BILL DEVALL

DEEP ECOLOGY

GEORGE SESSIONS

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Living as if nature mattered

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Dedicated to
Arne Naess
mountaineer, deep ecologist,
mentor, activist, philosopher
and
Gary Snyder
poet, mountaineer,
student of Eastern and Native American traditions,
teacher, reinhabitant of the western slope, Sierra Nevada

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PREFACE

The environmental problems of technocratic-industrial societies are beginning to be seen as manifestations of what some individuals are calling "the continuing environmental crisis." This is coming to be understood as a crisis of character and of culture.

The environmental/ecology social movements of the twentieth century have been one response to the continuing crisis. These movements have addressed some of the problems and have tried to reform some of the laws and agencies which manage the land and to change some of the attitudes of people in these societies. But more than just reform is needed. Many philosophers and theologians are calling for a new ecological philosophy for our time.

We believe, however, that we may not need something new, but need to reawaken something very old, to reawaken our understanding of Earth wisdom. In the broadest sense, we need to accept the invitation to the dance—the dance of unity of humans, plants, animals, the Earth. We need to cultivate an ecological consciousness. And we believe that a way out of our present predicament may be simpler than many people realize.

Responding to the environmental crisis, the themes in *Deep Ecology* alternate between personal, individual options and public policy and collective options. On the personal level, we encourage introspection, purification and harmony, and a dancing celebration or affirmation of all being. On the level of intellectual, historical analysis, the book offers an examination of the dominant worldview in our society, which has led directly to the continuing crisis of culture. We then present an ecological, philosophical, spiritual approach for dealing with the crisis.

On the level of public or community policies, we examine various conventional approaches to natural resource management, criticize these approaches and present realistic alternatives. A major thrust of the book is an intellectual examination of the predicament and an attempt to clarify our vital needs as humans.

To readers who feel we live in the best of all possible worlds, with a high standard of living, the book suggests an alternative perspective to consider. To professional philosophers, resource managers and politicians who deal with ideas, abstractions, ethical theory, economics and politics, the book suggests some of the limitations, in our view, of the dominant approach to public policy. To the reader seeking a more authentic existence and integrity of character, the book offers

a theory of direct action which can help develop maturity.

In structure, the book begins with a chapter on possible scenarios for the environmental/ecology movement during the next several decades. We suggest an approach based on asking deeper questions and on cultivating ecological consciousness. In chapter two we discuss the minority tradition of culture and community and specific types of direct action which individuals can take to further serve their own vital needs while serving the needs of the larger community of other humans, plants, animals, and the Earth. Chapter three summarizes the dominant worldview and its critics. In chapter four we discuss the reformist response to the dominant worldview, in both philosophy and reform politics.

Chapter five presents the basic intuitions, ultimate norms, and principles of deep ecology. In chapter six, various sources of deep ecological insights and philosophical principles are introduced. Chapter seven discusses the vital need humans have for wilderness and the public policy decisions now affecting the remaining wild places of the Earth.

In chapter eight we confront the real problems of managing natural resources in technocratic-industrial societies and suggest some proposals for management from a deep ecology perspective. The importance of ecotopian visions is presented in chapter nine along with a review of several ecotopian statements by prominent writers.

Chapter ten presents a theory of taking direct action to further the development of maturity based on theories of psycho-social development. The final chapter returns to the theme of direct action, and discusses ecological resisting—the affirmation of life based on deep ecological insights and principles.

Deep Ecology is an invitation to thinking, and presents challenging questions and dilemmas. To help in developing personal insights into deep ecology, brief writings from many authors have been included. These stimulating insights, perceptions, and debates can be read independent of the text. We encourage the reader to read the book creatively by bridging the ideas in the boxed writings and the text.

Taken in its entirety, the increase in mankind's strength has brought about a decisive, many-sided shift in the balance of strength between man and the earth. Nature, once a harsh and feared master, now lies in subjection, and needs protection against man's powers. Yet because man, no matter what intellectual and technical heights he may scale, remains embedded in nature, the balance has shifted against him, too, and the threat that he poses to the earth is a threat to him as well.

—*Jonathan Schell,* The Fate of the Earth *(1982)*

CANDLES IN BABYLON

Through the midnight streets of Babylon
between the steel towers of their arsenals,
between the torture castles with no windows,
we race by barefoot, holding tight
our candles, trying to shield
the shivering flames, crying
"Sleepers Awake!"
hoping
the rhyme's promise was true,
that we may return
from this place of terror
home to a calm dawn and
the work we had just begun.

—*Denise Levertov,* Candles in Babylon

CHAPTER 1

NOTHING CAN BE DONE, EVERYTHING IS POSSIBLE

We need nature to be fully alive: air, food, warmth, spiritual. . . . We live as if nature is only needed to provide extras: paper, recreation, specialty foods, a job to provide money.

—*Susan Griffin,* Women and Nature, *1978*

The major problems in the world are the result of the difference between the way nature works and the way man thinks.

—*Gregory Bateson, Lindisfarn, Long Island, 1976*

In this first chapter we assume that the environmental/ecology movement has been a response to the awareness by many people that something is drastically wrong, out of balance in our contemporary culture. In the first section, we present several alternative scenarios for the movement. These scenarios will provide a context in which to understand deep ecology. Some of the major themes of deep ecology and of cultivating ecological consciousness are discussed in the second section of the chapter.

I. SCENARIOS FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL/ECOLOGY MOVEMENT

1. Reform Environmentalism

Environmentalism is frequently seen as the attempt to work only within the confines of conventional political processes of industrialized nations to alleviate or mitigate some of the worst forms of air and water pollution, destruction of indigenous wildlife, and some of the most short-sighted development schemes.

One scenario for the environmental movement is to continue with attempts at reforming some natural resource policies. For example, ecoactivists can appeal administrative decisions to lease massive areas of public domain lands in the United States for mineral development, or oil and gas development. They can comment on draft Environmental Impact Reports; appeal to politicians to protect the scenic values of the nation; and call attention to the massive problems of toxic wastes, air and water pollution, and soil erosion. These political and educational activities call to the need for healthy ecosystems.

However, environmentalism in this scenario tends to be very technical and oriented only to short-term public policy issues of resource allocation. Attempts are made to reform only some of the worst land use practices without challenging, questioning or changing the basic assumptions of economic growth and development. Environmentalists who follow this scenario will easily be labeled as "just another special issues group." In order to play the game of politics, they will be required to compromise on every piece of legislation in which they are interested.[1]

Generally, this business-as-usual scenario builds on legislative achievements such as the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Endangered Species Act in the United States, and reform

legislation on pollution and other environmental issues enacted in most industrialized nations.

This work is valuable. The building of proposed dams, for example, can be stopped by using economic arguments to show their economic liabilities. However, this approach has certain costs. One perceptive critic of this approach, Peter Berg, directs an organization seeking decentralist, local approaches to environmental problems. He says this approach "is like running a battlefield aid station in a war against a killing machine that operates beyond reach and that shifts its ground after each seeming defeat."[2] Reformist activists often feel trapped in the very political system they criticize. If they don't use the language of resource economists—language which converts ecology into "input-output models," forests into "commodity production systems," and which uses the metaphor of human economy in referring to Nature—then they are labeled as sentimental, irrational, or unrealistic.

Murray Bookchin, author of *The Ecology of Freedom* (1982) and *Post-Scarcity Anarchism* (1970), says the choice is clear. The environmental/ecology movement can "become institutionalized as an appendage of the very system whose structure and methods it professes to oppose," or it can follow the minority tradition. The minority tradition focuses on personal growth within a small community and selects a path to cultivating ecological consciousness while protecting the ecological integrity of the place.[3]

A critique of reform environmental approaches is presented by Peter Berg:

> Classic environmentalism has bred a peculiar negative political malaise among its adherents. Alerted to fresh horrors almost daily, they research the extent of each new life-threatening situation, rush to protest it, and campaign exhaustively to prevent a future occurrence. It's a valuable service, of course, but imagine a hospital that consists only of an emergency room. No maternity care, no pediatric clinic, no promising therapy: just mangled trauma cases. Many of them are lost or drag on in wilting protraction, and if a few are saved there are always more than can be handled jamming through the door. Rescuing the environment has become like running a battlefield aid station in a war against a killing machine that operates just beyond reach, and that shifts its ground after each seeming defeat. No one can doubt the moral basis of environmentalism, but the essentially defensive terms of its endless struggle mitigate against ever stopping the slaughter. Environmentalists

have found themselves in the position of knowing how bad things are but are only capable of making a deal.

Why hasn't there been a more positive political approach to valuing the earth and reverencing life? One reason is that shocked bewilderment at the massive failures of Late Industrial society are mounting. Our optimistic attempts to carry out beneficial activities and our deliberate hope for the future seem always subject to instant miniaturization by the next Late Industrial avalanche.

Murray Bookchin, in an open letter to the ecology movement published on Earth Day, 1980, was explicitly critical of the move toward professionalizing the environmental movement. Bookchin concludes:

> It is necessary, I believe, for everyone in the ecology movement to make a crucial decision; will the eighties retain the visionary concept of an ecological future based on a libertarian (anarchist) commitment to decentralization, alternative technology and a libertarian practice based on affinity groups, direct democracy, and direct action? Or will the decade be marked by a dismal retreat into ideological obscurantism and a "mainstream politics" that acquires "power" and "effectiveness" by following the very "stream" it should be seeking to divert? Will it pursue fictitious "mass constituencies" by imitating the very forms of mass manipulation, mass media, mass culture it is committed to oppose? These two directions cannot be reconciled. Our use of "media," mobilizations, and actions must appeal to mind and to spirit, not to conditioned reflexes and shock tactics that leave no room for reason and humanity. In any case, the choice must be made now before the ecology movement becomes institutionalized into a mere appendage of the very system whose structure and methods it professes to oppose. It must be made consciously and decisively—or the century itself, and not only the decade, will be lost to us forever.

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2. Tactics of the "New Right" or "Moral Majority"

A second scenario for the environmental movement would be to copy the political tactics of the New Right or Moral Majority. The technology of professionally managed political campaigns, both for issues and candidates for political office, has developed into a sophisticated combination of what twentieth-century British writer George Orwell called "newspeak" and "targeting" segments of the mass public for direct mailing appeals, television and radio advertisements, and promotions playing on the fears, insecurities and the paranoid aspect of the American character. In an anomic society where the only goal

is winning, these campaigns can create momentum to gain political power.

Some environmental groups are attempting to form a bloc of environmental voters through political education campaigns. The League of Conservation Voters, the Sierra Club, and the Political Action Committees (PACs) of Friends of the Earth and other groups are explicitly directed to countering the PACs of corporations.

But even though surveys and polls indicate that public opinion in the United States in the 1980s is still strongly in favor of clear air and clean water acts and against opening up wilderness areas for mineral, oil and gas explorations, public opinion is fickle, shallow, and susceptible to manipulation. While deep ecology is explicitly critical of many elements of the modern perspective, some supporters of the movement argue that it is sometimes tactically wise to use the themes of nationalism or energy security to win political campaigns.

However, if the environmental movement moves toward even more professionally run political campaigns and slick advertisements, it could further centralize the leadership of the movement and make it harder for small groups of "radical amateurs" to play meaningful roles in revitalizing the movement or in leading campaigns. Professional leadership in centralized organizations could cut at the roots of volunteerism and could reinforce the trend toward ruling organizations by experts and bureaucracy, and the trend to mass politics.

3. New Age/Aquarian Conspiracy

A third scenario would be that the environmental/ecology movement would be coopted and incorporated into the New Age/Aquarian Conspiracy, which views the Earth as primarily a resource for human use. The popularity of Jesuit scholar Pierre Teilhard de Chardin and technologist R. Buckminster Fuller is testimony to the continuing appeal of anthropocentrism (human-centeredness) and to a teleological vision of humans as God's chosen instruments of progress and evolution.

Teilhard is criticized in our discussion of the management of natural resources, but he is an inspiration for many people in industries such as genetic engineering, computer technology, and mass media. California's famed Silicon Valley south of San Francisco has thousands of liberal, articulate, upscale, youngish professionals who are "turned on" by high technology, visions of human colonies on Mars, space travel, and humans as copilots of "spaceship Earth."

Ecologist James Lovelock, in *Gaia: A New Look at Life on Earth,* states the New Age vision: "In a Gaian world our species with its technology is simply an inevitable part of the natural scene. Yet our relationship with our technology releases ever-increasing amounts of energy and provides us with a similarly increasing capacity to channel and process information. Cybernetics tells us that we might safely pass through these turbulent times if our skills in handling information develop faster than our capacity to produce more energy. In other words, if we can always control the genie we have let out of the bottle."[4]

Many New Age thinkers conclude that humans' role as partner with Earth's natural processes "need not be vile" but coequal.[5] The ultimate New Age fantasy is the metaphor of the spaceship Earth. Humans from spaceship Earth will move to totally man-made and manipulated spaceships carrying colonies of humans to Mars, and the expert—the technologist—will be the hero.

