Nature in the equations of biopolitics (Foucault, History of Sexuality I 138-42). For Foucault, the whole point of the controlled tactics of inserting human bodies into the machineries of industrial and agricultural production as part and parcel of strategically adjusting the growth of human populations to the development of industrial capitalism was to bring "life and its mechanisms into the realm of explicit calculations," making the disciplines of knowledge and discourses of power into many agencies as part of the "transformation of human life" (143). Once this threshold of biopower was crossed, human economics, politics, and technologies continually placed all human beings' existence into question. Foucault notes that these industrial transformations implicitly raised ecological issues as they disrupted and redistributed the understandings provided by the classical episteme of defining human interactions with Nature. Living became "environmentalized,” as humans related to their history and biological life in new ways from within growing artificial cities and mechanical modes of production, which positioned this new form of human being "at the same time outside history, in its biological environment, and inside human historicity, penetrated by the latter's techniques of knowledge and power" (143). Here we can begin to locate the emergence of "the environment" as a nexus for knowledge formation and as a cluster of power tactics. As human beings began to consciously wager their life as a species on the outcomes of these biopolitical strategies and technological systems, it became clear that they also were wagering the lives of other (or all) species as well. While Foucault regards this shift as one of many lacunae in his analysis, it is clear there is much more going on here than he realizes. Once human power/knowledge formations become the foundation of industrial society's economic development, they also become the basis for the physical survival of all terrestrial life forms. Here, ecological analysis emerges as a productive power formation that reinvests human bodies—their means of health, modes of subsistence, and styles of habitation integrating the whole space of existence with bio-historical significance by framing them within their various bio-physical environments filled with various animal and plant bodies.

7. ‘Environment’ organizes space/ so that they can be controlled


Foucault can be read as dividing the environment into two separate, but interpenetrating spheres of action: the biological and the historical. For most of human history, the biological dimension, or forces of Nature working in the forms of disease and famine, dominated human existence with the ever-present menace of death. Developments in agricultural technologies as well as in hygiene and health techniques, however, gradually provided some relief from starvation and plague by the end of the eighteenth century. As a result, the historical dimension began to grow in importance as "the development of the different fields of knowledge concerned with life in general, the improvement of agricultural techniques, and the observations and measures relative to man's life and survival" averted some of the imminent risks of death (142). In other words, "the historical" starts to envelop, circumscribe, and surround "the biological." Hence, environmentalized settings emerged "in the space of movement thus conquered, and broadening and organizing that space, methods of power and knowledge assumed responsibility for the life processes and undertook to control and modify them" (142). While he does not explicitly define these spaces, methods, and knowledges as such as being "environmental," it appears that such maneuvers were crucial to the emergence of environmentalization. As biological existence was refracted through economic, political, and technological existence, "the facts of life" passed into fields of control for ecoknowledge and spheres of intervention for geo-power.
Managerialism Link: Environment / Preservation [cont’d]

8. Transforming nature into “the environment” is an imposition of sovereign control over the world

The cybernetic system of biophysical systems, once known as Nature, has now been reduced to “the environment,” so that it might be remapped to police the provinces of photosynthesis and bind the borders of bioeconomics which these spaces constitute. Logics of sovereignty, imposing military-administrative jurisdiction over bits and pieces of these global systems in irrationally drawn territories through governmentality, must be supplanted by larger logics of environmentality. As Fredric Jameson notes, if these changes can be understood as the historical expression of what is regarded as “postmodern,” then this postmodernity must be confronted “since the modernization process is complete and Nature is gone for good”. That is, where the times of modernity end, the spaces of environmentality perhaps begin.

9. Environmental ordering is a technique of governmentality—manages ‘the environment’ to protect the population and ensure smooth economic function

Foucault invites social theorists not to reduce all ensembles of modernizing development to the “statalization” of society wherein "the state" becomes an expansive set of managerial functions, discharging its effects in the development of productive forces, the reproduction of relations of production, or the organization of ideological superstructures. Instead he argues in favor of investigating the "governmentalization" of the economy and society whereby individuals and groups are enmeshed within the tactics and strategies of a complex form of power whose institutions, procedures, analyses, and techniques loosely manage mass populations and their surroundings in a highly politicized symbolic and material economy. Because governmental techniques are the central focus of political struggle and contestation, the interactions of populations with their natural surroundings in highly politicized economies compel states constantly to redefine what is within their competence throughout the modernizing process. To survive after the 1960s in a world marked by decolonization, global industrialization, and nuclear military confrontation, it is not enough for states merely to maintain legal jurisdiction over their allegedly sovereign territories. As ecological limits to growth are either discovered or defined, states are forced to guarantee their populations’ fecundity and productivity in the total setting of the global political economy by becoming "environmental protection agencies." Governmental discourses methodically mobilize particular assumptions, codes, and procedures in enforcing specific understandings about the economy and society. As a result, they generate "truths" or "knowledges" that also constitute forms of power with significant reserves of legitimacy and effectiveness. Inasmuch as they classify, organize, and yet larger understandings of reality, such discourses can authorize or invalidate the possibilities for constructing particular institutions, practices, or concepts in society at large. They simultaneously frame the emergence of collective subjectivities (nations as dynamic populations) and collections of subjects (individuals) as units in such nations. Individual subjects as well as collective subjects can be reevaluated as "the element in which are articulated the effects of a certain type of power and the reference of a certain type of knowledge, the machinery by which the power relations give rise to a possible corpus of knowledge, and knowledge extends and reinforces the effects of this power" (Foucault, Discipline and Punish 29). Therefore, an environmentalizing regime must advance eco-knowledges to activate its command over geo-power as well as to re-operationalize many of its notions of governmentality as environmentality. Like governmentality, the disciplinary articulations of environmentality must center upon establishing and enforcing "the right disposition of things."
Managerialism Link: Environmentalism

1. ‘Environmentalism’ leaves the planet open to human exploitation


The choice of language and terminology, "ecology" or "environmentalism", is very significant. These are not interchangeable terms. Environmentalism leaves intact a western (and capitalist) view of nature as resources for human exploitation, and as external to human beings. nature/culture dualism and naturalized systems of human oppression are not immanent concerns of environmentalists. Rather, they are concerned with managing a particular environment toward particular human ends and purposes, which may include the long-term stability of systems which oppress human beings. In one way or another, each of the three main branches of contemporary radical green theory-- social ecology, deep ecology, and eco-feminism-- begin with a critique of the limits of environmentalism.

2. The national security apparatus has appropriated ‘environmentalism’


As the twentieth century moves to a close, the world has changed enormously. New metaphors for an integrated "one world" proliferate in the form of visual images such as photographs of earth taken from space, and turn up in such unlikely places as fundraising mailings from Planned Parenthood, in a drawing in which human beings crowd together, ringing the planet. On the one hand, the contemporary recognition of the interrelated nature of our planet, and the archaic nature of national boundaries, suggest the possibility of a new transnational cooperation and a popular realization that national boundaries are arbitrary and political, they are products of history, not nature. Potentially, it calls forth the notion of an interconnected world in which all inhabitants of the planet have an equal claim on wealth and freedom, opening, rather than closing, national boundaries and national identities in a recognition of all that joins us, rather than separates us as human beings sharing this planet with each other and the rest of nature. But, as is often the case in the dialectics of history, this recognition of one, finite interconnected planet, so suggestive of shared possibilities and interests on the part of humanity, is also the occasion for an opposite possibility. Here images of a planetary pie, or a life boat, in which the joining and merging in itself threatens. This is particularly true in the bad faith context of US politics, in which the base selfishness of American foreign policy, and increasingly domestic policy, is an attempt to represent the interests of a very limited portion of the population as a national interest. Here, national security becomes synonymous with maintenance and enforcement of the economic and power status quo. It is in this context that the appropriation of "environmentalism" as the agenda of US national security strategists and policy makers is particularly pernicious, and a development in which feminists have an ongoing critical interest.
Managerialism Link: Rehabilitation / Restoration

1. Rehabilitation efforts only shift the damage caused by human behavior, try to find new economic possibilities in ecosystems that we have trashed


The acknowledgement of ecological degradation is not tremendously difficult. Indeed, the will to manage environments arises from this wide-spread recognition back in the 19th century. One obvious outcome of building and then living around the satanic mills of modern industrial capitalism was pollution of the air, water, and land. As it continued and spread, the health of humans, plants, and wildlife obviously suffered, while soils and waters were poisoned. Yet the imperatives of economic growth typically drove these processes of degradation until markets fell, technologies changed, or the ecosystem collapsed. At that juncture, business and government leaders, working at the local, regional, and national level, were faced with hard choices about either relocating people and settlements in industry to start these cycles of degradation anew, or maybe rehabilitating those existing economic and environmental assets to revitalize their resource extractive or commodity producing potential. Rehabilitation management then is about keeping production going in one way or another. Agricultural lands that once produced wheat might be turned to dairy production or low-end fibre outputs. Polluted water courses, poisoned soils, and poverty-stricken workers can all be remobilized in environmental rehabilitation schemes to revive aquatic ecologies, renew soil productivity, and replenish bank accounts. The engagements of rehabilitation management are to find a commodifiable or at least a valuable possibility in the brown fields of agricultural excess and industrial exhaustion. Even after decades of abuse, there are useful possibilities that already lie dormant in slag heaps, derelict factories, overused soil, polluted waterways, and rust belt towns. Management must search for and then implement strategies for their rehabilitation. Such operations can shift agricultural uses, refocus industrial practices, turn lands into eco-preserves, and retrain workers. But the goals here are not return ecosystems to some pristine natural state. On the contrary, its agendas are those of sustaining the yields of production. Of course, what will be yielded and at what levels it is sustained and for which environmental ends all remains to be determined. On the one hand, the motives of rehabilitation management are quite rational, because these moves delay or even cancel the need to sacrifice other lands, air, and soil preserves at other sites. Thus nature is perhaps protected elsewhere or at large by renewing industrial brown fields in agriculturalized domains for some ongoing project of industrial growth. On the other hand, rehabilitation managerialism may only shift the loci and the foci of damage, rehabilitating eco-systemic degradation caused in one commodity chain, while simply redirecting the inhabitants of these sites to suffer new, albeit perhaps more regulated and rational levels, of environmental contamination in other commodity chains. If one doesn't want to rehabilitate what has been ruined, one can then perhaps get into restoring it.