4. Revised Libertarian

A fourth scenario for the environmental/ecology movement would be a libertarian approach. Resource economist John Baden and biologist Garrett Hardin have worked for some years defining what they call a "rational foundation" for conservation. For them, this means clarifying property "rights" to overcome the "tragedy of the commons." The carrying capacity of a parcel of land is the amount of crops, sheep, timber, etc., that can be grown on an area for many generations without diminishing the capacity of the area to yield more natural resources. When people hold land in common, each seeks to maximize short-term gain at the expense of the commons.

If environmental groups, such as the Sierra Club, Audubon Society, and Nature Conservancy, want to hold lands as property and use those parcels for preservation of biological diversity, then that is their choice. They will undoubtedly forego developing the lands for increased income, such as building shopping centers. But they would be legitimate property owners making "rational decisions" based on their subjective value preferences.

As an example of this strategy, Baden frequently cites the Audubon Society, which owns lands in several areas of the United States as "wildlife sanctuaries," but allows oil and gas extraction and cattle grazing on some of the lands in order to generate income for the organization.

In preserving wilderness on public lands, Baden asserts "the self-interest of wilderness advocates imposes a cost on the rest of society.

On the other hand, if miners prevail, they frequently destroy wilderness values, again without compensation to the rest of society." Baden continues: "What we propose is that lands presently included in the wilderness system be put into the hands of qualified environmental groups such as the Sierra Club, the Audubon Society, and the Wilderness Society in exchange for (1) their agreement that in the future no wilderness areas be established by political fiat and (2) either their development of the acquired land (according to their own rules) or their clean-up of an environmentally degraded area be equal in size to the wilderness area acquired. The result would be that these areas, vast portions of which are currently closed to all mining activity, would be managed by groups with the expertise to weigh potential damage to the ecology against potential profits."[6]

The strategy is appealing to the environmental movement during an era of renewed devotion in America to the free enterprise system and an era in which government regulations are criticized as interfering with private property rights. The danger for environmental groups in accepting Baden's proposal is that the larger issues of deep ecology are not addressed. The Revisionist Libertarian approach would tie environmental groups more firmly to the existing version of what we call the Resource Conservation and Development ideology, which is human-centered.

II. DEEP ECOLOGY AND CULTIVATING ECOLOGICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

In contrast to the preceding scenarios, deep ecology presents a powerful alternative.

Deep ecology is emerging as a way of developing a new balance and harmony between individuals, communities and all of Nature. It can potentially satisfy our deepest yearnings: faith and trust in our most basic intuitions; courage to take direct action; joyous confidence to dance with the sensuous harmonies discovered through spontaneous, playful intercourse with the rhythms of our bodies, the rhythms of flowing water, changes in the weather and seasons, and the overall processes of life on Earth. We invite you to explore the vision that deep ecology offers.

The deep ecology movement involves working on ourselves, what poet-philosopher Gary Snyder calls "the real work," the work of really looking at ourselves, of becoming more real.

This is the work we call cultivating ecological consciousness. This process involves becoming more aware of the actuality of rocks, wolves, trees, and rivers—the cultivation of the insight that everything is connected. Cultivating ecological consciousness is a process of learning to appreciate silence and solitude and rediscovering how to listen. It is learning how to be more receptive, trusting, holistic in perception, and is grounded in a vision of nonexploitive science and technology.

This process involves being honest with ourselves and seeking clarity in our intuitions, then acting from clear principles. It results in taking charge of our actions, taking responsibility, practicing self-discipline and working honestly within our community. It is simple but not easy work. Henry David Thoreau, nineteenth-century naturalist and writer, admonishes us, "Let your life be a friction against the machine."

Cultivating ecological consciousness is correlated with the cultivation of conscience. Cultural historian Theodore Roszak suggests in *Person/Planet* (1978), "Conscience and consciousness, how instructive the overlapping similarity of those two words is. From the new consciousness we are gaining of ourselves as persons perhaps we will yet create a new conscience, one whose ethical sensitivity is at least tuned to a significant good, a significant evil."[7]

We believe that humans have a vital need to cultivate ecological consciousness and that this need is related to the needs of the planet. At the same time, humans need direct contact with untrammeled wilderness, places undomesticated for narrow human purposes.

Many people sense the needs of the planet and the need for wilderness preservation. But they often feel depressed or angry, impotent and under stress. They feel they must rely on "the other guy," the "experts." Even in the environmental movement, many people feel that only the professional staff of these organizations can make decisions because they are experts on some technical scientific matters or experts on the complex, convoluted political process. But we need not be technical experts in order to cultivate ecological consciousness. Cultivating ecological consciousness, as Thoreau said, requires that "we front up to the facts and determine to live our lives deliberately, or not at all." We believe that people can clarify their own intuitions, and act from deep principles.

Deep ecology is a process of ever-deeper questioning of ourselves, the assumptions of the dominant worldview in our culture, and the meaning and truth of our reality. We cannot change consciousness

by only listening to others, we must involve ourselves. We must take direct action.

Organizations which work only in a conventional way on political issues and only in conventional politics will more or less unavoidably neglect the deepest philosophical-spiritual issues. But late industrial society is at a turning point, and the social and personal changes which are necessary may be aided by the flow of history.

One hopeful political movement with deep ecology as a base is the West German Green political party. They have as their slogan, "We are neither left nor right, we are in front." Green politics in West Germany, and to some extent in Great Britain, Belgium and Australia in the 1980s, goes beyond the conventional, liberal definition of a party, combining personal work (that is, work on clarifying one's own character) and political activism. In West Germany, especially, the Green party has sought a coalition with antinuclear weapons protesters, feminists, human rights advocates and environmentalists concerned with acid rain and other pollution in Europe.[8] Ecology is the first pillar of the German Greens' platform.

In Australia, the Greens are the most important political movement in the nation. In national and state elections in the early 1980s they were a deciding factor in electing Labor Party governments dedicated to some of the planks of the Green platform, including preserving wilderness national parks and rain forests.

The Greens present a promising political strategy because they encourage the cultivation of personal ecological consciousness as well as address issues of public policy. If the Greens propogate the biocentric perspective—the inherent worth of other species besides humans—then they can help change the current view which says we should use Nature only to serve narrow human interests. (The Green political platform is presented in more detail in chapter two.)

Alan Watts, who worked diligently to bring Eastern traditions to Western minds, used a very ancient image for this process, "invitation to the dance," and suggests that "the ways of liberation make it very clear that life is not going anywhere, because it is already *there*. In other words, it is playing, and those who do not play with it, have simply missed the point."[9]

Watts draws upon the Taoist sages, Sufi stories, zen, and the psychology of Carl Jung to demonstrate the process of spontaneous understanding. It is recognized, however, that to say "you must be spontaneous" is to continue the massive double-bind that grips consciousness in the modern ethos.

The trick is to trick ourselves into reenchantment. As Watts says, "In the life of spontaneity, human consciousness shifts from the attitude of strained, willful attention to *koan,* the attitude of open attention or contemplation." This is a key element in developing ecological consciousness. This attitude forms the basis of a more "feminine" and receptive approach to love, an attitude which for that very reason is more considerate of women.[10]

In some Eastern traditions, the student is presented with a *koan,* a simple story or statement which may sound paradoxical or nonsensical on the surface but as the student turns and turns it in his or her mind, authentic understanding emerges. This direct action of turning and turning, seeing from different perspectives and from different depths, is required for the cultivation of consciousness. The *koan*-like phrase for deep ecology, suggested by prominent Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess, is: "simple in means, rich in ends."

Cultivating ecological consciousness based on this phrase requires the interior work of which we have been speaking, but also a radically different tempo of external actions, at least radically different from that experienced by millions and millions of people living "life in the fast lane" in contemporary metropolises. As Theodore Roszak concludes, "Things move slower; they stabilize at a simpler level. But none of this is experienced as a loss or a sacrifice. Instead, it is seen as a liberation from waste and busywork, from excessive appetite and anxious competition that allows one to get on with the essential business of life, which is to work out one's salvation with diligence."[11]

But I believe nevertheless that you will not have to remain without a solution if you will hold to objects that are similar to those from which my eyes now draw refreshment. If you will cling to Nature, to the simple in Nature, to the little things that hardly anyone sees, and that can so unexpectedly become big and beyond measuring; if you have this love of inconsiderable things and seek quite simply, as one who serves, to win the confidence of what seems poor: then everything will become easier, more coherent and somehow more conciliatory for you, not in your intellect, perhaps, which lags marveling behind, but in your inmost consciousness, waking and cognizance. . . . Be patient toward all that is unsolved in your heart and to try to love the *questions themselves* like locked rooms and like books that are written in a very foreign tongue. Do not now seek the answers, which cannot be given you because you would not be able to live them. And the point is, to live everything. *Live*

the questions now. Perhaps you will then gradually, without noticing it, live along some distant day into the answer.

—Rainer Maria Rilke, *Letters to a Young Poet* (1963)

Quiet people, those working on the "real work," quite literally turn down the volume of noise in their lives. Gary Snyder suggests that, "The real work is what we really do. And what our lives are. And if we can live the work we have to do, knowing that we are real, and that the world is real, then it becomes right. And that's the real work: to make the world as real as it is and to find ourselves as real as we are within it."[12]

Engaging in this process, Arne Naess concludes, people ". . . will necessarily come to the conclusion that it is not lack of energy consumption that makes them unhappy."[13]

One metaphor for what we are talking about is found in the Eastern Taoist image, the *organic self.* Taoism tells us there is a way of unfolding which is inherent in all things. In the natural social order, people refrain from dominating others. Indeed, the ironic truth is that the more one attempts to control other people and control nonhuman Nature, the more disorder results, and the greater the degree of chaos. For the Taoist, spontaneity is not the opposite of order but identical with it because it flows from the unfolding of the inherent order. Life is not narrow, mean, brutish and destructive. People do not engage in the seemingly inevitable conflict over scarce material goods. People have fewer desires and simple pleasures. In Taoism, the law is not required for justice; rather, the community of persons working for universal self-realization follows the flow of energy.[14]

To study the Way is to study the self.
To study the self is to forget the self.
To forget the self is to be enlightened
by all things.
To be enlightened by all
things is to remove the
barriers between one's self
and others.
—Dōgen

As with many other Eastern traditions, the Taoist way of life is based on compassion, respect, and love for all things. This compassion arises from self-love, but self as part of the larger *Self,* not egotistical self-love.

SONG OF THE TASTE

Eating the living germs of grasses
Eating the ova of large birds

the fleshy sweetness packed
around the sperm of swaying trees

The muscles of the flanks and thighs of
soft-voiced cows
the bounce in the lamb's leap
the swish in the ox's tail

Eating roots grown swoll
inside the soil

Drawing on life of living
clustered points of light spun
out of space
hidden in the grape.

Eating each other's seed
eating
ah, each other.

Kissing the lover in the mouth of bread:
lip to lip.

—*Gary Snyder in* Regarding Wave (1970)

ON "SONG OF THE TASTE"

The primary ethical teaching of all times and places is "cause no unnecessary harm." The Hindus, Jains, and Buddhists use the Sanskrit term *"ahimsa,"* "non-harming." They commonly interpret this to mean "don't take life" with varying degrees of latitude allowed for special situations. In the Eastern traditions "cause no unnecessary harm" is the precept behind vegetarianism.

Non-vegetarians too try to understand and practice the teaching of "non-harming." People who live entirely by hunting, such as the Eskimo, know that taking life is an act requiring a spirit of gratitude and care,

and rigorous mindfulness. They say "all our food is souls." Plants are alive, too. All of nature is a gift-exchange, a potluck banquet, and there is no death that is not somebody's food, no life that is not somebody's death.

Is this a flaw in the universe? A sign of a sullied condition of being? "Nature red in tooth and claw?" Some people read it this way, leading to a disgust with self, with humanity, and with life itself. They are on the wrong fork of the path. Otherworldly philosophies end up doing more damage to the planet (and human psyches) than the existential conditions they seek to transcend.

So again to the beginning. We all take life to live. Weston LaBarre says, "The first religion is to kill god and eat him" or her. The shimmering food-chain, food-web, is the scary, beautiful condition of the biosphere. Non-harming must be understood as an approach to all of living and being, not just a one-dimensional moral injunction. Eating is truly a sacrament.