2. Restoration reduces the Earth to a vast machine to be managed by our eco-experts


So a restoration managerialism is a recognition that lies at the root of many environmental problems that has sparked a reaction so intense that many call for going beyond rehabilitation and returning to some status quo anti. The call is first stop exploiting nature's endowments, and then move towards restoring those sites in systems that have been most abused. Ecological restoration, however, is a very tricky proposition, because what is to be restored? How will it be reclaimed? Who must revive what has been damaged, and exactly which prior state of existence is to be privileged as the state of restoration? Most appeals for restoration are made on aesthetic grounds. But restoration management has also developed more macrological engagements for maintaining the integrity of the earth's carrying capacity. In this respect, restoration managerialism focuses upon mobilizing all of the biological, physical, and social sciences to address the major economic and political affects of current environmental problems. Their resourcifications allow ecosystem managers to infrastructuralize all of the earth's ecologies in the name of an almost complete restoration for some biomes, bioregions or biosystems. The earth becomes, if only in terms of contemporary technoscience, an immense terrestrial engine. Serving as the human race's ecological support system, it has, with only the occasional localized failures (as restorationists like to say), provided services upon which human society depends consistently and without charge. As the environmental infrastructure of technoscientific production, the earth then can continue to generate these ecosystem services or their derivative products of natural systems, but only if they are restored. So this complex system of systems is what must survive, and its outputs include of course what we know: the generation of soils, the regeneration of plant nutrients, the capture of solar energy, the conversion of that solar energy into biomass, the accumulation, purification and distribution of water, the control of pests, the provision of a genetic library, the maintenance of breathable air, the control of micro and macro climates, pollination of plants, diversification of animal species, development of buffering mechanisms in eco-catastrophes. And, at the end of the day, some aesthetic enrichment to make it all seem worthwhile. Because it is the true capital stock of trans-national enterprise, the planet's ecology requires such highly disciplined treatment in order to restore some of its original capacities, and then guide perhaps its subsequent sustainable use. Restoring as much or as many as possible of these ecosystems is very important, because it might even bring us some almost extinct ecosystems to enlarge our existing carrying capacity. That in turn leads to another engagement, which is renewables managerialism.
Managerialism Link: Renewables

1. **Renewable energy is just a new manifestation of managerialism—replicates the sustained yield logics of traditional environmental managerialism**


   Once you've got that "carrying capacity" then maybe you have to realize that environments can be almost entirely destroyed. Which means that special efforts to rehabilitate them for continuing productive use or restoring them to some idealized condition of pre-existing stability are not enough. Older images of nature as a storehouse of goods that can be exhausted, and therefore one must manage their exhaustion for maintaining the greatest good for the greatest number at the maximum duration, begin to drift towards other less static and more dynamic images. For renewables management, nature becomes a more open-ended, self-renewing source of benefits, which comes with the vision of nature as a vast cybernetic system. This brings the engagement with renewability. The sustained yield metaphors of nature as a static depletable storehouse now shift towards a dynamic, self-regulating system. Recognizing these responsibilities and then mastering their macro management for optimal performance, both as the producers of raw material and conservers of systemic services, becomes the engagement of renewables managerialism. This commitments have pushed the thoughts and actions of many people away from sustained yield and more toward sustainability in the overall management of natural resources. Here the root commitment to resourceification has not been abandoned in the renewables project. Instead, it simply has been re-specified to meet other long-range, larger scale requirements. That is, sustained yield focuses on outputs, and views resource conditions as constraints on maximum production. Sustainability, however, makes resource conditions the goal and the pre-condition for meeting human needs over time. Outputs then are interest on resource capital. Three integrated themes begin to emerge: a concern for the health of ecosystems, a preference for a landscape scale and decentralized management, and a new kind of public participation that might integrate some civic discourse into decision making. These changes often are positive. The resourceification - in outline and tone - does not break all of its links with meeting output goals, but still this is an interesting development. Renewables managerialism moves towards monitoring the level of outputs, the rate of meeting the goals, and the scale of sustainable use. In many ways, it transforms sustainability into another style of sustained yield, so that the evolution from the original vision of sustained yield into today's notion of sustainability is a "win-win situation," both for economic and ecological interests. Renewables management only departs perhaps modestly from the original credo of sustained yield as it was spun up in the early 20th century. Nonetheless, there are some enlightened qualities of eco-managerialism, yet it is not a radical revolutionary reinvention of everything. Instead, what one then often sees is risk managerialism in the eco-managerial project.

2. **The affirmative’s drive to maximize energy production from the management of renewable resources is part and parcel of a failed managerial approach to nature**

   Dean Bavington, PhD Candidate, Geography and Environmental Studies, Wilfrid Laurier University, “Managerial Ecology and Its Discontents: Exploring the Complexities of Control, Careful Use and coping in Resource and Environmental Management,” ENVIRONMENTS v. 30 n. 3, 12—02, pp. 3-21, Expanded Academic ASAP.

   The worldwide crisis in resource management calls attention to the failed project of managerial ecology, which Carolyn Merchant (1980: 238) summarizes as the desire to "maximize energy production, economic yields and environmental quality through ecosystem modeling, manipulation, and prediction of outcomes.” Merchant (1980: 239) notes that managerial ecology involves the deployment of "scientifically trained advisors to government agencies, industries, and universities [to] help... formulate rational policy for resource use.” In The Death of Nature (1980), Merchant locates the historical roots of this utilitarian approach to organizing the human/nature relationship in the ideas of the natural philosophers of Restoration England and the Enlightenment - most notably Sir Francis Bacon (1561-1626), Rene Descartes (1596-1650), Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727), and Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679). These philosophers formed the intellectual foundations for Pinchot and Taylor's progressive projects of Conservation and Scientific Management. The next section of this paper will focus on the science associated with Pinchot and Taylor's managerial approaches.
Managerialism Link: Renewables [cont’d]

3. The shift to renewable resources changes nothing about the managerialist paradigm


Over the past nine decades, the fundamental premises of resource managerialism have changed significantly. On one level, they have become more formalized in bureaucratic applications and legal interpretations. Keying off of the managerial logic of the Second Industrial Revolution, which empowered technical experts (or engineers and scientists) on the shop floor, and professional managers (or corporate executives and financial officers) in the main office, resource managerialism has imposed corporate administrative frameworks on Nature in order to supply the world economy or provision national society with more natural resources through centralized state conservation programs. To even construct the managerial problem in this fashion, Nature is reduced to a system of systems that can be dismantled, redesigned, and assembled anew to produce its many “resources” efficiently and in adequate amounts when and where needed in the modern marketplace. On a second level, during the 1970s and 1980s, resource managerialism transcended simple strategies of merely conserving available quantities of nonrenewable resources by moving toward more expansive programs of protecting various types of environmental quality and providing for new systems of renewable resource generation. Still, these shifts are not a major departure from the original premises of conservation. They only broaden the conceptual definitions of resources either being created from or conserved within Nature, while expanding the prerogatives of managerial authority to renew as well as conserve resources. By envisioning it as an elaborate system of systems, Nature can be continually tinkered with in this fashion to find new fields within its systematcity to rationalize, control, and exploit for the benefit of human beings in wealthy, powerful nation-states. Beautiful vistas, clean air, and fresh water are redefined as “resources” that should not be overconsumed or underproduced, and the managerial impulse easily can rise to this challenge by creating recreational settings, scenery, and ecosystem services as entitlements to be administered by the state for multiple use in the economy, society, and culture.

4. Development of renewable resources reduces the earth to nothing more than a mechanized standing reserve


The application of enviro-discipline expresses the authority of eco-knowledgeable, geo-powered forces to police the fitness of all biological organisms and the health of their natural environments. Master concepts, like ‘survival’ or ‘sustainability’ for species and their habitats, empower these masterful conceptualizers to inscribe the biological/cultural/economic order of the Earth’s many territories as an elaborate array of environments, requiring continuous enviro-discipline to guarantee ecological fitness. The survival agenda, as Gates argues, ‘applies simultaneously to individuals, populations, communities, and ecosystems; and it applies simultaneously to the present and the future’ (Gates 1989: 148). When approached through this mind-set, the planet Earth becomes an immense engine, or the human race’s ‘ecological life-support system’, which has ‘with only occasional localised failures’ provided ‘services upon which human society depends consistently and without charge’ (Cairns 1995). As this environmentalized engine, the Earth then generates ‘ecosystem services’, or those derivative products and functions of natural systems that human societies perceive as valuable (Westmen 1978). This complex is what must survive; human life will continue if such survival-promoting services continue. They include the generation of soils, the regeneration of plant nutrients, capture of solar energy, conversion of solar energy into biomass, accumulation/purification! distribution of water, control of pests, provision of a genetic library, maintenance of breathable air, control of micro- and macroclimates, pollination of plants, diversification of animal species, development of buffering mechanisms in catastrophes and aesthetic enrichment (Cairns 1995). As an environmental engine, the planet’s ecology requires eco-engineers to guide its sustainable use, and systems of green governmentality must be adduced to monitor and manage the system of systems which produce all these robust services. Just as the sustained use of technology ‘requires that it be maintained, updated and changed periodically’, so too does the ‘sustainable use of the planet require that we not destroy our ecological capital, such as old-growth forests, streams and rivers (with their associated biota), and other natural amenities’ (ibid.3). Survival is the key value.
Managerialism Link: Resources

1. Resource management is designed to fuel economic growth and expansion


The script of environmentality embedded in new notions like "the environment" is rarely made articulate in scientific and technical discourses. Yet, there are politics in these scripts. The advocates of deep ecology and social ecology dimly perceive this in their frustrations with "reform environmentalism," which weaves its logics of geo-power in and out of the resource managerialism that has defined the mainstream of contemporary environmental protection thinking and traditional natural resource conservationism (Luke, "Green Consumerism"). Resource managerialism can be read as the eco-knowledge of modern governmentality. While voices in favor of conservation can be found in Europe early in the nineteenth century, the real establishment of this stance comes in the United States with the Second Industrial Revolution from the 1880s through the 1920s and the closing of the Western Frontier in the 1890s (Noble).

Whether one looks at John Muir's preservationist programs or Gifford Pinchot's conservationist codes, an awareness of modern industry's power to deplete natural resources, and hence the need for systems of conservation, is well established by the early 1900s (Nash, Wilderness).

The script of environmentality embedded in new notions like "the environment" is rarely made articulate in scientific and technical discourses. Discourses of resource management are filled with the promise of natural resource "reproduction (excessive resource use coupled with inadequate demand) and underproduction (inefficient resource use in the face of excessive demand) on the supply side as well as overconsumption (excessive resource exploitation with excessive demand) and underconsumption (inefficient resource exploitation coupled with inadequate demand) on the demand side. To even construct the managerial problem in this fashion, Nature must be reduced-through the encirclement of space and matter by national as well as global economies-to a cybernetic system of biophysical systems that can be dismantled, redesigned, and assembled anew to produce "resources" efficiently and in adequate amounts when and where needed in the modern marketplace. In turn, Nature's energies, materials, and sites are redefined by the eco-knowledges of resource managerialism as the source of "goods" for sizable numbers of people, even though greater material and immaterial "bads" also might be inflicted upon even larger numbers of other people who do not reside in or benefit from the advanced national economies that basically monopolize the use of world resources at a comparative handful of highly developed regional and municipal sites. Many of these eco-knowledge assumptions and geo-power commitments can be seen at work in the discourses of the Worldwatch Institute as it develops its own unique vision of environmentality for a global resource managerialism.