How to accomplish this? We can start by saying Grace. Grace is the first and last poem, the few words we say to clear our hearts and teach the children and welcome the guest, all at the same time. To say a good grace you must be conscious of what you're doing, not guilt-ridden and evasive. So we look at the nature of eggs, apples, and oxtail ragoût. What we see is plenitude, even excess, a great sexual exuberance. Millions of grains of grass-seed to become flour, millions of codfish fry that will never—and *must* never—grow to maturity: sacrifices to the food-chain. And if we eat meat it is the life, the bounce, the swish, that we eat, let us not deceive ourselves. Americans should know that cows stand up to their hocks in feed-lot manure, waiting to be transported to their table, that virgin forests in the Amazon are clear-cut to make pasture to raise beef for the American market. Even a root in the ground is a marvel of living chemistry, making sugars and flavors from earth, air, water.

Looking closer at this world of one-ness, we see all these beings as of our own flesh, as our children, our lovers. We see ourselves too as an offering to the continuation of life.

This is strong stuff. Such truth is not easy. But hang on: if we eat each other, is it not a giant act of love we live within? Christ's blood and body becomes clear: The bread blesses you, as you bless it.

So at our house we say a Buddhist verse of Grace:

"We venerate the Three Treasures"
(Buddha, Dharma, Sangha)
"And are thankful for this meal
The work of many people
And the sharing of other forms of life."

Anyone can use a grace from their tradition, if they have one, and infuse it with deeper feeling and understanding, or make up their own, from the heart. But saying Grace is not fashionable in much of America now, and often even when said is mechanical and flat, with no sense of the deep chasm that lies under the dining table. My poem "Song of the

Taste" is a grace for graces, a model for anyone's thought, verse, song, on "the meal" that the fortunate ones on earth partake of three times a day.
—Gary Snyder (Unpublished, 1983)

Cultivating ecological consciousness in contemporary societies, however, is a two-edged sword. We must not be misled by our zeal for change so that we are concerned only with the narrow self or ego. If we seek only personal redemption we could become solitary ecological saints among the masses of those we might classify as "sinners" who continue to pollute. Change in persons requires a change in culture and vice versa. We cannot ignore the personal arena nor the social, for our project is to enhance harmony with each other, the planet and ourselves.

The type of community most conducive to this cultivation of ecological consciousness is what we call in this book the minority tradition. In the next chapter we outline some of the major aspects of this tradition.

RECOVERING OUR ROOTS
From Tao Te Ching

Reach for the higher
Desert places of your self
All calm and clear

And see
Now all things rise
To flourish and return,
Each creature coming home
To recover its roots.

Recovering the root
Means just this:
The dynamics of peace—
Being recalled to our common fate
In the kinship of all creation.

Knowing this eternal truth
One sees all things with
Extraordinary clarity—
Eternity's radiant light.

Blind to this truth
Leaders sow the seeds of
Reckless deed and their
Evil fruits.

But when rulers plant
By this constant star
They embrace the world
And serve it fairly,
Guiding the world
On the celestial path,
And pass death's gate
On the everlasting way.

—Translated by Tom Early

CHAPTER 2

THE MINORITY TRADITION AND DIRECT ACTION

The notion that man is destined to dominate nature is by no means a universal feature of human culture. If anything, this notion is almost completely alien to the outlook of so-called primitive or preliterate communities. I cannot emphasize too strongly that the concept emerged very gradually from a broader social development: the increasing domination of human by human. Perhaps only by examining the attitudes of certain preliterate peoples can we gauge the extent to which domination shapes the most intimate thoughts and the most minute actions of the individual today.

—*Murray Bookchin,* The Ecology of Freedom (1982)[1]

The ideally nonviolent state will be an ordered anarchy.

—*Gandhi*

The type of community most compatible, in our estimation, with engaging in the "real work" of cultivating ecological consciousness is found in the minority tradition. There is a minority, but persistent tradition in Western politics and social philosophy. It is also a tradition found in many other cultures and historical eras, including Native American cultures, and Eastern traditions including Taoism and some Buddhist communities. In the West, it is found in numerous revolts of people seeking local autonomy from centralized state authority. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries this tradition erupted in such events as the Paris Commune of 1871 and the numerous utopian communities founded in the United States. In the twentieth century it is seen in the persistence of New England town meeting traditions, in older communities in New York and Chicago and among the anarchists in Spain during the 1930s.

Leading theorists of this tradition in Western thought include Peter Kropotkin *(Mutual Aid)* in the nineteenth century and Murray Bookchin *(Post-Scarcity Anarchism* and *The Ecology of Freedom)* from 1950 on.

In some forms, this tradition is expressed by such diverse individuals as Thomas Jefferson, Henry Thoreau, Walt Whitman, Woody Guthrie and Carl Sandburg, as well as Paul Goodman, and in the novels of Ursula LeGuin and many others.

The central elements of this tradition as contrasted with the elements of the dominant form of community in technocratic-industrial societies are summarized in figure 2-1.

Figure 2-1

Dominant Position	*Minority Tradition*
Centralized authority	Decentralized; nonhierarchical; democratic
Bureaucratized	Small-scale community
Police	Local autonomy
Individualism (radical subjectivism or "deluxe nihilism")	Self-responsibility
Leadership by holding instruments of violence (such as police)	Leadership by example ("not leading")
Competitive	Helping others; mutual aid; communalism

Frequent encouragement to "produce more, consume more"	Simplicity of "wants"
More government regulation	Self-regulation; nonviolent in a "professional" way
Secular authority	Respect spiritual-religious mentors
Churches monopolize religious ritual	Community fully participates in rituals
Tends toward monoply of ideology whether religious or secular	Tolerance of variety of approaches to being (religious experiences)
Nature perceived as "data" or as "natural resources"	More open communication with Nature
Narrow definition of citizenship; all other inhabitants of place are slaves or disenfranchised	Broader definition of community (including animals, plants); intuition of organic wholeness

The minority tradition, as defined in this book, should not be confused with the advocacy of chaos or unrestrained individualism. It does not mean a lack of authority, but a lack of centralized authority relying on large forces of police or military to keep power over restless local communities. Nor does the minority tradition as used in this book mean a lack of control by individuals or a lack of clear thinking. It is not radical subjectivism whereby people claim "that's only your opinion."

The essence of the minority tradition is a self-regulating community. Anthropology provides abundant evidence from primal societies that authority need not be hierarchical and centralized. The "chief" was frequently noncoercive, primarily a ritual ruler and specific in dealing with members of the community.

Pierre Clastres concludes in *Society Against the State* that: "One is confronted, then, by a vast constellation of societies in which the holders of what elsewhere would be called power are actually without power; where the political is determined by a domain beyond coercion and violence, beyond hierarchical subordination; where, in a word, no relation of command-obedience is in force."[2]

Theodore Roszak in *Person/Planet* points to many examples of this persistent tradition in the United States. One is the revival of the household economy with groups of people (not always related by kinship or marriage) engaging in the process of raising some of their own food,

practicing some spiritual tradition together, and working on projects such as energy self-reliance and conservation.

Other examples include the existence of trade and bargain, small communal farms, monistic groups, and the continuing attempts to scale down the size of institutions, organizations and industries.

Primal societies (usually called *preliterate* or *primitive* by anthropologists) provide numerous examples of what we call the minority tradition. Stanley Diamond, in his review of the crisis of the Western world in contrast to the balance of primal societies, concluded that small-scale, local communities provided both for the vital needs of the individual and the vital need to sustain the community of humans in Nature.[3]

Jack Forbes, using northern California tribes as his reference, points out the critical difference between white invaders and Native Americans:

Native Californians . . . felt themselves to be something other than independent, autonomous individuals. They perceived themselves as being deeply bound together with other people (and with the surrounding non-human forms of life) in a complex interconnected web of life, that is to say, a true community. All creatures and things were . . . brothers and sisters. From this idea came the basic principle of non-exploitation, of respect and reverence for all creatures, a principle extremely hostile to the kind of economic development typical of modern society and destructive of human morals. It is this principle, I suspect, which more than anything else preserved California in its *natural* state for 15,000 years, and it is the steady violation of this principle which, in a century and a half, has brought California to the verge of destruction.[4]

Stanley Diamond in *In Search of the Primitive* suggests that primal societies are characterized by individuation, personalism, nominalism, and existentialism. These continuously reinforce each other and they are fully consonant with the social structure.

1. Existentialism is evident in 1) ritual expression of primary needs of the person in nature and society, 2) emphasis on existence rather than essence, 3) the responsibility of the individual to self and society, and 4) the lack of concern for analytic modes of thought.

2. Personalism is revealed in 1) the web of kinship, 2) organic community, and 3) apprehension of consciousness THROUGHOUT SOCIETY AND NATURE.

3. Nominalism is focused in 1) emphasis on concrete particulars and contexts, 2) naming of existents in nature and society, in dream and reality, 3) in the fact that ideas were not typically reified.

4. Individuation is nurtured by 1) full and manifold participation of individuals IN NATURE AND SOCIETY, 2) the intensely personal socialization process through which individual qualities are delineated, and 3) the expression of society in person and person in society.

[In contemporary cultures, Diamond says] Our pathology consists in our dedication to abstractions, to our collectivism, pseudo-individualism, and lack of institutional means for the expression and transcendence of human ambivalence. . . . Our illness springs from the very center of civilization, not from too much knowledge, but from too little wisdom. . . .

In machine-based societies, the machine has incorporated the demands of the civil power or of the market, and the whole life of society, of all classes and grades, must adjust to its rhythms. Time becomes lineal, secularized, "precious," it is reduced to an extensior in space that must be filled up, and sacred time disappears. . . .

Primitive society may be regarded as a system in equilibrium, spinning kaleidoscopically on its axis but at a relatively fixed point. Civilization may be regarded as a system in internal disequilibrium; technology or ideology or social organization are always out of joint with each other—that is what propels the system along a given track. Our sense of movement, of incompleteness, contributes to the idea of progress. Hence, the idea of progress is generic to civilization. And our idea of primitive society as existing in a state of dynamic equilibrium and as expressive of human and natural rhythms is a logical projection of civilized societies and is in opposition to civilization's actual state. . . . The longing for a primitive mode of existence is no mere fantasy or sentimental whim, it is consonant with fundamental human needs.

I. A NATURAL WAY TO ORGANIZE: BIOREGION

In an age in which government agencies and some economists talk of the "world system of economy" and military uses of outer space, it is deeply conservative to turn attention to our bioregions. Our bioregion is the best place to begin cultivating ecological consciousness.

The notion of bioregion is hardly new. Jim Dodge, a sheep rancher living in Western Sonoma County, California, says, "It has been the animating cultural principle through ninety-nine percent of human history and is at least as old as consciousness."[5]

Dodge states that the central element of bioregion is the importance given to natural systems "both as the source of physical nutrition and as the body of metaphors from which our spirits draw sustenance. To understand natural systems is to begin an understanding of the self."

A second element of bioregion is self-regulation. As Dodge says, "anarchy doesn't mean out of control; it means out of their control." Local communities inspired by a shared concern for the bioregion, for "letting be" the plants and native animals of that place, can make decisions concerning individual and communal actions which respect the integrity of natural processes in that place. Caring for a place means avoiding exploitation.

"A third element composing the bioregional notion is spirit," Dodge explains. There is no single religious practice for this sense of bioregional spirit. It can be Christian, Buddhist, Native American or others; based on deep ecological insights, it can be expressed in numerous ways.

Jim Dodge and his associates have developed a questionnaire in figure 2-2, "Where You At?"[6] Answering these questions is an excellent way to begin cultivating a sense of place and ecological consciousness.

Figure 2-2

WHERE YOU AT?

What follows is a self-scoring test on basic environmental perception of place. Scoring is done on the honor system, so if you fudge, cheat, or elude, you also get an idea of where you're at. The quiz is culture bound, favoring those people who live in the country over city dwellers, and scores can be adjusted accordingly. Most of the questions, however, are of such a basic nature that undue allowances are not necessary. This test was adapted from the version appearing in *CoEvolution,* no. 23 (Winter, 1981).

1. Trace the water you drink from precipitation to tap.
2. How many days until the moon is full (plus or minus a couple of days)?
3. Describe the soil around your home.
4. What were the primary subsistence techniques of the culture(s) that lived in your area before you?
5. Name five native edible plants in your bioregion and their season(s) of availability.
6. From what direction do winter storms generally come in your region?
7. Where does your garbage go?
8. How long is the growing season where you live?
9. On what day of the year are the shadows the shortest where you live?
10. Name five trees in your area. Are any of them native? If you can't name names, describe them.

11. Name five resident and any migratory birds in your area.
12. What is the land use history by humans in your bioregion during the past century?
13. What primary geological event/process influenced the land form where you live?
14. What species have become extinct in your area?
15. What are the major plant associations in your region?
16. From where you are reading this, point north.
17. What spring wildflower is consistently among the first to bloom where you live?
18. What kinds of rocks and minerals are found in your bioregion?
19. Were the stars out last night?
20. Name some beings (nonhuman) which share your place.
21. Do you celebrate the turning of the summer and winter solstice? If so, how do you celebrate?
22. How many people live next door to you? What are their names?
23. How much gasoline do you use a week, on the average?
24. What energy costs you the most money? What kind of energy is it?
25. What developed and potential energy resources are in your area?
26. What plans are there for massive development of energy or mineral resources in your bioregion?
27. What is the largest wilderness area in your bioregion?

In California, the people of the Shasta Nation, Turtle Island, have developed some criteria for practicing bioregional politics. The Shasta Nation is a bioregion encompassing all of northern California and part of southern Oregon from Big Sur on the south to the Rogue River on the north. Their suggestions are presented in figure 2-3.

Figure 2-3

Some Criteria for the Consciousness and Practice of Bioregional Politics

1. What is your definition of the region? Watershed, biotic province, geological history, land-form characteristics, climate zone. Original and potential vegetation, fauna, soils?
2. Who are indigenous peoples, early settlers, their unique inhabitory skills and understandings? What is their present situation in the region?
3. What is the present condition of nature in the region: what has been

destroyed, or lost? Build an inventory of priorities in rebuilding soils and reestablishing certain flora and fauna, in consultation where possible with both scientists and indigenous teachers.

4. What are necessary long-range economics of the area in terms of a high-cost energy future? What would be a sustainable economic base? What sort and how much trade could be done with neighboring areas? What is the probable human carrying capacity of the region?

5. As a new "bioregional nation," what would the probable boundaries be? What sort of government would be wanted, instructed by biotic and local sociological consideration? What steps must be taken to correct injustices to indigenous people and early settlers and to guarantee their proper political and economic role in the nation?

6. What role would this bioregional nation play in relation to its nearest neighbors in culture, politics, trade? What on a planetary scale?

7. What spiritual and social disciplines are required for continued habitation of the region: How must people adapt to live well but also in the company of all other beings who are part of that zone? Lessons from biology and ecology. Lessons from the nature-sensitive philosophies of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Taoism. Lessons especially from the mythologies, songs, stories, and teachings of the indigenous peoples.

Even in large cities, a sense of place can be recultivated. For example, Nancy Morita's project in San Francisco, "Wild in the City," sponsored by Planet Drum, is attempting to uncover information on the geology, native plants, animals and land forms buried under the mass of concrete that forms the modern image of the city. And Malcolm Margolin's *The Ohlone Way: Indian Life in the San Francisco-Monterey Bay Area* (1978) has helped thousands of readers see the complex ecosystem of San Francisco Bay in the new, but very old, way of hunter-gatherers.

Local bioregional magazines are now published in many parts of North America, but better still, you can start your own magazine by drawing from your knowledge and the wisdom of "old timers" in your bioregion.

II. SUGGESTIONS FOR PERSONAL DIRECT ACTION

In the concluding section of this chapter we suggest some specific types of direct action. Some are directed to the process of cultivating ecological consciousness, others are actions within the political arena,

working in organizations promoting wise use of natural resources or preservation of habitat for plants and animals.

Byron Kennard, whose book on the zen of social activism, *Nothing Can Be Done, Everything Is Possible* (1982), inspired the title of chapter one, suggests that many of our actions can be celebrations and affirmations. Earth Day 1970, for example, was a "happening, that even many politicians felt obligated to engage in their busy schedules."[7] Earth Day brought together in many cities over 100,000 people to affirm their hope for the maintenance of Earth's integrity.

A simple celebration is to express oneself artistically through painting, writing poems, etc., in a relatively untrammeled landscape or by a stream (perhaps polluted but still flowing) in one's neighborhood. Reading the poetry of some of the poets of place, including Gary Snyder and Robinson Jeffers, to a group of friends can revive the oral tradition.

Certain forms of yoga and breathing exercises, nonegotistical mountain climbing, and other integrative activities are also aspects of direct action.

SMOKEY THE BEAR SUTRA

Once in the Jurassic, about 150 million years ago, the Great Sun Buddha in this corner of the Infinite Void gave a great Discourse to all the assembled elements and energies: to the standing beings, the walking beings, the flying beings, and the sitting beings—even grasses, to the number of thirteen billion, each one born from a seed, were assembled there: a Discourse concerning Enlightenment on the planet Earth.

"In some future time, there will be a continent called America. It will have great centers of power called such as Pyramid Lake, Walden Pond, Mt. Rainier, Big Sur, Everglades, and so forth; and powerful nerves and channels such as Columbia River, Mississippi River, and Grand Canyon. The human race in that era will get into troubles all over its head, and practically wreck everything in spite of its own strong intelligent Buddha-nature."

"The twisting strata of the great mountains and the pulsings of great volcanoes are my love burning deep in the earth. My obstinate compassion is schist and basalt and granite, to be mountains, to bring down the rain. In that future American Era I shall enter a new form: to cure the world of loveless knowledge that seeks with blind hunger; and mindless rage eating food that will not fill it."

And he showed himself in his true form of

SMOKEY THE BEAR.

A handsome smokey-colored brown bear standing on his hind legs, showing that he is aroused and watchful.

Bearing in his right paw the Shovel that digs to the truth beneath appearances; cuts the roots of useless attachments, and flings damp sand on the fires of greed and war;

His left paw in the Mudra of Comradely Display—indicating that all creatures have the full right to live to their limits and that deer, rabbits, chipmunks, snakes, dandelions, and lizards all grow in the realm of the Dharma;

Wearing the blue work overalls symbolic of slaves and laborers, the countless men oppressed by a civilization that claims to save but only destroys;

Wearing the broad-brimmed hat of the West, symbolic of the forces that guard the Wilderness, which is the Natural State of the Dharma and the True Path of man on earth; all true paths lead through mountains—

With a halo of smoke and flame behind, the forest fires of the kali-yuga, fires caused by the stupidity of those who think things can be gained and lost whereas in truth all is contained vast and free in the Blue Sky and Green Earth of One Mind;

Round-bellied to show his kind nature and that the great earth has food enough for everyone who loves her and trusts her;

Trampling underfoot wasteful freeways and needless suburbs; smashing the worms of capitalism and totalitarianism;

Indicating the Task: his followers, becoming free of cars, houses, canned food, universities, and shoes, master the Three Mysteries of their own Body, Speech and Mind; and fearlessly chop down the rotten trees and prune out the sick limbs of this country America and then burn the leftover trash.

Wrathful but Calm, Austere but Comic, Smokey the Bear will Illuminate those who would help him; but for those who would hinder or slander him,

HE WILL PUT THEM OUT.

Thus his great Mantra:

Namah samanta vajranam chanda maharoshana

Sphataya hum traka ham mam

"I DEDICATE MYSELF TO THE UNIVERSAL DIAMOND

BE THIS RAGING FURY DESTROYED"

And he will protect those who love woods and rivers, Gods and animals, hobos and madmen, prisoners and sick people, musicians, playful women, and hopeful children;

And if anyone is threatened by advertising, air pollution, or the police, they should chant SMOKEY THE BEAR'S WAR SPELL:

DROWN THEIR BUTTS

CRUSH THEIR BUTTS

DROWN THEIR BUTTS

CRUSH THEIR BUTTS

And SMOKEY THE BEAR will surely appear to put the enemy out with his vajra-shovel.

Now those who recite this Sutra and then try to put it in practice will accumulate merit as countless as the sands of Arizona and Nevada,

Will help save the planet Earth from total oil slick,

Will enter the age of harmony of man and nature,

Will win the tender love and caresses of men, women, and beasts

Will always have ripe blackberries to eat and a sunny spot under a pine tree to sit at,

AND IN THE END WILL WIN HIGHEST PERFECT ENLIGHTENMENT.

thus have we heard.

—Gary Snyder (1969)

A deeply conservative approach to direct action is the revival of Earth-bonding rituals, celebrating specific places. One function of ritual is to release energy, which we see in contemporary culture in such events as football games and rock music concerts. But these events are not harnessed to the other functions of ritual. On making a commitment to a ritual, a participant is enabled to *purify* in the oldest sense of the word, of clearing away anger and focusing on action.

Dolores LaChapelle, author of "Ritual Is Essential" (in appendix F of this book), *Earth Wisdom* (1978) and *Earth Festivals* (1976), provides an example of this type of direct action, which she uses at her Way of the Mountain Center at Silverton, Colorado (figure 2-4). This example is derived from the Taoist tradition, but such Earth rituals could be revived or derived from Christian and other traditions.

Figure 2-4

AUTUMN EQUINOX TAOIST CELEBRATION

Way of the Mountain Center, Silverton, Colorado

We learn from the inter-relationships of sky/rock/water/trees in the same manner as the ancient Taoist masters learned. Taoism is not a religion but a "way of looking" which allows us to step back into the flow of the universe. Taoism developed out of the Warring States period in China when certain "intellectuals" chose not to stay at the courts of the warring feudal lords but to withdraw into the mountains to meditate on the Order of Nature. They felt that human nature could never be brought into order until there was some understanding of the way of Nature because human society was only a small pattern within the whole of Nature.

We, too, can make the same discovery as the Taoist master:

"I did not *find* but suddenly realised that I had never lost the Way. Those crimson dawn clouds, that shining noonday light, the procession of the seasons, the waxing and waning of the moon—these are not majestic functions or auspicious symbols of what lies behind. They *are* the Tao."

We do as traditional peoples the world over have always done— ritually circle our sacred mountain. Each day we go out to view the sacred mountain from a different aspect, thus experiencing the yin and yang of the universe.

First day

* From a sunny south (yang) setting we become acquainted with the north (yin) face of our sacred mountain.
* We begin learning a short form of Tai Chi.
* Full moon autumn equinox ceremony.

Second day

"Who can break the snares of the world
And sit with me among the white clouds?"

* Hike up our "dragon mountain" to view natural bonsai trees and a hanging waterfall.
* Tai Chi on the "dragon mountain" while viewing the western face of the sacred mountain.
* Setting sun ceremony.

Third day

"The morning sun pops from the jaws of blue peaks;
Bright clouds are washed in green pond.
Who ever thought I would leave the dust world
And come bounding up the southern slope of Cold Mt."

* Hike up the third waterfall—site of a tea ceremony with the waterfall as "honored guest."
* View the sacred mountain's southern (yang) side from our northerly (yin) valley.
* Tai Chi.

Fourth day

* All day in the shimmering, golden aspen, followed by a ritual meal.

Some lifestyles contribute more to cultivating ecological consciousness than do others. *Voluntary simplicity* is a label for lifestyles that promote personhood and self-realization. Duane Elgin, in *Voluntary Simplicity,* provides many practical examples of outward simplicity and

inward richness. He shows how we can distinguish between *wants*—encouraged by mass-media advertising and the demands of our society that we "consume more" in order to keep the economy growing—and real, vital *needs.*[8] At an elementary level, he suggests criteria that touch on the issue of balanced consumption:

1. Does what I own or buy promote activity, self-reliance, and involvement, or does it induce passivity and dependence?
2. Are my consumption patterns basically satisfying or do I buy much that serves no real need?
3. How tied is my present job and lifestyle to installment payments, maintenance and repair costs, and the expectations of others?
4. Do I consider the impact of my consumption patterns on other people and on the Earth?

Another example of personal direct action is aikido, a practice developed in Japan by Morihei Uyeshiba, which helps integrate body and mind. *Ai* means harmony or coordination; *ki,* spirit or energy; *do,* the way or process of practicing. The authors of a major book on aikido conclude that all people, of whatever religious or philosophical belief, can benefit from practicing aikido: "The improved physical/mental health, the deeper understanding and awareness of the problems facing every person, the essential unity and identification of all persons, their integration with and necessity to one another, as well as a sense of 'belonging' to their times and their world—this is the potential that the theory and practice of the art of aikido can offer all persons, wherever they may be."[9]

III. DIRECT ACTION IN POLITICAL CONTEXTS

Besides personal actions, working in our own households, on wilderness trips with fellow seekers, and in our own lifestyles, many people work through and with reformist environmental organizations. We can change the conventional political process by using it for deeper purposes.

Advocates of deep ecology can work on large wilderness proposals, wilderness preservation on private lands, and public policy on pollution and land use. The best environmental reform can be encouraged by acting from the deep ecology principles discussed in chapter five.