2. Our training systems ensure that our experts view nature instrumentally, as resources to be managed


So the book of nature then remains for the most part a readerly text. Different human beings will observe its patterns differently; they will choose to accentuate some while deciding to ignore others. Consequently, nature's meanings always will be multiple and fixed in the process of articulating eco-managerialist discourses. In the United States, the initial professionalized efforts to resourcify nature began with the second industrial revolution, and the original conservation movements that emerged over a century ago, as progressively minded managers founded schools of agriculture, schools of engineering, schools of forestry, schools of management, and schools of mining, to master nature and transform its materiality into goods and services. By their lights, the entire planet was reduced through resourcifying assumptions into a complex system of inter-related natural resource systems, whose ecological processes in turn are left for certain human beings to operate efficiently or inefficiently as the would-be managers of a vast terrestrial infrastructure. Directed towards generating greater profit and power from the rational insertion of natural and artificial bodies into the machinery of global production, the discourses of resource management work continuously to redefine the earth's physical and social ecologies, as sites where environmental professionals can operate in many different open-ended projects of eco-system management.

The scripts of eco-system management imbedded in most approaches to environmental policy, however, are rarely rendered articulate by the existing scientific and technological discourses that train experts to be experts. Still, a logic of resourcification is woven into the technocratic lessons that people must acquire in acquiring their expert credentials. In particular, there are perhaps six practices that orient how work goes here. Because I have a weakness for alliteration, I call them Resource Managerialism, Rehabilitation Managerialism, Restoration Managerialism, Renewables Managerialism, Risk Managerialism, and Recreationist Managerialism.
Managerialism Link: Resources [cont’d]

3. ‘Environmentalism’ and ‘resource management’ discipline nature, justifying human domination

Ynestra King, ecofeminist, “Managerial Environmentalism, Population Control and the New National Security: Towards a Feminist Critique,” POLITICAL ENVIRONMENTS n. 5, Fall 1997, www.cwpe.org/resources/environment/managerial, accessed 3–7.14. Tim Luke, writing in Cultural Critique (Fall 1995) goes even further to suggest that a new meta-managerial perspective and policy elite are emerging under the banner of environmentalism. He argues that: an environmental act, in turn, is already a disciplining move, aimed at constructing some expanse of space -- a locale, a biome, a planet as a biospherical or on the other hand, some city, any region, the global economy in technospherical territory -- in a discursive envelope. Within these enclosures, environmental expertise can arm environmentalists who stand watch over these surroundings, guarding the rings that include or exclude forces, agents, and ideas. (p.65) Living worlds, or ecosystems and their human inhabitants become: ... sites of supervision, where environmentalists see from above and from without through the enveloping designs of administratively delimited systems. Encircled by enclosures of alarm, environments can be disassembled, recombined, and subjected to the disciplinary designs of expert management. Enveloped in these interpretive frames, environments can be redirected to fulfill the ends of other economic scripts, managerial directives, and administrative writs. Environing, then, engenders "environmentality", which embeds instrumental rationalities in the policing of ecological spaces. (p.65) By focusing on the leading think-tank of environmentality, the US based Worldwatch Institute, Luke suggests that "discourses of nature, ecology, or the environment, as disciplinary articulations of "eco-knowledge", might be interpreted as efforts to generate systems of "geo-power" over, but also within and through, nature for the governance of modern economies and societies. Here the "facts of life" as delivered and mediated by the Worldwatch Institute pass into "fields of control for eco-knowledge and spheres of intervention for "geo-power"." (p.67). He develops his analysis of environmentality as an extension of governmentality, which applies techniques of instrumental rationality to the arts of everyday management. "As ecological limits to growth are discovered or defined, states are forced to guarantee their populations' fecundity and productivity in the total setting of the global political economy by becoming "environmental protection agencies." (p.69). Governmentality reemerges as environmentality, re-establishing and enforcing "the right disposition of things." Resource managerialism is the eco-knowledge of modern governmentality, in which national security and national interests are "greened" in which the natural bounty of the planet is continually monitored and watched over by the new technologies of oversight. To construct the managerial problem in the fashion of environmentalism, nature must be redefined by the eco-knowledge of resource managerialism as the source of "goods" for the use and exploitation of particular human beings. Being "an environmentalist" provides the grounds for draping a bioeconomic spreadsheet over Nature while "hovering over the world in a scientifically centered surveillance machine"-- a green panopticon. International environmentalism is watching everything and everyone, measuring and evaluating among other things, the fertility of women, who can be reduced to "populations" for the purpose of analysis. The disciplining of nature, misrepresented as maintaining national security, involves the subdivision of nature into environs, the reduction of human beings to populations, and the construction of a geo-global political structure to manage it all.

4. Viewing nature as a set of resources to be instrumentally used by humanity sets up a calculative, technological worldview that hollows out our very being


Machination is unconditional controllability, the domination of all beings, the world, and earth through calculation, acceleration, technicity, and gigantism. Calculation represents a reduction of knowing to mathematics and science and a reduction of the world and earth to what is calculable, a step taken decisively by Descartes (1999, 84–96). Machination is the "pattern of generally calculable explainability, by which everything draws nearer to everything else equally and becomes completely alien to itself" (1999, 92). The unrestrained domination of machination produces a totalizing worldview that enchants: "When machination finally dominates and permeates everything, then there are no longer any conditions by which still actually to detect the enchantment and to protect oneself from it. The bewitchment by technicity and its constantly self-surpassing progress are only one sign of this enchantment, by virtue of which everything presses forth into calculation, usage, breeding, manageability, and regulation" (1999, 86–87). Heidegger prophetically predicts that machination will produce "a gigantic progress of sciences in the future. These advancements will bring exploitation and usage of the earth as well as rearing and training of humans into conditions that are still inconceivable today" (1999, 108). Animals and plants are reduced to various forms of use value and, more significantly, are banished from Being-in-the-world with us: "What is a plant and an animal to us anymore, when we take away use, embellishment, and entertainment" (1999, 194).

"Nature" suffers a similar fate: "What happens to nature in technicity, when nature is separated out from beings by the natural sciences? The growing—or better, the simple rolling unto its end—destruction of 'nature'... And finally what was left was only 'scenery' and recreational opportunity and even this still calculated into the gigantic and arranged for the masses" (1999, 195). Under the unrestrained domination of machination, humans suffer a "hollowing out" (1999, 91, 348) and Being-in-the-world is replaced by "adventures." (I am here translating Erlebnis as adventure. Others translate it as lived-experience.)
Managerialism Link: Science

1. Scientific ‘knowledge’ is marshalled in their service of existing power/knowledge formations


These kinds of analyses present important opportunities for understanding how knowledge about the environment continues to be generated today. Rose (1996), in discussing the centrality of expertise in governmentality, has argued that the authority and legitimacy generated by the supposed objectivity of science produced new kinds of knowledge/power and techniques for regulation. This is no different in the case of the earth sciences. In one of Foucault’s rare references to nature, he asserts: ‘[b]ut in fact, ecology also spoke a language of truth. It was in the name of knowledge concerning nature, the equilibrium of the process of living things, and so forth’ (Foucault in Darier. 1999: 4). Biologists, botanists, geologists, physicists and, of course, ecologists, have all asserted their authority in speaking about the environmental crisis. Indeed, it is through the spectacle of events such as the various Earth Days and Summits, international climate change conferences and the World Summit on Sustainable Development, for example, that the truth and legitimacy of the science of ecology is performed and reinforced (Peace, 2002). Further, these global meetings and their attendant observations, predictions, calculations and forecasts make the validity and credence of ecology obvious: ‘what was unknown has become fully knowable; what was mysterious is now readily imaginable; and the whole has become eminently governable’ (Peace, 2002: 536–37). To know, to measure, to assess, to document risk, and propose its necessary remedies are the tools that the environmental sciences use to construct and circumscribe the problems and their self-evident solutions.

2. Science is not a neutral mechanism for creating environmental policy – it is easily molded to conform to dominant environmental discourses like managerialism

Andrew McMurray, Assistant Professor, English, University of Waterloo, “Management and Ignorance,” ENVIRONMENTS v. 30 n. 3, 12—02, Expanded Academic ASAP.

"Management and Its Discontents” reaches back to the stirrings of the Enlightenment ambition - to conquer nature through practical power. All of modernity - the good and the bad - emerges from the productive arrogance that comes from this conceit, namely, that God created an intelligible and rule-governed world for us to interpret and remake. According to Bacon [1960: 39] in his central work, Novum Organon, "Nature to be commanded must be obeyed." The goal of the pioneer of scientific thought was to develop a rigorous method by which one could leverage a knowledge of nature into a predictive science, which in turn could be used to exert control over outcomes. Knowledge for its own sake was rarely the point; the point was instrumental knowledge, i.e., knowledge that had a view toward power and works. But the problem with such a view, as we realize some 400 years on, is that science is not founded on natural law but rather on natural law as filtered through human thought and language. No matter how well our descriptive models appear to latch onto the things themselves, human desires, emotions, and imperatives are as much part of those formulations as molecules and magnetic fields. This means that science cannot be presumed to be "purer" than other areas of human thought and endeavour; while it is doubtlessly the model for objective and disinterested investigation - science is nothing if not relentless in its assertion of its own impartiality - it only models that stance. Science is made by humans; it does not make itself. By extension, science cannot tell us how to manage nature or people - although there are plenty of managers who try to rise above the messiness of ideology by buttressing their own ideology with the authority of neutral science.