1. Reform Legislation

In the United States, the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and various state acts, such as the California Environmental Quality

Act of 1970, provide requirements for legal environmental assessment. The Wilderness Act of 1964 provides a framework for legally designated wilderness. Environmental Impact Statements are available to the public for review and comment.

Many environmental groups have worked diligently to expose the hazards of nuclear wastes, pesticides, herbicides, and a variety of toxic wastes and have worked to implement regulations for forest practices, water and air quality, and range management.

Supporters of the deep ecology movement can strongly support enforcement of existing reform legislation and use of criminal sanctions against polluters. In Los Angeles, for example, an assistant attorney asked for jail sentences for corporate executives of polluting firms. Ira Reiner, commenting on his decision to bring criminal charges against corporate executives of polluting firms, said, "A burglar goes to jail, and if he only does ninety to a hundred days, that's a vacation for him. But the top executive officer of a business doesn't expect to go to the slammer. It puts the fear of God in them."[10]

Traffickers in prohibited importation of wildlife, poachers, and eagle killers have been successfully prosecuted. More will be prosecuted if citizens demand law and order for reform environmental laws as much as they do for crimes against persons.

Supporting large wilderness proposals is one of the most vital activities for interim protection of the biosphere. The tropical rain forests of Africa, Asia, Central and South America, Australia, and Oceania are threatened by social and economic factors. We strongly urge zoning the remaining world rain forests as wilderness where only small populations of humans can live engaged in nonexploitive ways, and where large-scale clear-cutting for timber, oil and mineral development, and conversion of forests to grazing lands is forbidden.

The entire continent of Antarctica should be zoned as wilderness. In the United States, tens of millions of acres should be zoned wilderness with rigid restrictions on industrial developments. In the United States, as well as in Africa, park police guard national parks and reserves from poachers, timber fellers, and vandals. Local populations can protect local wilderness areas with the same sense of caring as they protect public buildings and monuments. Earth First!, a movement developed in 1981 to defend wilderness and biological diversity, has presented feasible and defensible proposals for U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management areas in Oregon, California, and elsewhere.

Some environmental groups have started "adopt a wilderness or roadless area" programs whereby members visit an area frequently, get to know it intimately, and defend the area before legislative committees and public lands agencies who want to intensively manage the area. Many people cultivate a *sense of place.* For example, Gray Brechin, in the epilogue to the *Mono Lake Handbook,* speaks eloquently of the *spirit* of Mono Lake. The lake is connected to the migrations and reproduction of seagulls and other bird populations, but also to the vast urbanization of southern California through a series of dams and aqueducts. It is connected through time to the Pleistocene Ice Ages, and to the ever-increasing human population and per-capita consumption of natural resources in California. But it is also connected to the ecological consciousness of those who defend its integrity. There are many other places, such as the Colorado Plateau and Maine's Mt. Katahdin, which can bring about a sense of place.

If there are place spirits, Mono has one of the strongest I have ever encountered. It's easy to personify the lake; I sometimes wonder what it thinks as its millions of years of existence come to an abrupt end. I have thought of Mono as an old friend for so many years that it now looks to me like a prone patient being bled to death on an operating table, and I wonder if that great reservoir of experience dreams back to the groundbreakings and upthrust of the Sierra which gave it birth, to the icebergs and volcanic formations which have reflected on its surface in the recent past. Morbidly I wonder if it will stink when its prodigious life finally expires on the bone-white lakebed.

Whether Mono Lake has a consciousness will remain one of its mysteries. But Mono endows its friends with awareness, for we have all had to learn from it. Mono has taught us to see the world anew, to accept and perceive beauties we had been unaware of, and to ask questions whose answers may be far from simple or comfortable. On the solitude of its beaches, at dawn and at dusk, we have learned to listen and to watch and to live quietly with ourselves. But mostly, we have learned to live with other beings which we cannot use but whose mere presence enhances our daily existence.

Mono doesn't ask simple questions. It demands an examination of the inner and outer worlds which constitute human awareness. And that is why it is the best kind of friend, and that is why we cannot let it die.

—Gray Brechin, *The Mono Lake Handbook*

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2. *Coalitions*

Forming coalitions is another form of direct action. The peace movement and environmental/ecology movement share common concerns for public policy on weapons research and the threat of nuclear holocaust. Leaders of the peace movement have faced the psychological problem of nuclear threat and provided constructive suggestions, many of which are summarized in Joanna Rogers Macy's book, *Despair and Personal Power in the Nuclear Age* (1983). Workshops on empowering the individual, and direct action on specific issues can be jointly sponsored by peace groups, women's groups and environmental groups.

The peace movement and antinuclear movement provide excellent examples of engaging in the political process creatively. Use of affinity groups, decision-making by consensus and decentralized authority as exemplified by the Greens in West Germany illustrate that even within contemporary societies there are opportunities for direct action within the minority tradition.

3. *Protests*

People can engage in direct, nonviolent action in the form of protest. Protesters at the Livermore Atomic Laboratory and Diablo Canyon nuclear reactor, both in California, and the well-documented actions in Tasmania in the early 1980s to blockade the building of a dam provide examples of such creative action.

Other examples of direct action in defense of wilderness are provided by Earth First! In one creative action, Earth Firsters "cracked" the dam at Glen Canyon on the Colorado River as part of a traditional Fourth of July celebration of American wilderness. After a patriotic rally for the American heritage of wilderness, they unrolled a huge black plastic "crack" down the face of the dam in front of a horde of TV cameras.

In other actions, Earth First! blockaded the construction of a road contracted by the U.S. Forest Service to be built on the borders of a major wilderness area in southwestern Oregon. After weeks of blockade, the courts ordered a halt to construction, stating that the U.S. Forest Service had violated the law in attempting to build the road.

In March 1984, Earth First! sponsored a speaking tour in North America by Australian ecoactivist John Seed, who has done much to alert us to the damage currently being done to the world's remaining rain forests by multinational corporations and government agencies. In April 1984, Earth First! coordinated a nationwide day of protest

at a leading fast food chain, protesting the importation of beef from Central America raised on lands cleared of rain forest and converted into grasslands.

4. *Women's Movement*

In some aspects of the women's movement we are taught that social action is not abstract ideological sloganizing and posturing. Social action is personal, caring, individual action in the context of small groups.

The values that have been labeled "feminine"—love, compassion, receptivity, caring, cooperation, listening, patience, nurturing, deep feeling, affirmation, quiet statement—can guide us in our practice of creative direct action.

5. *Working in the Christian Tradition*

Some Christian groups in Norway encourage priests and ministers to address ecological issues or environmental controversies. Other Christians now recognize the need for a new natural theology for Christianity.

Those Christians who agree with the platform of deep ecology as stated in chapter five can do much to develop ideas within a Christian context, to justify preserving ecological diversity, designating large wilderness areas, limiting the growth of human populations, preserving the world's rain forests, and criticizing the destructive aspects of technology.

In America we still see many preachers arguing that the American government must develop a huge military to "fight godless Communism," but few preachers express deep ecology principles.

John Carmody, a Christian teacher and scholar, in *Ecology and Religion: Toward a New Christian Theology of Nature,* sketches some themes that might be incorporated into such a theology. These, he says, are signposts to a complete theology, but any such formal philosophy begins from "foundational attitudes proper to a converted Christian consciousness aware of today's ecological issues," and the biblical doctrines germane to a contemporary theology of Nature.[11]

Carmody has set the agenda for Christian scholars, theologians, preachers, and laypersons engaged in ecological social action. It is hoped that preachers in all Christian churches will rise to the crisis not with sermons on "the end of the world," but with sermons on the glorious fecundity of God's creation and our responsibility to

restrain human population growth, protect wild areas, and develop new bioregional ways of life.

In the face of the spiritual-ecological crisis, some Christians propose an Eleventh Commandment expressed in the spirit of the Scriptures which should be preached in every church of the land:

THE EARTH IS THE LORD'S AND THE FULLNESS THEREOF: THOU SHALL NOT DESPOIL THE EARTH, NOR DESTROY THE LIFE THEREON.

Vincent Rossi, leader of the Eleventh Commandment Fellowship, suggests in this essay some of the personal actions which Christians who accept the Eleventh Commandment might find important for their own lives:[12]

1. Make the Eleventh Commandment the foundation of your personal ethic of the environment.
2. Learn all you can about the ecological crisis so you will be able to make informed choices.
3. Become familiar with the many ecologically appropriate techniques, practices and devices that are being developed. Find ways to use them in your own life.
4. Examine your life. Begin to eliminate habits or activities that are destructive to the environment, no matter how slight. Begin to incorporate in your life activities and practices that are supportive to the environment, no matter how insignificant these may appear.
5. Know that what is healthy for the environment is healthy for you. What is not healthy for the environment, no matter what the short term gains may be, will ultimately threaten your own personal health, and the health of your children.
6. Study the lives and works of great naturalists, such as St. Francis of Assisi, Henry David Thoreau, and John Muir, to begin to appreciate the joy and spiritual fulfillment to be found in attuning yourself with nature.
7. Form environmental action associations, or the like, in order to raise the collective consciousness about the environment and to promote positive environmental action with a spiritual foundation.

Healing the environment must begin in our own personal lives. We must examine our own choices and actions. Do the choices we make each day support the forces that are destructive to the environment? If so, we must commit ourselves to changing our choices, our habits, one by one. Nothing is too small to be overlooked. Everything we do counts, as far as its effect on the environment is concerned. What we eat, what we wear, what we buy, what we do for work or pleasure, everything must be weighed in the environmental balance.

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6. Questioning Technology

Questioning technology is a process of direct action that anyone can develop, as a consumer, participating in public meetings, commenting on Environmental Impact Reports, in classrooms, with friends, and in religious groups. It is one of the most serious actions that can be taken in a technocratic society where the assumption that "technology will solve all problems" is so deeply held.

To question technology—as a system or as a specific device such as a certain type of vehicle or a computer—can often arouse hostility, defensiveness, irritation, and resentment in listeners. Anyone who questions technology can be branded a "Luddite" or antimodernist. A person who says "no" to any technological device is often charged as being antiprogressive. Yet it is crucial to question technology, in spite of these criticisms.

We need technology which is compatible with the growth of autonomous, self-determining individuals in nonhierarchical communities. We need principles that will help us escape the trap of technocratic society, where technology is the central institution.

Technology can be criticized and evaluated based on general principles, scale or structure. The following questions can be asked of any technological device or system:

1. Does this technological device serve vital needs?
2. Is this device or system of the sort that can be immediately understood by nonexperts?
3. Does it have a high degree of flexibility and mutability or does it impose a permanent, rigid, irreversible imprint on the lives of citizens?
4. Does this technological device or system foster greater autonomy of local communities or greater dependency on some centralized "authority"?
5. Is this device or system ecologically destructive or conducive to a deep ecology way of life?
6. Does this device or system enhance the individuality of persons or does it lead to bureaucratic hierarchies?
7. Does this device or system encourage people to behave and think like machines?

A fully informed, appropriate technology is a meeting ground of ethics, politics, mechanical understanding and deep ecological consciousness. As Langdon Winner concludes in *Autonomous Technology*, "If one lacks a clear and knowledgeable sense of what means

are appropriate to the circumstances at hand, one's choice of means can easily lead to excesses and danger." These means do not involve just narrow utility or efficiency of production or profit in some short-term calculation. Indeed, the narrow emphasis upon efficiency of means drives us away from the larger issues of environmental ethics and individual responsibility for the consequences of our actions.[13]

7. Working in Green Politics

If Green politics is to become a transforming politics, transforming personal consciousness and political systems, it must be something quite different from conventional political parties. Green parties are likely to be based in small affinity groups, with discussions based on platforms focusing on direct action and personal growth.

Two such platforms are presented in figures 2-5 and 2-6. The first is from the Japanese Greens, a group concerned with the task of turning Japanese culture away from the dominant technocratic mode of thinking. The second is from a California-based network of Greens.

Figure 2-5

PLATFORM OF THE JAPANESE GREEN PARTY

It is our opinion that modern civilization has abused the environment beyond the limit of its tolerance and we are facing a disastrous contradiction in all areas of our society, including the political, economic, educational, and scientific.

In order to liberate ourselves from this contradiction, we must harmonize the lives of human beings with the natural environment, and discard materialism, the pursuit of profit, and the idea that human beings are the center of all things.

1. We have seriously reconsidered our present social system, including conventional politics, economics, science, and education, and are determined to work for the establishment of a society based upon new values, in which humans and nature can coexist without the destruction of nature.
2. We will gather people who have realized the same, and establish a new political organization. This organization will not commit the errors of existing systems such as centralization and institutionalism, but will be operated according to democratic principles which are based upon the individual integrity of each member.
3. We will work for the establishment of a naturally governed society which is based upon the principles of the living cosmos, and which transcends anthropocentrism.