3. Science is a Trojan horse – in the hands of managerial regimes it means humanity’s relationship to nature is characterized by instrumentalism and domination


Marcuse’s reading of science and technology in one-dimensional society rearticulates much of the Frankfurt School’s critique of the Enlightenment. Ultimately, Marcuse sees science, as it operates in contemporary advanced industrial society, in terms that underscore its intrinsic instrumentalism. The procedures of abstraction, calculation, formalization, and operationalization lead him to contest “the internal instrumentalist character of this scientific rationality by virtue of which it is a priori technology, and the a priori of a specific technology—namely, technology as a form of social control and domination.” This inherent instrumentalism is problematic, because the value-free objectivism of science leaves it open to adopt and serve substantive ends that are external to it. Emerging along with modern European entrepreneurial capitalistic and nationalistic statism in Europe, the inherent technological instrumentalism of science soon integrated destructive social ends into its operations. The principles of modern science were a priori structured in such a way that they could serve as conceptual instruments for a universe of self-propelling, productive control; theoretical operationalism came to correspond to practical operationalism. The scientific method which led to the ever-more-effective domination of nature thus came to provide the pure concepts as well as the instrumentalities for the evermore-effective domination of [hu]man by [hu]man through the domination of nature. Theoretical reason, remaining pure and neutral, entered into the service of practical reason. The merger proved beneficial to both. Today, domination perpetuates and extends itself not only through technology but as technology and the latter provides the great legitimation of the expanding political power, which absorbs all spheres of culture. Captured up within these operational constraints and goals, science works so that “the liberating force of technology—the instrumentalization of things—turns into a fetter of liberation; the instrumentalization of man.”
1. **Sustainability is an effort to reshape human behavior—a policing of global carrying capacity**


   No longer Nature nor even ecosystem, the world under this kind of watch is truly becoming "an environment," ringed by many eco-knowledge centers dedicated to the rational eco-management of its geo-powers. Being "an environmentalist" quickly becomes a power expression of the eco-knowledge formations of environmentality in which the geo-powers of the global ecosystem can be mobilized through the disciplinary codes of green operational planning. The health of global populations as well as the survival of the planet itself allegedly necessitate that a bioeconomic spreadsheet be draped over Nature, generating an elaborate set of accounts for a terrestrial eco-economy of global reach and scope. Hovering over the world in a scientifically centered surveillance machine built out of the disciplinary grids of efficiency and waste, health and disease, poverty and wealth as well as employment and unemployment discourses, Brown, Flavin, and Postel declare "the once separate issues of environment and development are now inextricably linked" (25). Indeed, they are in the discourses of Worldwatch Institute as its organizational expertise surveys Nature-in-crisis by auditing levels of topsoil depletion, air pollution, acid rain, global warming, ozone destruction, water pollution, forest reduction, and species extinction. Environmentality, then, would govern by restructuring today's ecologically unsound society through elaborate managerial designs to realize tomorrow's environmentally sustainable economy. The shape of an environmental economy would emerge from a reengineered economy of environmentalizing shapes vetted by worldwatching codes. The individual human subject of today, and all of his or her unsustainable practices, would be reshaped through this environmentality, redirected by practices, discourses, and ensembles of administration that more efficiently synchronize the bio-powers of populations with the geo-powers of environments. Traditional codes defining human identity and difference would be reframed by systems of environmentality in new equations for making comprehensive global sustainability calculations as the bio-power of populations merges with the ecopower of environments. To police global carrying capacity, in turn, this environmentalizing logic bids each human subject to assume the much less capacious carriage of disciplinary frugality instead of affluent suburban consumerism. All of the world will come under watch, and the global watch will police its human charges to dispose of their things and arrange their ends-in-reengineered spaces using new energies at new jobs and leisure-abouts these environing agendas.

2. **Sustainability only entrenches current development/management regimes—it becomes an exertion of power over life**


   Sustainability, however, cuts both ways. On the one hand, it can articulate a rationale for preserving Nature's biotic diversity in order to maintain the sustainability of the biosphere. But, on the other hand, it also can represent an effort to reinforce the prevailing order of capitalistic development by transforming sustainability into an economic project. To the degree that modern subjectivity is a two-sided power/knowledge relation, scientific-professional declarations about sustainability essentially describe a new mode of environmentalized subjectivity. In becoming enmeshed in a worldwatched environ, the individual subject of a sustainable society could become simultaneously "subject to someone else by control and dependence," where environmentalizing global and local state agencies enforce their codes of sustainability, and police a self-directed ecological subject "tied to his own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge" (Foucault, "Afterword" 12). In both manifestations, the truth regime of ecological sustainability draws up criteria for what sort of "selfness" will be privileged with political identity and social self-knowledge. Sustainability, like sexuality, becomes a discourse about exerting power over life. How power might "invest life through and through" (Foucault, History of Sexuality I 139) becomes a new challenge, once biopolitical relations are established as environmentalized systems. Moreover, sustainability more or less presumes that some level of material and cultural existence has been attained that is indeed worth sustaining. This formation, then, constitutes "a new distribution of pleasures, discourses, truths, and powers; it has to be seen as the self-affirmation of one class rather than the enslavement of another: a defense, a protection, a strengthening, and an exaltation ... as a means of social control and political subjugation" (123). The global bio-accounting systems of the Worldwatch Institute conceptually and practically exemplify the project of environmentality with their rhetorics of scientific surveillance. How Nature should be governed is not a purely administrative question turning upon the technicalities of scientific "know-how." Rather, it is essentially and inescapably political. The discourses of Worldwatching that rhetorically construct Nature also assign powers to new global governors and governments, who are granted writs of authority and made centers of organization in the Worldwatchers' environmentalized specifications of managerial "who-can" and political "how-to."
Managerialism Link: Sustainability [cont’d]

3. Sustainable development is little different from industrial managerialism


So to conclude, each of these wrinkles in the record of eco-managerialism should give its supporters pause. The more adaptive and collaborative dimensions of eco-managerial practice suggest its advocates truly are seeking to develop some post extractive approach to ecosystem management that might respect the worth and value of the survival of non-human life in its environments, and indeed some are. Nonetheless, it would appear that the commitments of eco-managerialism to sustainability maybe are not that far removed from older programs for sustained yield, espoused under classical industrial regimes. Even rehabilitation and restoration managerialism may not be as much post extractive in their managerial stance, as much as they are instead proving to be a more attractive form of ecological exploitation. Therefore, the newer iterations of eco-managerialism may only kick into a new register, one in which a concern for environmental renewability or ecological restoration just opens new domains for the eco-managerialists to operate within. To even construct the problem in this fashion, however, nature still must be reduced to the encirclement of space and matter in national as well as global economies - to a system of systems, where flows of material and energy can be dismantled, redesigned, and assembled anew to produce resources efficiently, when and where needed, in the modern marketplace. As an essentially self contained system of biophysical systems, nature seen this way is energies, materials, in sites that are repositioned by eco-managerialism as stocks of manageable resources. Human beings, supposedly all human beings, can realize great material goods for sizeable numbers of people if the eco-managerialists succeed. Nonetheless, eco-managerialism fails miserably with regard to the political. Instead, its work ensures that greater material and immaterial bads will also be inflicted upon even larger numbers of other people, who do not reside in or benefit from the advanced national economies that basically have monopolized the use of the world's resources. This continues because eco-managerialism lets those remarkable material benefits accrue at only a handful of highly developed regional municipal and national sites. Those who do not benefit, in turn are left living on one dollar or two dollars a day, not able, of course, at that rate of pay, to pay for eco-managerialism. So I'll stop there.

4. Discourses of living within limits justify resource managerialism


This governability of nature comes through in the scientific discourse related to the carrying capacity and limits of the earth (Rutherford, 1999; 2002; Luke, 1999). What this discourse of limits implies is its manageability: the resources of the earth can be rationalized, indexed, measured, assessed and made better through the application of various technologies and modalities of rule. Luke argues this point succinctly with regard to the compelling discourse on sustainable development: ‘Encircled by grids of ecological alarm, sustainability discourse tells us that today’s allegedly unsustainable environments need to be disassembled, recombined and subjected to the disciplinary designs of expert management’ (1999: 142). Thus, ecology and the earth sciences cannot be seen as unimplicated in politics. Rather, they have become fundamental to the production of regimes of governmentality that create the conditions of possibility to speak about nature as something in desperate need of governing by particularly located experts. Thus, ecology works as a power/knowledge regime, producing the truth about nature, the way it can be told, and by whom.
Managerialism Link: Technology

1. The application of technology to nature has led to a dismal track record

Mark Hudson, Assistant Professor, Sociology, Ursinus College, “Branches for Roots: Recalling the Context of Environmental Management,” ENVIRONMENTS v. 30 n. 3, 12–02, pp. 21-36, Expanded Academic ASAP.

In The Death of Nature, Merchant argues that through the processes of commercial expansion and mechanization unfolding in the 16th and 17th Centuries, humanity came to experience the world in a new way, as extensively manipulated and controlled by machine technology. As a result, she argues that there was, "A slow but unidirectional alienation from the immediate daily organic relationship that had formed the basis of human experience from earliest times" (Merchant 1980: 68). Partially as a result of this alienation, and feeding back into the decline of this organic relationship, was the rise of philosophical and scientific conceptions of nature as mechanical. Merchant argues that the emergence of this mechanical conception of the environment and the corresponding "death of nature" enabled a new pretension on the part of humanity concerning our ability to dominate nature. The rise of power and control over a wild, unruly, and fickle nature. At the same time, the metaphor lifted a previously existing "normative restraint" on the scale and type of human exploitation of nature that was based on the image of nature as a "nurturing mother" or "world soul" (Merchant 1980: 20). An I-Thou relationship in which nature was considered to be a person-writ-large was sufficiently prevalent [in the Renaissance mind] that the ancient tendency to treat it as another human still existed... [This] could effectively function as a restraining ethic (Merchant 1980: 28). In combination with a utilitarian conservationist ethic arising initially as a result of timber shortages in England, Merchant argues that the scientific and philosophical(1) trends toward mechanism and away from vitalism find their expression in the concept and practice of environmental management - a practice that has an abysmal track record of failure and destruction in its present form.

2. Technological approaches to nature are profoundly dangerous and self-expanding


Avoiding the romanticism of a return to the Pleistocene or the utopianism of embracing a Star Trek futurism, from a Heideggerian perspective the question becomes, "What sort of revealing does a particular regime of technology make possible?" More prosaically, what sort of relationships to the earth and world does a technology enable? To this question, Heidegger provides a stinging critique of modern technology [albeit, admittedly, tempered by an ontological hope (see 1993, 333–41)]. The way of revealing of modern technology is Gestell or enframing: "The revealing that rules throughout modern technology has the character of a setting-upon, in the sense of a challenging-forth... a challenging, which puts to nature the unreasonable demand that it supply energy which can be extracted and stored as such" (1993, 321, 320). Nature, then, is reduced to a "standing-reserve... a calculable coherence of forces" (1993, 322, 326),6 so that "nature reports itself in some way or other that is identifiable through calculation and that it remains orderable as a system of information" (1993, 328). Heidegger gives examples from the fields of agriculture and energy that ring even more true today (see 1993, 320–21). Of farming, Heidegger writes: The work of the peasant does not challenge the soil of the field. In sowing grain it places seed in the keeping of the forces of growth and watches over its increase. But meanwhile even the cultivation of the field has come under the grip of another kind of setting-in-order, which sets upon nature. It sets upon it in the sense of challenging it. Agriculture is now the mechanized food industry. (1993, 320) Of course, the all-too-immediate reaction to such an example is to charge Heidegger with a dangerous romanticism. With the benefit of a few decades experience around the world with the products of the mechanized food industry, from tasteless food, soil erosion, and ubiquitous pesticides to emptied communities, alienated consumers, and green imperialism, in retrospect Heidegger's critique seems understated. More significantly, though, the question is not a moral one of good or bad but an exploration of what possible ways of relating to nature are opened and foreclosed with different practices of revealing. Heidegger himself dismisses the possibility of romanticism in response to the giganticism and the progress of science, "whose onset can neither be hindered nor even held up in any way, by any romantic remembering of what was earlier and different" (1999, 108). Indeed, Heidegger's fundamental critique of modern technology is not directed at the world it reveals but the world it erases: Where this ordering holds sway, it drives out every other possibility of revealing. Above all, enframing conceals that revealing which, in the sense of poiesis, lets what presences come forth into appearance. As compared with that other revealing, the setting-upon that challenges forth thrusts man into a relation to whatever is that is at once antithetical and rigorously ordered. Where enframing holds sway, regulating and securing of the standing-reserve mark all revealing. (1993, 332) The problem, then, is not that nature is seen as "standing-reserve," a "calculable coherence of forces," but that that is all it can be seen as.
Managerialism Impact: Environment

1. The plan’s reliance on managerial tactics only ensures worse environmental harm

Dean Bavington, PhD Candidate, Geography and Environmental Studies, Wilfrid Laurier University, “Managerial Ecology and Its Discontents: Exploring the Complexities of Control, Careful Use and coping in Resource and Environmental Management,” ENVIRONMENTS v. 30 n. 3, 12—02, pp. 3-21, Expanded Academic ASAP.

Increasingly scholars and practitioners in resource and environmental management are pointing to what Buzz Holling and Gary Meffe (1996) have referred to as "The Pathology of Command and Control in Resource Management." Resource management based on the metaphor of horse training, directing and taking charge has proven itself a failure in resource sector after resource sector. Management structures in many cases have produced the very tragedies they were designed to prevent resulting in paradox, pathology and crisis in the field (Holling 1995). Under the assumptions of reductionist Newtonian ecology, resource management has produced scarcity from former natural abundance. As Holling (1995: 6 emphasis added) notes: "Any attempt to manage ecological variables (e.g. fish, trees, water, cattle) inexorably [leads] to less resilient ecosystems, more rigid management institutions, and more dependent societies...the very success of management...set[s] the conditions for collapse. In each case the goal [is] to control a target variable."

2. Managerialism is doomed to fail – complexity and uncertainty are irreducible

Dean Bavington, PhD Candidate, Geography and Environmental Studies, Wilfrid Laurier University, “Managerial Ecology and Its Discontents: Exploring the Complexities of Control, Careful Use and coping in Resource and Environmental Management,” ENVIRONMENTS v. 30 n. 3, 12—02, pp. 3-21, Expanded Academic ASAP.

The scientific roots of the crisis in resource management stem from the recognition that reductionist Newtonian science, and the Cartesian and Baconian Enlightenment project of commanding and controlling nature has inherent limits. Rene Descartes' plea (quoted in Oelschlaeger 1991: 87) for European men to become the "masters and possessors of nature" is now recognized as a form of patriarchal arrogance and hubris that ends up producing fragile and degraded ecosystems. Francis Bacon's call (quoted in Glacken 1973: 474) for scientists to enlarge "the bounds of human empire, to the effecting of all things possible" is increasingly seen as impractical due to the inherent limitations associated with predicting and controlling complex self-organizing adaptive systems. Developments within ecological science have largely undermined the legitimacy of managerial ecology by questioning the assumptions embedded in the Newtonian model of the universe - assumptions that permitted the belief in certain knowledge and the ability to control nature as if it were a machine. Ecological science increasingly draws on post-Newtonian models, metaphors and methods which focus on the science of complex systems. Complex systems science understands reality as a nested collection of adaptive ecological systems that are in constant evolutionary flux with periods of rapid change and domains of fragile, adaptive stability (Capra, 1996, Levin 1999). This new scientific paradigm focuses on complexity, uncertainty and limits to predictability and control. It subsequently calls on resource managers to recognize the necessity of coping with irreducible uncertainty and adapting to complexity in dynamic and interconnected ecosocial systems (Thompson and Trisoglio 1997, Berkes and Folke 2000, Mitchell 1998, Ludwig 2001).

3. Technological rationalism reduces us to an ontological state worse than nuclear war

Michael Zimmerman, Professor of Philosophy at Tulane University, CONTESTING THE EARTH’S FUTURE: RADICAL ECOLOGY AND POSTMODERNITY, 1997, p. 119-20

Heidegger asserted that human self-assertion, combined with the eclipse of being, threatens the relation between being and human Dasein. Loss of this relation would be even more dangerous than a nuclear war that might “bring about the complete annihilation of humanity and the destruction of the earth.” This controversial claim is comparable to the Christian teaching that it is better to forfeit the world than to lose one’s soul by losing one’s relation to God. Heidegger apparently thought along these lines: it is possible that after a nuclear war, life might once again emerge, but it is far less likely that there will ever again occur an ontological clearing through which such life could manifest itself. Further, since modernity’s one-dimensional disclosure of entities virtually denies them any “being” at all, the loss of humanity’s openness of being is already occurring. Modernity’s background mood is horror in the face of nihilism, which is consistent with the aim of providing material “happiness” for everyone by reducing nature to pure energy. The unleashing of vast quantities of energy in nuclear war would be equivalent to modernity’s slow-motion destruction of nature: unbounded destruction would equal limitless consumption. If humanity avoided nuclear war only to survive as contented clever animals, Heidegger believed we would exist in a state of ontological damnation: hell on earth, masquerading as material paradise.
**Managerialism Impact: Violence**

1. **Managerial tactics play a key role in legitimizing large-scale violence**

Matt Szabo, PhD Candidate, Geography, University of Manchester, “Managerial Ecology: Zygmunt Bauman and the Gardening Culture of Modernity,” ENVIRONMENTS v. 30 n. 3, 12—02, pp. 55-69, Expanded Academic ASAP.

Bauman goes on to quote various 20th Century scientists who made the connection between gardening and the potential improvements offered to society by a marriage of eugenics and social engineering (1991: 27-29). It is the common drive towards instrumental control rather than a shared politics that unifies the various protagonists cited, and, crucially, it is the ubiquity of such controlling visions within 'well-intentioned' scientific and political thinking generally - the application of results-driven scientific methodologies to the social realm - that motivates Bauman's broader critique: Let us emphasize that none of the above statements [from various scientists] was ideologically motivated; in particular, none of them was aimed specifically at the Jews... The quoted scientists were guided solely by proper and uncontested understanding of the role and mission of science - and by the feeling of duty towards the vision of good society; a healthy society, an orderly society. In particular, they were guided by the hardly idiosyncratic, typically modern conviction that the road to such a society leads through the ultimate taming of the inherently chaotic natural forces, and by systematic, and ruthless if need be, execution of a scientifically conceived rational plan (Bauman 1991: 29).

The centrality of science within such narratives of control is perhaps indicative of science's traditional philosophical orientation - the Baconian and Cartesian directives of mastery over nature. Also, the role science plays as the provider of the technics (Mumford: 1934) necessary to realize abstract political goals inevitably places it at the very centre of recent social-engineering projects - regardless of their ideological motivations. As Bauman observes, it was the advance of technology in tandem with the evolving managerial capacities of the modern state that transformed Frederick the Great's metaphors into 20th Century eugenics. Obviously, a mass of contestable and highly controversial historical baggage lies between these readings of gardening as a managerial metaphor and gardening as applied biological science. Bavington's (this volume) concerns about the implications of a shift from managing nature to managing humans makes this baggage especially salient for a critique of managerial ecology.

2. **There is a direct link between managerial thought and the most destructive events of modern history**

Matt Szabo, PhD Candidate, Geography, University of Manchester, “Managerial Ecology: Zygmunt Bauman and the Gardening Culture of Modernity,” ENVIRONMENTS v. 30 n. 3, 12—02, pp. 55-69, Expanded Academic ASAP.

A not-so-tenuous link should now be emerging between Bauman's thinking upon the events of the Holocaust and Gulag, the extension of civilite from the gardens of Versailles, and the moral and educational crusades of the Enlightenment. Although in hindsight the Holocaust appears to be an abomination and the other factors listed necessary steps toward globalized 21st century civilisation, all the narratives manifest modernity's relationship with the intertwined narratives of order, control and progress to varying degrees. They each exemplify the ordering of human society and nature alike via a planned, rational framework in order to progress towards a perceivably better world. The challenge Bauman's thinking poses to this project is the realisation that a thin line stands between 'well intentioned' social-engineering and Weber's dystopian image of instrumental rationality gone awry - the iron cage. Such a reading implies that the Holocaust and Gulag, rather than being blips in the smooth ascendance of modernity, were eventualities - not accidents waiting to happen. The philosophical thread that binds together modern genocide, modern ethics, modern education and modern notions of civilisation is itself a product of modern thinking and consists of two interrelated tenets: 1. The assumption that humankind creates order out of chaos must presume a state of permanent natural disorder. Hence... 2. The removal of disorder or ambivalence - physical and mental - demands the imposition of man-made order upon the prevailing condition of natural disorder. Bauman is not proposing that concepts of order and disorder were 'invented' in the Enlightenment, rather, early modernity was the era when physical and mental ordering became paramount concerns for both intellectuals and the emerging state apparatus alike (Heatherton and Lee, 2000). Both camps were seeking to justify the governmental narratives of order-building and intrusive, applied reason hence, what better way to frame such activities than by pitting them against the metaphysical fabric of the universe? This, of course, meant revising medieval concepts of a divinely ordained 'great chain of being' and reassigning the authority to order the world to humankind alone. Under the new conditions, order could no longer be extrapolated from the book of nature via religion or hermetic magic (Baigent and Leigh, 1997), but had to be actively created by man. Within these new philosophical parameters, the natural state of disorder becomes a challenge, a threat even, to the ordering rationale of les philosophes and the political aspirations of the emerging 'Leviathan' state. Bauman cites Stephen Collins' study of Hobbes to illustrate this point: [a] Hobbes understood that a world in flux was natural and that order must be created to restrain what was natural... order was coming to be understood not as natural, but as artificial, created by man and manifestly political and social... [b] The raw existence, the existence free of intervention, the unordered existence... become now nature: something singularly unfit for human habitat - something not to be trusted and not to be left to its own devices, something to be mastered, subordinated, remade so as to be readjusted to human needs ([a] Collins cited in Bauman 1991: 5, [b] Bauman 1991: 7).
Managerialism Impact: Answers to “Some Management Good / Inevitable”

1. Management is in crisis—emerging consensus says that it does not work

Dean Bavington, PhD Candidate, Geography and Environmental Studies, Wilfrid Laurier University, “Managerial Ecology and Its Discontents: Exploring the Complexities of Control, Careful Use and coping in Resource and Environmental Management,” ENVIRONMENTS v. 30 n. 3, 12—02, pp. 3-21, Expanded Academic ASAP.