—Translated by Rick Davis

Figure 2-6

GREEN POLITICS—POINTS OF UNITY

1. NATURAL PHILOSOPHY. We base our philosophy on a proper understanding of the purposes and workings of nature and do not try to impose an ideology upon it. We seek to transform society based upon this understanding.

2. CONSENSUS DEMOCRACY. We conduct all our meetings according to the principles of consensus democracy, emphasizing unanimous or near-unanimous agreement on all decisions. No representative may make decisions on behalf of the Greens without the approval of the entire membership. We encourage the use of consensus democracy in all social, economic and political institutions.

3. NONVIOLENCE AND FREEDOM. We oppose the threat or use of physical violence to resolve international, civil, political and personal conflicts. We encourage the nonviolent enforcement of all private and public rules and laws. We recognize that a nonviolent society would be a very free society and encourage tolerance of others' views and actions.

4. SOCIAL ECOLOGY. We emphasize the connection of domination and violence toward the environment and toward our fellow humans. We seek a nonviolent society in which the needs of individuals, communities and bioregions are balanced and integrated and in which economic resources are used consciously, democratically and appropriately to further this end.

5. STRATEGY. We will oppose ecologically and socially destructive policies and practices through nonviolent political protest and civil disobedience activities. We will promote alternative projects and institutions consistent with our Green philosophy. We will cooperate in solidarity with all groups in substantial agreement with these points of unity as participants in the international Green movement.

8. Global Action

Globally, the *World Conservation Strategy,* written by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, provides insightful and practical direct action suggestions for conservation of soil, forests, water (both fresh and ocean water), and range lands as well as wildlife habitat of all varieties.

It rests on three major goals:

1. Maintaining essential ecological processes and life-support systems.

2. Preserving genetic diversity.
3. Utilizing species and ecosystems sustainably.

The World Charter for Nature, adopted in October 1982 by the United Nations General Assembly, could be used as a framework for constitutional change in nations. Lawyers would have the legal basis upon which to ground cases for habitat preservation if the following General Principles from the World Charter for Nature were included in constitutions:

1. Nature shall be respected and its essential processes shall not be disrupted.
2. The genetic viability on Earth shall not be compromised; the population levels of all life forms, wild and domesticated, must be at least sufficient for their survival, and to this end necessary habitats shall be maintained.
3. All areas, both land and sea, shall be subject to these principles of conservation; special protection shall be given to unique areas, representative samples of all ecosystems and the habitats of rare and endangered species.
4. Ecosystems and organisms, as well as land, marine and atmospheric resources which are utilized by man, shall be managed to achieve and maintain optimum sustainable productivity, but not in such a way as to endanger the integrity of those other ecosystems or species with which they coexist.
5. Nature shall be secured against degradation caused by warfare or other hostile acts.
6. Actions working for nuclear disarmament are essential.[14]

A useful summary of direct action for individuals working within groups is found in G. Tyler Miller's *Living in the Environment* (1982). Miller suggests:

1. You can sensitize yourself to your environment.
2. You can become ecologically informed in all aspects of scientific ecology.
3. You can choose a simpler lifestyle, reducing your energy and matter consumption and waste and pollution production. Recycling is a discipline.
4. You can remember that environment begins in the household economy.
5. You can avoid the extrapolation-to-infinity syndrome as an excuse for not doing anything.

6. You can become politically involved on local, regional or national levels in either the best of reform groups or in Green politics.
7. You can do little things: don't litter, be aware of the color of the sky.
8. You can work on the big polluters and big problems through direct action in politics or lobbying, and through environmental education.
9. Don't make people feel guilty. There is plenty to do and no one can do everything.[15]

(In addition, we suggest using the bioregion test.)

We have presented an overview of specific types of direct action which individuals and groups can take to defend ecological diversity and engage in the process of cultivating ecological consciousness. We will present the formal principles of deep ecology after we review the dominant, modern worldview and the reformist response.

in the service
of the wilderness
of life
of death
of the Mother's breasts.
—Gary Snyder, *from "Tomorrow's Song" in* Turtle Island *(1974)*

CHAPTER 3

THE DOMINANT, MODERN WORLDVIEW AND ITS CRITICS

(My discoveries) have satisfied me that it is possible to reach knowledge that will be of much utility in this life; and that instead of the speculative philosophy now taught in the schools we can find a practical one, by which, knowing the nature and behavior of fire, water, air, stars, the heavens, and all the other bodies which surround us, as well as we now understand the different skills of our workers, we can employ these entities for all the purposes for which they are suited, and so make ourselves masters and possessors of nature.

—*René Descartes,* Discourse on Method *(1637)*

The awakening of ecological consciousness by increasing numbers of people during the twentieth century gave birth to the reformist political response discussed in the previous chapter and in more detail in chapter four. To more clearly understand the problem, we need to define the dominant worldview, its major assumptions and premises, and then review some of the criticisms which continue to be made of it.

I. THE DOMINANT MODERN WORLDVIEW

A dominant worldview (or social paradigm) is the collection of values, beliefs, habits, and norms which forms the frame of reference for a collectivity of people, such as a nation. According to one writer, "A dominant social paradigm is a mental image of social reality that guides expectations in a society."[1]

A worldview, then, has several elements in thought and action:

1. There are general assumptions about reality, including man's place in Nature.
2. There are general "rules of the game" for approaching problems which are generally agreed upon.
3. Those who subscribe to a given worldview share a definition of the assumptions and goals of their society.
4. There is a definite, underlying confidence among believers in the worldview that solutions to problems exist within the assumptions of the worldview.
5. Practitioners within the worldview present arguments based on the validity of data as rationally explained by experts—be they scientific experts or experts in the philosophy and religious assumptions of the worldview.[2]

There are rarely public debates about the general assumptions of the worldview. Problems that are not soluble are explained away or contradictions are not openly addressed. There may be recurrent attempts to persecute for heresy people who question its basic assumptions. Sometimes the persecution of heretics is quite severe, as illustrated by the thousand-year attempt by the Roman Catholic church to impose its view or orthodoxy on the Christian tradition, as clearly witnessed by the Inquisition.

Drawing from several sources, four basic assumptions of the Western worldview are summarized by sociologists William Catton, Jr. and Riley Dunlap:

1. People are fundamentally different from all other creatures on Earth, over which they have dominion (defined as domination).
2. People are masters of their own destiny; they can choose their goals and learn to do whatever is necessary to achieve them.
3. The world is vast, and thus provides unlimited opportunities for humans.
4. The history of humanity is one of progress; for every problem there is a solution, and thus progress need never cease.[3]

Ecologist David Ehrenfeld provides some corollaries to this last assumption concerning the approach to problems within the worldview:

1. All problems are soluble.
2. All problems are soluble by people.
3. Many problems are soluble by technology.
4. Those problems that are not soluble by technology, or by technology alone, have solutions in the social world (of politics, economics, etc.).
5. When the chips are down, we will apply ourselves and work together for a solution before it is too late.[4]

In this worldview, the Earth is seen primarily, if not exclusively, as a collection of natural resources. Some of these resources are infinite; for those which are limited, substitutes can be created by technological society. There is an overriding faith that human civilization will survive. Humans will continue to dominate Nature because humans are above, superior to or outside the rest of Nature. All of Nature is seen from a human-centered perspective, or anthropocentrism.

In the social sciences, as William Catton demonstrates, this worldview is carried to an extreme position of human-centeredness. Four popular notions dominate the social science perspective:

1. Since humans have a cultural kind of heritage in addition to and distinct from their genetic inheritance, they are quite unlike the earth's other creatures.
2. Culture can vary almost infinitely and can change much more readily than biological traits.
3. Thus, since many human characteristics are socially induced rather than inborn, they can be socially altered, and inconvenient differences can be eliminated.
4. Also, cultural accumulation means that technological and social progress can continue without limit, making all social problems ultimately soluble.[5]

While the dominant worldview has developed in Europe and North America during the past several hundred years, the most articulate expression has been in the United States. Many perceptive commentators have summarized the character and culture of the United States, beginning with Alexis de Tocqueville's classic study in the 1830s, *Democracy in America.* The persistence of many of the aspects of the worldview in America is seen by comparing Tocqueville's assessment with that of social scientist Robin Williams, Jr., published in 1970, the year of Earth Day, when the National Environmental Policy Act became law.[6]

Among the values Williams found as being enduring in this culture was the belief in opportunity for social advancement, a belief that the goal of life was comfort and convenience, a persistent attitude of racism, and a faith in technology and progress. In reviewing the statements of major political leaders, results of public opinion polls and dominant themes in textbooks and other sources, he found no mention of a value in the "quality of the natural environment" nor any statement of the value of maintaining biological diversity or the inherent worth of species other than humans. There was a pervasive sense of individualism and there was little assertion of the value of the community of humans, much less the "land community." He found an overriding value in linking scientific study and technology to exploit and develop some aspect of Nature—energy, minerals, and so forth—to serve the growing economy.

COMPARISON OF WORLDVIEWS

Historian Morris Berman summarizes the worldview of the Middle Ages versus that of the seventeenth century:[7]

Worldview of the Middle Ages

Universe: Geocentric, earth in the center of a series of concentric, crystalline spheres. Universe closed, with God, the Unmoved Mover, as the outermost sphere.

Explanation: In terms of formal and final causes; teleological. Everything but God in process of Becoming; natural place, natural motion.

Motion: Forced or natural, requires a mover.

Matter: Continuous, no vacua.

Time: Cyclical, static.

Nature: Understood via the concrete and the qualitative. Nature is alive, organic; we observe it and make deductions from general principles.

Worldview of the Seventeenth Century

Universe: Heliocentric; earth has no special status, planets held in orbit by gravity of the sun. Universe infinite.

Explanation: Strictly in terms of matter and motion, which have no higher purposes. Atomistic in both the material and philosophical sense.

Motion: To be described, not explained, law of inertia.

Matter: Atomic, implying existence of vacua.

Time: Linear, progressive.

Nature: Understood via the abstract and quantitative. Nature is dead, mechanistic, and is known via manipulation (experiment) and mathematical abstraction.

There have been extensive attempts by some historians and social scientists to explain the origins and development of the dominant worldview. For some, it derives from Judeo-Christian origins based upon anthropocentric assumptions. For others its driving force is seen in the development of the market economy. Others have explored the impact of the rise of capitalism. There is also a growing body of literature which sees the origins in patriarchical societies based on male-dominated hierarchies.[8]

Sociologist Max Weber described "the disenchantment of the world" as conditioned by the rise of "instrumental rationality." In this perspective, bureaucracy is the social organization most conducive to bringing this instrumental rationality into operation. The primary goal is to use resources efficiently in order to meet planned, purposeful goals.

Our purpose here is not to extensively review the origins and development of the dominant worldview, but to explore, in general, its influence on current societies and on our approach to ultimate reality (metaphysics), to knowledge (epistemology), to being (ontology), to the cosmos (cosmology) and to social organization.

II. THE CONTINUING CRITIQUE OF THE DOMINANT WORLDVIEW

For the last five hundred years, some of the assumptions of the dominant worldview have been questioned and criticized in the West by philosophers, poets, religious spokespeople and others from different philosophical backgrounds. These critics include Thomas Malthus, William Blake, many of the Romantic poets, many in the pastoral-naturalist literary tradition, and thinkers such as seventeenth-century

Dutch philosopher Baruch Spinoza and twentieth-century German philosopher Martin Heidegger. One aspect of this criticism has addressed the prolific use of natural resources by growing human populations.

Malthus, in 1803, presented an argument indicating that human population growth would exponentially outstrip food production, resulting in "general misery," but his warning was ignored by the rising tide of industrial/technological optimism. This warning continues to be articulated in terms of contemporary, sophisticated ecological thinking by William Catton, Jr. Catton applies the ecological concept of *carrying capacity,* the ability of an environment to sustain a given population of a species in the long run, to argue that human population has long ago moved into a dangerous phase of the "boom-bust" cycle of population growth and decline.[9]

American geographer George Perkins Marsh was one of the first Americans to warn that modern man's impact on the environment could result in a rising species extinction rate and possible extinction of humans. The environmental crisis was further articulated by ecologist William Vogt (*Road to Survival,* 1948), anticipating the work of radical ecologists such as Paul Ehrlich in the 1960s.

While the ecologists, geographers and biologists cited above, along with many of their colleagues, focused on the assumptions of progress, other critics focused on the assumption of human domination over Nature. Even in the thirteenth century, Saint Francis of Assisi tried to divert Christianity away from the dominant anthropocentric assumption to an older, more animistic biocentric position. He proposed "a democracy of all God's creatures."