Contemporary theories, practices and experiences in resource and environmental management increasingly call into question the projects of managerial command and control epitomized by Pinchot and Taylor. While resource and environmental management continues to share many of the fundamental philosophical orientations of the Progressive Era, the legitimacy and effectiveness of scientific resource management has been disputed on a number of fronts. Ecological scientists question the feasibility of control by drawing on the insights of complex systems science, which understands nature as a dynamic, self-organizing system in continuous chaotic flux as opposed to an image of nature as a collection of linear mechanisms striving toward predictable equilibrium states (Botkin 1990, Pimm 1991, Kay and Schneider 1994, Capra 1996, Levin 1999). Political ecologists question the justice and legitimacy of top-down management, the deleterious constraints placed on resource use by capitalism, and the importance of making distinctions between politics and administration (Torgerson 1999, Sandilands 2002, Garside, this volume, Hudson, this volume). Environmental ethicists and others interested in exploring moral ecology question the human arrogance of controlling "nature," when it is understood as collections of instrumentally valued resources (Evernden 1993, Szabo, this volume). These criticisms have combined with ongoing resource management failures in forestry, fisheries, wildlife and agriculture to produce explosive conflict and uncertainty, resulting in what many refer to as a “worldwide crisis in resource management” (Holling et al 2000: 342).

2. The affirmative harms are simply not responsive to managerial solutions

Dean Bavington, PhD Candidate, Geography and Environmental Studies, Wilfrid Laurier University, “Managerial Ecology and Its Discontents: Exploring the Complexities of Control, Careful Use and coping in Resource and Environmental Management,” ENVIRONMENTS v. 30 n. 3, 12—02, pp. 3-21, Expanded Academic ASAP.

Overfishing, global warming, biodiversity reduction, species extinction, soil erosion, water shortages and the myriad of other environmental "problems" are contested scientific, political and ethical issues as much as they are technical or administrative. Managers can not "solve" these complex environmental issues as if they were a math problem. Democratic and equitable relationships among human beings, and between human beings and other living species demand an evolution beyond management into the complex and largely uncharted terrain of environmental ethics, democratic politics and post-Newtonian complex systems science. The emerging, if belated, recognition within resource management that human beings do not have the capacity to manage wild ecosystems and their living members, often leads to the hope and belief that we can and must, manage humans and their interactions with ecosystems. If we are to think beyond managerial ecology we must challenge the hubris and desirability associated with controlling and stewarding both human and non-human worlds while exploring the limits and potentials of coping with the complex reality we have before us.

3. We can only address the case after we understand the failures off management


Rethinking world politics as a form of interenvironmental relations requires us, like Latour, to jump off the familiar tracks that liberal humanism has laid down for understanding “the environment” – to reinterpret, for example, how “the economy” or “the state” works. Environmental problems are real, and most of them cannot be addressed adequately, much less effectively solved, without coming to terms with the social purposes of those who misconstruct economy amid the environment around the mystified terms that are most commonly used today. Environmental discourse must be broadened as widely as possible so that the built environment of Society and its production processes in “second nature” are recognized as pervasive influences that should not be separated from the unbuilt environments, or nature, or “first nature,” and its damage from by-production processes. Because states and economies both try to capture and contain these social forces, who and/or what defines, directs, and develops that built environment and its products clearly must he a central concern of international relations. Their interventions, however, rarely are decisive enough to succeed, even though en tire academic disciplines, like environmental studies, green management, and applied ecology, are dedicated to guiding their efforts. To address these questions, we need to think about the constructions of interenvironmental relations as much as—or even more than—the constructs of international relations.” At this juncture, there are so many quantitatively new, rapidly expanding environmental trends that we face many qualitatively new conditions. Inequalities are no longer simply international in scope and national by method; they essentially are interenvironmental in their breadth and depth. Accounting for these shifts may require mobilizing new terms and conditions beyond those traditionally accepted in the chronicles of men, and sometimes women, for coping with modernity. Given these goals, this analysis is imperfect, incomplete, and unfinished. At this stage of these discursive developments, it cannot be otherwise.
Managerialism Alt: Give Up Control

1. We need to refuse attempts to control nature

Dean Bavington, PhD Candidate, Geography and Environmental Studies, Wilfrid Laurier University, “Managerial Ecology and Its Discontents: Exploring the Complexities of Control, Careful Use and coping in Resource and Environmental Management,” ENVIRONMENTS v. 30 n. 3, 12—02, pp. 3-21, Expanded Academic ASAP.

In addition to the historic control and caretaking roots of management, there is a third meaning of the word which is finding increasing contemporary expression, both colloquially and within the field of resource management. The third meaning of management implies the opposite of controlling, directing and careful use and is often invoked in adaptive and ecosystem management when command and control techniques are recognized to have failed due to uncertainty, complexity and surprise. Rather than meaning to control and to use carefully, “to manage” can also mean to simply cope with a situation, person, problem or complex process (Thompson and Trisoglio 1997). We use this colloquial meaning of management...when we say, “I just managed to get this paper done on time, or “I just managed to pay rent this month.” When we utilize management in these ways we are referring to situations far removed from that of a controlling authority and from being in a position to map, plan, simplify, direct, husband or steward reality to serve our wishes. When we manage as coping we are the ones being controlled or carefully used by someone or something. Managing, in the sense of dealing-with and coping-with uncertainty and complexity is now a dominant theme in resource and environmental management and in contemporary life in general. This can take one of two forms, depending on the type of complexity identified with the managed object, process or person. When complexity is understood in its irreducible ontological mode, all that managers can do is cope with the given reality. When complexity is understood as an epistemological shortcoming, managers are challenged to develop new and improved information, techniques and models, to (re)gain control and the ability to carefully use resources while they cope in the mean time.

2. Releasing our desire to control opens up more authentic relationships with the world


Heidegger did not spell out with any clarity the specific kinds of technology an attitude of releasement would have us develop or how we would use it differently. Nevertheless, it would have to be consistent with our belonging within the world; and so we could speculate that we would proceed in a way that works with, not against nature, works with and not against one another, works with and not against the interdependencies that find us all connected and thus vulnerable within a shared world. Releasement need not abandon what is possible with the genome, the stem cell; but it would have us approach such areas of research with a hand that remains open: not in the manner of taking, but as receiving and thus grateful before all that is granted and all that becomes possible. It would proceed as the steadied and careful hands of the micro-biologist who is astounded, thus humbled, by the world that opens before him. It would proceed, seeking to bring hope where there is suffering and pain, yet thankful for the miracle of those healing energies of life itself that make it all possible. It would proceed with the diligence and care of the parent, proud yet humbled, frightened yet ready to care. The difference would play a basic role not only in the kinds of technology we develop, but also in the purposes to which we put that technology. Do we see ourselves at the center of a world that is increasingly at our disposal, in which nothing else matters but what we will to do, becoming ever more powerful and able to extend what we can control, what we can produce and consume without limits, as though entitled to do so? Do we continue to develop and use technology to enhance the advantage of some regardless of the expense to others? Do we proceed with technology blindly believing that every problem can be fixed with technology itself? Or, do we see ourselves as uniquely destined to a level of responsibility and care toward one another and the earth that is frightening precisely in the power that has been given over to us? And therefore, do we see ourselves as needing to consider how what we do with technology impacts one another as well as the earth that births and sustains us as all belonging together within the shared gift of world?

3. We must view ourselves as being in the world, not acting in relation to it


Heidegger, then, is suggesting a Copernican revolution with respect to humanity’s relation to the world, for it is never a matter of “to” but “in.” Humanity is never a subject over and against or above the world apart from the world; rather, the subject is always in the world, a part of the world, and, indeed, is constituted by relations in the world. Further, in an important point that is not so clear in Being and Time but that becomes evident in later writings, “I am in the world” on earth, that Being-in-the-world is always already Being-in-the-world on earth. Earth is “that on which and in which man bases his dwelling.... Upon the earth and in it, historically man grounds his dwelling in the world.... The world grounds itself on the earth, and earth juts through world” (1993, 169, 171, 172). In displacing the subject-object dichotomy that so circumscribes environmental theory and practice, Heidegger’s thought opens up a horizon of possibilities of other ways/beginnings/trajectories for environmentalism. What would it mean to approach all environmental issues from a fundamental understanding of Being-in-the-world on earth?
Managerialism Alt: Rethinking

1. We need to question and rethink environmental governmentality and management

Stephanie Rutherford, Faculty of Environmental Studies, York University, “Green Governmentality: Insights and Opportunities in the Study of Nature’s Rule,” PROGRESS IN HUMAN GEOGRAPHY v. 31 n. 3, 2007, pp. 291-307, p. 304-305. This article has been an attempt to read the management of nature through the eyes of Foucault, donning his particularly insightful lens to take up how the saving of nature is a profoundly political project. Notions of governmentality allow geographers to ask different kinds of questions about the environmentalist critique, a process which might yield a fresh perspective in terms of how truth claims and disciplinary regimes are formed. By deploying notions around the circulation of power, biopolitics, and technologies of the self, I have attempted to show how these concepts can provide a strong basis on which to interrogate the self-evident virtuousness of environmentalism in particular, and the governing of nature more generally. However, I have also tried to point out that one cannot abandon a more critical perspective when entering this terrain. Instead, there needs to be an awareness of the ways in which governmentality literature needs to be made messier – more complicated – to provide a robust analysis of the exercise, administration and application of power. By paying attention to unintended consequences, acts of resistance, processes of occlusion, and multiple locations in the exercise of green governmentality, I think geographers can provide a more nuanced picture of how rule circulates, and, indeed, is changed by this circulation. In recognizing both the utility and drawbacks of governmentality as applied to nature, geographers are provided with the opportunity to rethink environmental politics in a way that might open up space to seize on the interstices provided in the administration of rule. Further, accepting that environmentalism is always implicated in power should not induce paralysis for the critical spirit (a critique often leveled at Foucault) but rather a sense of liberation. To me, the most compelling part of Foucauldian analysis is that, if things are made rather than found, then the possibility exists for them to be unmade, or made differently. If we accept Legg’s (2005) notion that studies in governmentality operate as genealogical projects, charting the history of the present, this allows for the imagination of things – politics, natures, power relations, subjectivities, discourses, practices – to be otherwise. Once the claiming of innocence is recognized as a fiction, environmental politics can put aside its attempts to position itself outside of power. Perhaps part of our job as geographers then is to explore this fiction and build new ways of imagining human/non-human relations.

2. Our politics must be centered on rethinking our technologization of the environment

Kevin Michael DeLuca, “Thinking with Heidegger: Rethinking Environmental Theory and Practice,” ETHICS & THE ENVIRONMENT v. 10 n. 1, 2005, pp. 67-87, Ebsco. "Questioning builds a way. We would be advised, therefore, above all to pay heed to the way. . . . The way is one of thinking" (1993, 311). This essay has been an attempt to embark on the path of questioning in order to begin again the thinking of humanity-nature relations, to offer a clearing for environmental theory. The questions are many and are meant to distress: What would it mean to approach all environmental issues from a fundamental understanding of Being-in-the-world on earth? Do certain environmentalist's strategies contribute to machination? If public relations, along with advertising, is the discourse of machination, a discourse of empty words in service of giganticism (bigger is better) and progress (newer is better), what are the consequences when radical environmental groups deploy that very discourse in efforts to reach the public through mass media? Is it possible to fundamentally challenge machination while using the techniques of machination? What sort of revealing does a particular regime of technology make possible? What sort of relationships to the earth and world does a technology enable? Can humans even think outside of the regime of modern technology? Has modern technology foreclosed the possibilities of thinking the way of Being-in-the-world on earth? Does or does not a particular technological device promote modern technology's enframing of earth and world? Does a strategy of wilderness pictures promote or prevent an engagement with the earth? The questioning hopes to provoke a distress that starts us on the way of thinking. The way of thinking that Heidegger is after marks a new beginning for philosophy (if it is even important to retain that old name). It is a thinking that is necessary for social theory and politics. More to the point, Heidegger is imagining a thinking that is the very condition for Being-in-the-world on earth. A thinking that will enable us to engage the earth and answer the question: "Must nature be surrendered and abandoned to machination? Are we still capable of seeking earth anew? Who enkindles that strife in which the earth finds its open, in which the earth encloses itself and is earth?" (1999, 195).
Managerialism Alt: Rethinking [cont’d]

3. We need to challenge the role of management in shaping world politics


These new modes of existence present us with an opportunity. A world where one asks, “What are world politics?” and then fundamentally doubts all the answers about what the political world is taken to be gives both individuals and groups the opportunity to transform their spaces for effective action. Those who dominate the world exploit their positions to their advantage by defining how the world is known. Unless they also face resistance, questioning, and challenge from those who are dominated, they certainly will remain the dominant forces. Looked at by itself, the neat division of the world into the realms of international relations and environmental affairs remains somewhat colorless. Such terms continuously remediate our most common modes of interpretation, as they now prevail in the world. Indeed, this language spins particular words—globalization, sustainability, development—into either important choke points or major rights-of-way in the flows of political discourse. The connections between international relations and the environment assume considerable importance in the 2000s because much of the world’s ecology has deteriorated so rapidly during the past ten, thirty, or fifty years. This omnipolitanizing deterioration, in fact, has spread so quickly that neither green fundamentalist preservationism nor corporate capitalist conservationism can do much to solve the pressing ecological problems of the present. Now, after the industrial revolution, nowhere in the world holds out against machines; high technology is everywhere. After two world wars, few places anywhere in the world hold onto traditional formulas of authority; liberal democracy is spreading everywhere. After the Cold War, nowhere seriously holds forth as a real alternative to the market; corporate capitalism is everywhere. So only a truly critical approach to international relations and the environment can unravel why these forces interact, and maybe correct how they create ecological destruction. Improving the understanding of international relations as a scholarly discipline is one possible response to this new context. Strangely enough, the dysfunction of markets and states is a key constituent component of the contemporary world system’s environmental crisis.
Managerialism Alt: Answers to “Permutation”

1. The permutation saps any possibility of change

Dean Bavington, PhD Candidate, Geography and Environmental Studies, Wilfrid Laurier University, “Managerial Ecology and Its Discontents: Exploring the Complexities of Control, Careful Use and coping in Resource and Environmental Management,” ENVIRONMENTS v. 30 n. 3, 12—02, pp. 3-21, Expanded Academic ASAP.

For many years ecological scientists have been under pressure to provide useful knowledge to serve the productive interests of management. James Kay and Eric Schneider (1994: 32) have noted that as environmental degradation and change become increasingly evident, "scientists...find themselves under pressure to set out simple and clear rules for proper ecosystem management." Haila (1998: 472) articulates a similar insight when he documents how "ecologists have been subjected to a long standing pressure from the productive needs of agriculture, forestry, fisheries and game management." The recognition of irreducible complexity in and limits on what can be known about biophysical systems places severe constraints on ecological scientists' ability to produce knowledge amenable to management. It is this recognition that led some ecologists to refer to ecology as the "subversive science" (Shepard and McKinley 1969). However, in the context of ongoing natural resource failures and the social crises that accompany them, economic and political demands and rewards for knowledge that promise control, certainty and instrumental application encourage the discovery of new targets for managerial control, even in the context of a generalized recognition of the many failures of management. Demands for control do not go away with the emergence of the ecological science of complexity rather they relocate themselves onto aspects of reality which appear most amenable to handling, direction and stewardship - those which appear to be less uncertain and complex when viewed through the reductive lens of global capitalism and the demands of neo-liberal statecraft. What is troubling is that most contemporary management literature remains blind to the larger demands for command and control embedded in contemporary neo-liberal governance strategies and the capitalist dynamics of management as careful use and coping. As one example of this very wide spread problem in resource management, I offer a quote from Holling and Meffe. Holling's comments are disturbing because his ideas have been very effective in critiquing the idea of control in resource and environmental management and in advocating a new approach to management he labels adaptive.(4) Holling and Meffe (1996: 335 my emphasis) point out that... Ironically, our attempts at command and control are usually directed at complex, poorly understood, and non-linear natural systems, rather than at the fundamental source of the problem - human population growth and consumption - where control is viable, reasonable, and could be effective.

2. The plan’s commitment to management snowballs, confounding the alternative / kritik

Matt Szabo, PhD Candidate, Geography, University of Manchester, “Managerial Ecology: Zygmunt Bauman and the Gardening Culture of Modernity,” ENVIRONMENTS v. 30 n. 3, 12—02, pp. 55-69, Expanded Academic ASAP.

The logic of modern ordering is, to use Weston's terminology (1996), a process of "self-validating reduction" that simultaneously generates its own victims and justifies its defining role via the logic of its own unfolding. The attempt to order the world follows the pattern of positive feedback: the only way to control ever increasing levels of uncertainty is by the application of ever more complex taxonomies of reference: as the taxonomy of order grows however, so does the amount of ambivalence or disorder that it sets out to contain. For Bauman then, Modernity's chief flaw is not so much an escalation in power per-se but an exponential growth in the control-oriented thinking and technology that all forms of modern power - regardless of political hue - utilise for various ends. Controlling, or more euphemistically, managing ethics, the economy, education, and, of course, the environment, is taken for granted, even if the role and political orientation of power that mediates the mechanics of control is more closely scrutinised. But the quest for control seems to continuously create its own supply of self-validating material. Indeed, for Bauman, "The Quest for Order" (1991:1-17) is unlikely to end until that collective moment when the "primal state" of chaos which permeates multiple dimensions of existence is embraced and accepted, rather than perceived as an ongoing threat to human security and a challenge to the ordering tendency of the human intellect. It is this postmodern 'true' with ambivalence that seems to inspire Bauman in the passage below: It is, we may say, a pristine and brute fact that human beings exist in the never-ending, since never fully successful, effort to escape from Chaos: society, its institutions and their routines, its images and their compositions, its structures and their managerial principles, are all facets of that forever inconclusive and relentless escape. Society, we might say, is a massive and continuous cover up operation. And yet the best the escape ever succeeds in coming up with is a thin film of order that is continuously pierced, torn apart and folded up by the Chaos over which it stretches...
Managerialism Alt: Answers to “Permutation” [cont’d]

3. The permutation only puts a happy face on managerialism—it fails

Dean Bavington, PhD Candidate, Geography and Environmental Studies, Wilfrid Laurier University, “Managerial Ecology and Its Discontents: Exploring the Complexities of Control, Careful Use and coping in Resource and Environmental Management,” ENVIRONMENTS v. 30 n. 3, 12—02, pp. 3-21, Expanded Academic ASAP.

While representations of nature and culture have changed in contemporary resource and environmental management and the strategies of control, careful use and coping have developed and been rearranged, managerial ecology remains. As Fikret Berkes (forthcoming) notes these changes do "not mean that the role of the manager has ended; it means that the role of the manager has changed in nature." The recognition of irreducible complexity and uncertainty that has accompanied the end of Newtonian ecology and the rise of complex ecological science has the potential to foment unprecedented revolutionary changes in our relationships with each other and the natural world. However, the risks associated with the new science are also extreme, perhaps more so since the new science is almost always presented as providing liberation and offering renewed freedom in the form of new and improved approaches to management (Martin 1998). It appears that the creative and revolutionary changes in how we understand nature and resource management are being influenced according to a pre-existing societal need for control and certainty, a politics of state-led control, the needs of unregulated global capital, and a generalized economic and political neo-liberalism. These forces have been extremely effective in limiting the creativity and revolutionary potential of complex ecological science and in rescuing and strengthening a general belief in management as a central value and ideal of our civilization.

4. The permutation ensures the cooption of the kritik

Andrew McMurray, Assistant Professor, English, University of Waterloo, “Management and Ignorance,” ENVIRONMENTS v. 30 n. 3, 12—02, Expanded Academic ASAP.