While many modern Western philosophers have been slow in criticizing the dominant modern worldview, one philosopher at the beginning of the twentieth century made a scathing attack on the anthropocentrism of Western philosophy and the dominant version of Christianity. George Santayana's speech, "The Genteel Tradition in American Philosophy," presented at the University of California at Berkeley in 1911, was a historical turning point in the development of the contemporary search for an alternative worldview and an environmental ethic that would not be subjectivist, anthropocentric, and essentially materialistic.[10]

In his speech, Santayana intimated that cultivating ecological consciousness by close, intimate contact with wild Nature would help us discard the baggage of human chauvinistic assumptions:

A Californian whom I had recently the pleasure of meeting observed that if the philosophers had lived among your mountains, their systems would have been different from what they are. Certainly very different from what those systems are which the European genteel tradition has handed down since Socrates; for these systems are egotistical; directly or indirectly they are anthropocentric, and inspired by the conceited notion that man, or human reason, or the human distinction between good and evil, is the center and pivot of the universe. That is what the mountains and the woods should make you at last ashamed to assert.

According to Santayana, while Calvinism saw both man and Nature as sinful and in need of redemption, Transcendentalism, with Ralph Waldo Emerson, saw Nature as "all beauty and commodity." Transcendentalism was a "systematic subjectivism"—a "sham system of Nature." The problem for Santayana was that Western religion and philosophy were failing to provide any restraints on the developing urban-industrial society—the "American Will." If anything, they were providing a justification for the technological domination of Nature. Santayana claimed that only one American writer, Walt Whitman, had fully escaped the genteel tradition and anthropocentrism by extending the democratic principle "to the animals, to inanimate nature, to the cosmos as a whole." Santayana looked forward to a new nonanthropocentric revolution in philosophy—a "noble moral imagination"—of which Whitman was the beginning.

Still alive in California at the time of Santayana's address was the one nonnative American who most fully exemplified this nonanthropocentric "noble moral imagination." John Muir (1838-1914) overcame his Calvinistic upbringing while studying science and Transcendentalism at the University of Wisconsin in the 1860s. Muir walked out of a career as a technological genius as a young man. He developed his nonanthropocentric philosophy while walking one thousand miles from Indiana to the Gulf of Mexico in 1867. For the next ten years, Muir wandered through Yosemite and the High Sierra, studying geology, botany and natural history. He was cultivating his ecological consciousness through direct intuitive *experiencing* of Nature. Muir's development of ecological consciousness has been greatly underrated and misunderstood. Although he has been referred to as mainly a "publicist" for the wilderness preservationist movement, he overcame the subjectivism of Transcendentalism to a much greater extent than did Thoreau. Muir battled against inappropriate water developments and the conversion of forest ecosystems into managed "tree farms."

He advocated wilderness protection as a vital necessity for preserving at least some areas where Nature could remain flowing and free.

Technological society not only alienates humans from the rest of Nature but also alienates humans from themselves and from each other. It necessarily promotes destructive values and goals which often destroy the basis for stable viable human communities interacting with the natural world. The technological worldview has as its ultimate vision the total conquest and domination of Nature and spontaneous natural processes—a vision of a "totally artificial environment" remodeled to human specifications and managed by humans *for* humans. Contemporary Christian theologian Harvey Cox spoke for this vision when he looked with approval on the dominance of the city in the future ("the most distinct expression of man's separation from nature") in which "nature in any untrammeled form will exist in sparse lots and only because man allows it."[11] The ultimate value judgment upon which technological society rests—*progress* conceived as the further development and expansion of the artificial environment necessarily at the expense of the natural world—must be looked upon from the ecological perspective as unequivocal *regress*.

In sum, we have provided a sketch of the dominant worldview in the West and some of its critics. Based upon its radical critique of this worldview, the deep ecological perspective leads to an uncompromising stand against the main thrust of modern, technocratic culture.

The insight of ecology, to which we return again and again, is the literal *intermingling* of parts in the whole, as biologist Neil Everndon discusses in his essay, "Beyond Ecology":[12]

> The really subversive element in Ecology rests not on any of its more sophisticated concepts, but upon its basic premise: interrelatedness. But the genuinely radical nature of that proposition is not generally perceived, even, I think, by ecologists. To the western mind, *interrelatedness* implies a causal connectedness. Things are interrelated if a change in one affects the other. So to say that all things are interrelated simply implies that if we wish to develop our "resources," we must find some technological means to defuse the interaction. The solution to pollution is dilution. But what is actually involved is a genuine *intermingling* of parts of the ecosystem. There are no discrete entities. . . . Ecology undermines not only the growth addict and the chronic developer, but science itself.

The heart has its reasons
which reason does not know.
—*Pascal,* Pensées

CHAPTER 4

THE REFORMIST RESPONSE

If we consider all species on Earth, and the rate at which natural environments are being disrupted if not destroyed, it is not unrealistic to suppose that we are losing at least one species per day. By the end of the 1980s we could be losing one species per hour. It is entirely in the cards that by the end of this century, we could lose as many as one million species, and a good many more within the following few decades—until such time as growth in human numbers stabilizes, and until growth in over-consumerist lifestyles changes course.

—Ecologist Norman Myers (1979)

In the previous chapter we sketched the assumptions of the dominant worldview and some of the challenges from its critics. Now we review some of the reformist responses to these assumptions and the thrust of action which this perspective has generated during the past two hundred years. By *reformist* we mean attempts to address some of the environmental problems in this society without seriously challenging the main contradictions and assumptions of the prevailing worldview.

The first section of this chapter reviews reformist ideas in philosophy. We briefly discuss 1) Resource Conservation and Development; 2) the philosophy of humanism; 3) the animal rights or "animal liberation" movement; and 4) the "limits to growth" response. We suggest that the chief weakness of these positions, from a deep ecology perspective, is that they are ultimately anthropocentric. A more detailed discussion of Resource Conservation and Development ideology is presented in chapter eight.

In the second section of this chapter we briefly review the reformist political response, the gradual awareness, especially in the context of American society during the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, of the continuing and multiplying problems generated by the dominant worldview. We call this a shift "from conservation to ecology" to indicate a gradual reawakening of ecological consciousness.

I. PHILOSOPHICAL REFORMISM

In these reformist philosophical positions, progress is understood along the lines of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Enlightenment thinkers as the cultural development of humans from the primitiveness of gathering/hunting, superstitious religious man, through philosophy and metaphysics, to the scientific-technocratic society considered the zenith of human culture. Philosophy in its traditional Socratic role as a critique of society is no longer thought necessary for the scientific society. There is little awareness of the need for a shift in worldview based upon a metaphysics consistent with ecological interrelatedness.

1. Resource Conservation and Development

A Resource Conservation and Development perspective views Nature as basically a resource for human use and development. The two major contemporary secular theorists for an updated utilitarian conservationist position are John Passmore and Garrett Hardin.

Shortly after publishing *Man's Responsibility for Nature,* Passmore dramatically changed his mind and claimed:

We do need a "new metaphysics" which is genuinely not anthropocentric. . . . The working out of such a metaphysics is, in my judgment, the most important task which lies ahead of philosophy . . . the emergence of new moral attitudes to nature is bound up then with the emergence of a more realistic philosophy of nature. This is the only adequate foundation for effective environmental concern.[1]

Garrett Hardin has sophisticated the old conservationist position by calling for more legalistic restraints ("mutual coercion mutually agreed upon") to protect the "commons" from total environmental destruction. And further, as a result of severe overpopulation around the world, he claims that our situation today is similar to that of "lifeboats." To keep the high-consumption energy-intensive urban-industrial system afloat, aid to underdeveloped countries must cease and the people be allowed to starve back to biological carrying capacity while we remain "affluent" by continuing to use their resources on a capitalistic basis. Hardin also argues that there is no alternative to increased management and control of Nature. The great significance of Hardin's writings is that he has carried out to a logical conclusion the inevitable consequences of an anthropocentric, egoistic, exploitive resource approach by humans to the planet and its nonhuman inhabitants.[2]

John Rodman diagnosed the Resource Conservation and Development philosophy as providing a basis for the future generations' argument:

. . . "the criterion of what is best for posterity" became perhaps the major criterion of normative judgment in the Conservationist outlook. Certainly it is with regard to this preoccupation with the good of posterity that the Conservation movement has been most influential; the post-Conservationist forms of ecological consciousness display all the marks of being children of Resource Conservation in this respect. Certainly it is the most powerful of Conservationist appeals."[3]

2. Humanism as a Reformist Perspective

The philosophy of humanism has recently come under sharp attack as promoting an arrogant anthropocentric approach to Nature, and as providing the modern Western secular basis for the vision of a man-controlled artificial environment. Philosopher Pete Gunter claims that:

Pragmatism, Marxism, scientific humanism, French positivism, German mechanism: the whole swarm of smug antireligious dogmas emerging in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and by now deeply entrenched in scientific, political, economic, and educational institutions really do not, as they claim, make man a part of nature. *If anything they make nature an extension of and mere raw material for man.*[4]

Theodore Roszak has claimed that, "There are those who believe fervently that the good society may yet be built—if only our humanistic resolve is sufficiently strong. I disagree. Humanism is the finest flower of urban-industrial society; but the odor of alienation yet clings to it and to all culture and public policy that springs from it."[5]

In 1925, George Santayana called John Dewey's pragmatism an extreme subjectivism calculated to justify all the assumptions of American industry and society, and included it within the anthropocentric genteel tradition. Twenty years later, British philosopher Bertrand Russell also pointed to the anthropocentrism of both Dewey and Karl Marx and claimed that their intoxication with the idea of social power over Nature, "however unintentionally, contributes to the increasing danger of vast social disaster."[6]

3. Animal Rights and Animal Liberation

As part of the reformist response, there has recently been a virtual explosion of interest by philosophers in the question of animal rights and animal liberation. Much of this interest was generated by Peter Singer's influential book, *Animal Liberation* (1975), which pointed to the callous way technological society treats nonhumans. Professional philosophers are now actively discussing the moral questions involved in issues such as vegetarianism, vivisection, sport hunting, the inhumane treatment of feed-lot animals, factory hens, confining wild animals in zoos and circuses for the amusement of humans, and the needless and often unspeakable cruelty inflicted on large numbers of animals in the name of science and product-testing.

On the basis of contemporary Western ethical theory, these philosophers argue that other animals besides humans, or at least the more highly evolved conscious ones, have some "rights," or that utilitarianism allows moral significance to those animals capable of suffering or experiencing pain. Deep ecology theorists are also very concerned about many of the issues which the animal liberationists address, but also believe that many of these problems are mainly symptoms of a more deep-seated malaise. Contemporary humanistic ethical theory is ineradicably anthropocentric, designed specifically to deal with the problems of *human* interaction. When the attempt is made to extend this theory to other animals (Moral Extensionism), they are accorded much less moral consideration (less intrinsic worth) than humans.

Under contemporary ethical theory, some beings, thought to have little or no sentience, together with the entire nonliving world, have no moral standing whatsoever. Thus, animal rights theorizing tends to violate the deep ecology insistence on "ecological egalitarianism in principle." As John Rodman remarks, "There is a pecking order in this moral barnyard." Rodman also points out that this theorizing is timid in that no challenge or examination is made of the basic assumptions of the urban/industrial worldview: "The attempt to produce a 'new ethics' by the process of extension perpetuates the basic presuppositions of the conventional modern paradigm; however much it fiddles with the boundaries. . . . [the animal rights movement] while holding out promise of transcending the homocentric perspective of modern culture, subtly fulfills and legitimizes the basic project of modernity—the total conquest of nature by man."[7]

4. The "Limits to Growth" Response

The limits to growth debate is a combination of philosophical and public policy discussion. In philosophy it has focused on debate over the "destiny" of humans. Some argue that more and more humans are desirable on this Earth because humans are the "ultimate resource." More people means more creativity and more opportunity to produce and consume.

The reformist response to the debate has been to amass huge amounts of data on human population, industrialization, resource use interactions and to build models of these interactions. Then, using computer simulation, various scenarios and outcomes of continued human use of resources have been projected.

While Thomas Malthus discussed the consequences of human population growth and food supply in 1803, the most dramatic response to the situation in recent times was the publication of Paul Ehrlich's *The Population Bomb* (1968).