If the Project of Reason made democracy possible, it also sowed the seeds for democracy's irrelevance. The complexity of modern techno-society, with its vast networks of communication, finance, information, and so on, required the emergence of a managerial class that could take on the day-to-day running of the system. As a result of complexity, fewer and fewer significant planning decisions are taken by the polity or its elected representatives because the sorts of deliberations suitable for such bodies cannot include those that are time-sensitive or unconformable with the yea/nay coding structure of the political system. As for the rest - in other words, just about every decision that counts - on them the managerial sub-structure of the political system goes to work. Autarchic bodies such as the WTO or the IMF are the most visible incarnations of the management regime, but behind the scenes in every jurisdiction are the silent bureaucracies that churn out the reports and analyses, the rules and regulations that so palpably affect the quotidian existences of humans and non-humans alike. To the extent that green theory and practice participate in this bureaucratization of the political imagination, to that extent they are committed to business-as-usual. "The Obscured Potential of Environmental Politics" argues that this consensual quietism can be invigorated only by a rededication to the actual sources of open and robust democracy: antagonism, partisanship, and dissensus. Environmental activists should never work within the system to make it, so to speak, see green; rather, they must work at the system to rearticulate the bases of democratic decision-making. Without that kind of radicalism, environmental politics comes to look much like what we see today: a Potemkin village hiding the ongoing failure of activists to achieve anything except at the edges of the environmental crisis.
5. Permutations only expand the scope and destructiveness of instrumental rationalities

Timothy W. Luke, Professor, Political Science, Virginia Tech University, “Environmentality as Green Governmentality,” DISCOURSES OF THE ENVIRONMENT, 1999, ed. E. Darier, 1999, pp. 121-151, p. 128-129, Oxford: Blackwell. These efforts to link economic growth with ecological responsibility, however, are stated most obviously in Vice-President Gore’s environmental musings. To ground his green geopolitics, Gore argues that ‘the task of restoring the natural balance of the Earth’s ecological system’ could reaffirm America’s long-standing ‘interest in social justice, democratic government, and free market economics’ (Gore 1992: 270). The geo-powers unlocked by this official ecology might even be seen as bringing ‘a renewed dedication to what Jefferson believed were not merely American but universal inalienable rights: life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness’ (ibid.). At another level, however, Gore takes his own spiritual-religious opposition to geo-economics to new heights, arguing that America’s new strategic goals after the Cold War must re-establish ‘a natural and healthy relationship between human beings and the earth’, replacing the brutal exploitation of nature with an ‘environmentalism of the spirit’ (ibid. 218, 238). He asserts confidently that industrial civilization, like all highly organized cultures, depends upon ‘a web of stories’ to explain what it is, where it is going, and why it exists. Capitalism’s existing stories, however, are riddled with the geo-economic themes of instrumental rationality, mindless growth and possessive individualism. Hence, ‘new stories about the meaning and purpose of human civilization’ must be devised (ibid. 216). To tell his new story, however, Gore casts all those advanced industrial societies, which are still hooked on geo-economics, as ‘dysfunctional civilization’. On his diagnosis, their dysfunctionality has many origins: big science, instrumental rationality, capitalistic greed, industrial alienation and growth mania. None the less, its most basic cause is that worsening addiction to mass consumption. Because allegedly ‘we’ (meaning everyone in advanced industrial society) have lost our direct everyday connections to the natural world, we are all ‘addicted to the consumption of the earth itself’ (ibid. 220). Lonely, empty and obsessive, Gore argues, Americans attempt to fill this void with the inauthentic surrogates of more consumer goods. Thus, we become biosphere abusers. He does not, like the deep ecology community, call for us to face down the addiction by going cold turkey at the mall or by returning to a wild nature. Like all addicted individuals or any dysfunctional family, he argues, we are in denial. Still, we must, and fortunately can, heal ourselves. Indeed, there is an easy way out of dysfunctionality through responsible stewardship of nature. Gore argues that such absolutions ‘can heal the wound and free the victim from further enslavement’ (ibid. 236—7). In healing talk of self-condemnation, then, Gore finds the easy therapy for redeeming both nature and humanity from industrial geo-economics. Sensing the mass public’s anxious need for such rough-and-ready redemption, he labels us all ‘dysfunctional deviants’, identifies the causes of our common neuroses, and provides the talking cure needed to realize our collective salvation: namely, ‘the new story of what it means to be a steward of the earth’ (ibid. 237).
Managerialism Alt: Answers to “Reformism”

1. Reform fails—our links turn the case and prove that they exacerbate environmental destruction

Mark Hudson, Assistant Professor, Sociology, Ursinus College, “Branches for Roots: Recalling the Context of Environmental Management,” ENVIRONMENTS v. 30 n. 3, 12–02, pp. 21-36, Expanded Academic ASAP.
The history of “scientific management” of resources from forests to fisheries consists largely of a catalogue of ecological destruction, a point well established elsewhere (see Bavington, this volume). Responses to managerial failure can, for my purposes, be roughly categorized into three groups. First, is a continuation or intensification of the managerial status quo. Here, failure of scientific management is viewed as a result of imperfect information, incomplete monitoring, or lack of enforcement, so advancement is to be found by improvements in these areas. The shortcomings of this response have been amply covered by managerial critics and critics of “command and control” management techniques (e.g., Holling and Meffe 1996). Second is an appeal for a managerial transformation away from “command and control” methods and toward adaptive and ecosystem management techniques (Grumbine 1994; Holling and Meffe 1996). Here, failure is seen as a “pathology” of dominant management techniques in which the tools of “command and control” have the effect of reducing the variation and resiliency of natural systems. The solution is presented as a new paradigm of management that admits of inevitable uncertainty and tailors resource management practices to the realities of indeterminacy (Holling and Meffe 1996: 330; Bavington, this volume). The third response is a fundamental and radical questioning of the entire project of management, be it targeted at ecosystems, economies, or social systems (see Bavington, this volume; Szabo, this volume). Certainly the status quo response cannot be considered viable in the long term, as evidence of its complete failure mounts in the form of simplified and vulnerable ecosystems, collapsed fisheries, and species extinction. The second response attempts to address the shortcomings of the status quo by recognizing the complexity of ecological systems and calling into question our ability to control and predict system behaviour. It shifts the focus of management from controlling ecosystems to controlling human populations (Bavington, 2003). As such, it focuses on retooling the techniques of management - shifting from “command and control” techniques to “adaptive” or “ecosystem” techniques - but leaves untouched the question of whether “management” is a problem in and of itself. The final response calls into question not only the techniques of management, but its usefulness as a dominant paradigm and as a concept. I will restrict my argument to the important questions posed by the radical critique: whether the concept of management itself is salvageable and whether there is some use in making the attempt. This paper is an initial attempt to enter into this debate by suggesting that (1) there are serious difficulties - both practical and political - in attempting to jettison the concept of management; and (2) that if we can distinguish between management as a transhistorical abstraction and its historically specific capitalist form we might more clearly understand the roots of ecological crisis and avoid some potentially dangerous pitfalls. In order to set the stage for these contentions, we need some understanding of the core elements of the critique of management and their implications. It is to this that we now turn.

2. Criticizing managerialism must be at the forefront—even radical approaches fail otherwise

Yet even the practices of radical grassroots groups that eschew central organization and its attendant dangers deserve scrutiny. Beginning with Greenpeace in the 1970s and intensifying in the 1980s with the emergence of wilderness and environmental justice groups, the radical environmental movement has increasingly relied on managing images and manipulating media, in fact practicing what could be considered an oppositional grassroots public relations. If public relations, along with advertising, is the discourse of machination, a discourse of empty words in service of giganticism (bigger is better) and progress (newer is better), what are the consequences when radical environmental groups deploy that very discourse in efforts to reach the public through mass media? What are the consequences when Greenpeace champions the cause of furry baby harp seals at the neglect of less photogenic indicator species? Are the effects of this any different from when the much more compromised World Wildlife Fund (WWF) adopts the panda as its symbol and cause celebre? What are the consequences when Earth First!, the environmental justice group Kentuckians For The Commonwealth, and other grassroots groups conform to the constraints of the mass media (stunning images, sound bites, conflict focus, emotional appeals, and so on) and deploy the practices of public relations in order to stage image events? Is it possible to fundamentally challenge machination while using the techniques of machination? These are not rhetorical questions. I do not have the answers and I do not think there are easy answers. Instead, Heidegger offers the environmental movement the admonishment to question what it takes for granted, to think about the presuppositions and practices that are reflexively deployed as a matter of course.
Managerialism Alt: Answers to “Technological Essentialism”

1. Our arguments are contextual—we do not reject technology of management per se, but rather how they are deployed

Mark Hudson, Assistant Professor, Sociology, Ursinus College, “Branches for Roots: Recalling the Context of Environmental Management,” ENVIRONMENTS v. 30 n. 3, 12—02, pp. 21-36, Expanded Academic ASAP.
Specifically, no attempt is made within critiques of management per-se to separate the concept of management - in the sense of some form of conscious regulation of relations and processes, in this case regulation of relations between humans and nature - from the form it assumes under various sets of social relations. A major contributor to this problem is that the concept of management as we currently understand it developed in tandem with the currently dominant set of social relations, making the two difficult to separate analytically. This has an analogy with problems identified in critiques of technology. Adorno, for example, points out the problematic practice of seeing technology as a historical force independent of the relations that spawn and condition it: It is not technology which is calamitous, but its entanglement with societal conditions in which it is fettered. I would just remind you that consideration of the interests of profit and dominance have channeled technical development: by now it coincides fatally with the needs of control. [...] By contrast, those of its potentials which diverge from dominance, centralism and violence against nature, and which might well allow much of the damage done literally and figuratively by technology to be healed, have withered (Adorno, 2000, 160 n. 15).

2. We do not essentialize—we only show the disadvantages to our current approaches to technology

Mark Hudson, Assistant Professor, Sociology, Ursinus College, “Branches for Roots: Recalling the Context of Environmental Management,” ENVIRONMENTS v. 30 n. 3, 12—02, pp. 21-36, Expanded Academic ASAP.
The second difficulty is that critiques of management per-se distract from the profoundly anti-ecological logic and drives of the capitalist system, which orient, channel, and limit the purposes of management. Such critiques also deny the possibility of human organization in construction of a different set of social relations, which could provide the possibility of escaping the anti-ecological relations of capitalism. As Szabo's work (this volume) so cogently demonstrates, critiques of modernity call into question the wisdom and possibility of engaging in any sort of "social engineering." Bauman's work on the Holocaust convincingly demonstrates that the tools of modernity enable the capacity for atrocities on a grand scale (Bauman, 1989). Indeed, we need not look to such extreme cases to see the shadowy side of rationalization, attention to efficiency, planning, and co-ordination. As will be discussed below, Marx argues that these characteristics of "modernity" hold the promise of liberation from material want, yet their "dark side" becomes apparent when harnessed to capitalist relations of production and the necessities of accumulation. Rationality and scientific technique become shackles on the bulk of humanity, creating immiseration and alienation instead of liberation (Marx, [1867] 1976). For Marx, it is the social relations of production specific to capitalism that produce oppression, rather than the generalized application of rationality, planning, and co-ordination - in other words - management. This emphasis and distinction allows for the possibility of an organized political project to seize control of the forces of production and for the conscious transformation of the entire mode of production, encompassing objectives and techniques. If the conditioning influences of societal structures on the form and purpose of technique are neglected, then we are encouraged - if not forced completely - to abandon the possibility of consciously altering our environment. For example, if we fail to recognize the influence that the capitalist mode of production and its need for accumulation has on management practices, we will fail to see the potential for intentionally changing our environment, including our natural environment, but also our social environment; the social relations in which we live, work, recreate, and die.