In the early 1970s, the Club of Rome, an organization dedicated to rational planning for the future, publicized Jay Forrester's "world model" and subsequently published several versions.[8] Much of this material was summarized by Gerald Barney in 1980 in *The Global 2000 Report to the President.* Commissioned by President Carter, this

book became a best seller in the United States as well as West Germany and Japan.[9] It stimulated debate on the need for much more extensive reforms than environmentalists had envisioned before. In the meantime, numerous voluntary groups have been organized to pursue policy reform, including Zero Population Growth and the "Global 2000 Group."

II. THE REFORMIST POLITICAL RESPONSE

The move to ecological conscience/consciousness has been a slow process for the population as a whole. Until recently, modern people who considered themselves enlightened on the human/Nature relationship have thought of themselves as *conservationists.* Ecologist John Livingston defined conservation as "the care of 'natural resources' and their protection from depletion, waste, and damage, so that they will be readily at hand through perpetuity."[10] John Passmore defined it as the "saving of natural resources for later consumption."[11] Out of the Progressive Movement at the turn of the twentieth century, especially as a result of the influence of politician Gifford Pinchot on Teddy Roosevelt, the modern version of utilitarian Resource Conservation and Development was born. The "wise use" of resources would be achieved through the "rational efficient scientific/technological management" of Nature for the benefit of "the greatest number of humans." Reckless exploitation would cease, and social justice would be achieved.

Pinchot became the first director of the U.S. Forest Service. The rise of the "resource expert" (the scientific manager of Nature) soon followed. Resource management programs were established and expanded rapidly in colleges and universities throughout the world to supply the new demand for scientific foresters, agricultural experts, wildlife experts, range managers, soil scientists, and so on, to industry and to government resource and development agencies. From this point onward most of wild Nature, from forests to wildlife, was to be treated much the same as a domestic field of corn, to be managed and "harvested" by humans.

It is surely no coincidence that humans would also come to be looked upon as a resource to be managed in the best interests of the emerging urban-industrial society. The shift from "people" to "personnel" (and "consumers") to which modern scientific management principles are to be applied for more efficient production of commodities is but the flip side of the mentality and consciousness that

sees Nature as but a resource to be managed and manipulated for the benefit of those in power. Indeed, we have programs in our universities to train "leisure management experts" and "wilderness management experts"—experts who are largely in the business of managing people.

The analytical error of contemporary man is that he has not understood in religious terms the meaning of what he has already accomplished scientifically by revealing the world of sensory perceptions. In seeking the ultimate answer to the meaning of existence, that is, reading God's mind, as early scientists considered their work, modern man has foreclosed the possibility of experiencing life in favor of explaining it. Even in explaining the world, however, Western man has misunderstood it.

—Vine Deloria, *God is Red* (1973)[12]

At the same time that resource management ideology was developing as a reformist response to unrestrained and short-sighted treatment of the land, other reformers were focusing on the need to establish institutions which would set aside bits of land and water as recreational space for humans and habitat for other species.

Early in the nineteenth century, some scientists began to understand the connection between urbanization, industrialization, human contamination of air and water and the spread of certain diseases. Physicians and public health professionals agitated for major public investments in water purification systems for cities, protection of the watersheds feeding city water supplies, and for sewage treatment facilities. Debates over proposed technical solutions to perceived public health problems focused on the benefits of clean water and air for human populations.

During the latter half of the nineteenth century, appreciation for scenic, ecological and recreational values of natural landscapes in America had been stimulated by painters, naturalists, biologists and Nature writers. One articulate planner and activist, Frederick Law Olmstead, argued that parks, both in rural areas and very large urban areas, were necessary for the physical and mental health of the masses of citizens. Just as the aristocracy in Europe had their hunting reserves and rural retreats, citizens in a democracy had the right to have access to places for quiet contemplation of the wonders of Nature. Olmstead

was instrumental in creating Central Park in New York City before the Civil War and was the first director of what became Yosemite National Park in California in 1864.[13]

In 1872 Congress established the precedent of creating national parks by passing the Yellowstone Park Act. However, Congress failed to resolve what has come to be a most difficult issue: the relation of parks as recreation space for humans and parks as reserves of biological diversity and wild Nature.

The advantage of tourism to economic growth in areas near new parks convinced some railroads and other businesses to support the parks movement. By 1916 when Congress passed the National Parks Act, creating a new agency to manage the parks, the National Park Service, the institution was firmly established. Following 1916, successful campaigns by conservationists led to the creation of many more national parks, including Olympic, Grand Canyon, Grand Teton, Kings Canyon and Redwoods National Park. The Wilderness Act of 1964 further established procedures for setting aside lands in national forests and parks.

The period from 1916 through 1935 was marked especially by reform action to protect wildlife. Professional wildlife experts, hunting groups, gun manufacturers and many conservationists sought the protection of wild animals and the creation of wildlife refuges. Spokespeople for this movement argued that hunting is a great national tradition, that conservation of wildlife can occur side by side with industrial expansion, and that since by common law wildlife was public property, public agencies should be created to compensate private landowners for lands taken for wildlife preserves. Out of this movement most states established Fish and Game (or Wildlife) Commissions and the battles focused over protection of so-called nongame species (those species hunters considered not worth shooting), predator control (particularly wolves and coyotes which were seen to be "interfering" with human uses of the land), and production of game species for hunters.[14]

Most urban centers had municipal water and sewage systems before 1940. However, after 1950 even more serious, possibly insolvable, problems of public health developed into near crisis proportions with the rapid introduction of massive amounts of herbicides, pesticides and many toxic chemicals into the environment.[15] These chemicals were used to increase the efficiency of crop production or were byproducts of industrial processes and the massive consumption of fossil fuels.

During the past five decades, an increasing number of scientists and environmental activists were broadening their concerns to include criticisms of major assumptions of the dominant social worldview and to address social and political factors. And some were following John Muir's lead in articulating the need for a spiritual approach to Nature. Professional ecologists such as Aldo Leopold, Charles Elton, Paul Sears, William Vogt, Eugene Odum, F. Fraser Darling and others were identifying the dangers to humans of environmental degradation and calling for a new *land ethic.* This call for a land ethic and a call that we cultivate ecological consciousness is clearly seen in the work of Rachel Carson, Aldous Huxley, and Leopold, among others.

A turning point in the search for a philosophy of ecology was seen in Stuart Udall's *The Quiet Crisis* (1962). In it he outlined the American conservation crisis and environmental thought from Thomas Jefferson through Pinchot and Muir. A significant issue Udall raised was the difficulty he experienced in writing his history of American conservation. The lack of historical and political scholarship in this area was scandalous. The crucial issue of the human/Nature relationship had largely been ignored by the academic establishment. Tucked away in this ignored issue was the ticking time bomb of the global environmental crisis together with the need to criticize the basic assumption of the Western worldview and to seek a contemporary version of a spiritual approach to Nature, to seek a land wisdom so clearly evidenced in many Native American peoples.[16]

History tells us that earlier civilizations have declined because they did not learn to live in harmony with the land. Our successes in space and our triumphs of technology hold a hidden danger: as modern man increasingly arrogates to himself dominion over the physical environment, there is the risk that his false pride will cause him to take the resources of the earth for granted—and to lose all reverence for the land. . . .

[It is ironic that] . . . today the conservation movement finds itself turning-back to ancient Indian land ideas, to the Indian understanding that we are not outside of nature, but of it. . . . In recent decades we have slowly come back to some of the truths that the Indian knew from the beginning: that unborn generations have a claim on the land equal to our own; that men need to learn from nature, to keep an ear to the earth, and to replenish their spirits in frequent contacts with animals and wild land. And most important of all, we are recovering a sense of reverence for the land. . . . Within a generation [of White settlement of America] the wildness would begin to convert some of their sons, and

reverence for the natural world and its forces would eventually sound in much of our literature, finding its prophets in Thoreau and Muir.
—Stuart Udall, *The Quiet Crisis* (1962)

From the early 1960s onward, the "quiet crisis" became increasingly visible and discussions over environmental policy became more intense. Smog, urban blight, toxic wastes, loss of productive farmlands due to soil erosion, massive deforestation in some parts of the Earth, all continued to be front page news.

In a wave of reform in the 1960s, concerned citizens sought to change public policy by seeking better government regulation of toxic chemicals. A turning point in this effort was the passage of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and passage of similar legislation in many states. This act (usually referred to as NEPA) created regulatory procedures for air and water polluters and for strip-mining operations. It called for annual reports to citizens on the "State of the Environment," created a new public agency, the Environmental Protection Agency, and mandated that major public projects be considered only after an Environmental Impact Report on the project had been written and considered at public hearings.[17] In 1972 the United Nations sponsored the Stockholm Conference on the Environment, focusing attention to the worldwide dimensions of the crisis.

The reformist political response, generally speaking, has been oriented only toward public policy. It has been based on the liberal democratic assumption that if enough citizens have accurate information on environmental problems, they will assert themselves through voluntary organizations to demand better policies and practices from legislators and regulatory agencies.

Using rational, technical scientific models and data and economic arguments, reformers have altered citizens' perceptions to some degree and have alerted them to the dangerous consequences to human health from many types of pollution. But in the continuing, and at times intense, public debates, more and more people have begun to realize the meaning of the basic ecological principle that everything is connected to everything else.

The reformist response has been extremely valuable. Many parks, nature reserves and forests have been, at least temporarily, "saved." But the integrity of many national parks is threatened by technocratic society.[18] In the 1980s, the massive attack on Nature by the Reagan

administration in the United States, combined with the greed of political elites in many Third World nations, and the massive problems of balancing human population growth and increasing per capita consumption of resources with preservation of wilderness, has led many to see the limitations and weaknesses of the reformist response.[19]

While accepting the best of reformist environmentalism, many people have sensed that something is missing. They are asking deeper questions. They understand that the environmental/ecology movement needs an articulate philosophical approach grounded upon assumptions which are different from those of the dominant worldview.

They realize that a perspective is needed that will place the best of the reformist response into a coherent philosophical perspective—a philosophy based on biocentric rather than anthropocentric assumptions.[20] This philosophy should be able to draw on the science of ecology, but should not be constrained by scientism, and by the definition of Nature as just a collection of bits of data to be manipulated by humans.

This philosophy should be both rational and spiritual. It should focus on ways of cultivating ecological consciousness and on principles for public environmental policy. It should be a philosophy that draws from the Earth wisdom of Native Americans and other primal cultures and that makes these approaches to wisdom relevant to contemporary, technocratic-industrial societies.

In 1972, Arne Naess began discussing such a philosophy which he called *deep ecology.* A formal statement of the insights, *ultimate norms* and principles of deep ecology are presented in the next chapter.

Without the energy that lifts mountains,
how am I to live?
—Mirabai

CHAPTER 5

DEEP ECOLOGY

Then what is the answer?—Not to be deluded by dreams,
To know that great civilizations have broken down into
violence, and their tyrants come, many times before.
When open violence appears, to avoid it with honor or choose
the least ugly faction; the evils are essential.
To keep one's own integrity, be merciful and uncorrupted
and not wish for evil; and not be duped
By dreams of universal justice or happiness. These dreams will
not be fulfilled.
To know this, and know that however ugly the parts appear
the whole remains beautiful. A severed hand
Is an ugly thing, and man dissevered from the earth and stars
and his history . . . for contemplation or in fact . . .

Often appears atrociously ugly. Integrity is wholeness,
the great beauty is
Organic wholeness, the wholeness of life and things, the divine
beauty of the universe. Love that, not man
Apart from that, or else you will share man's pitiful
confusions, or drown in despair when his days darken.

—*Robinson Jeffers, "The Answer" from* Selected Poetry *(1938)*

The term *deep ecology* was coined by Arne Naess in his 1973 article, "The Shallow and the Deep, Long-Range Ecology Movements."[1] Naess was attempting to describe the deeper, more spiritual approach to Nature exemplified in the writings of Aldo Leopold and Rachel Carson. He thought that this deeper approach resulted from a more sensitive openness to ourselves and nonhuman life around us. The essence of deep ecology is to keep asking more searching questions about human life, society, and Nature as in the Western philosophical tradition of Socrates. As examples of this deep questioning, Naess points out "that we ask why and how, where others do not. For instance, ecology as a science does not ask what kind of a society would be the best for maintaining a particular ecosystem—that is considered a question for value theory, for politics, for ethics." Thus deep ecology goes beyond the so-called factual scientific level to the level of self and Earth wisdom.

Deep ecology goes beyond a limited piecemeal shallow approach to environmental problems and attempts to articulate a comprehensive religious and philosophical worldview. The foundations of deep ecology are the basic intuitions and experiencing of ourselves and Nature which comprise ecological consciousness. Certain outlooks on politics and public policy flow naturally from this consciousness. And in the context of this book, we discuss the minority tradition as the type of community most conducive both to cultivating ecological consciousness and to asking the basic questions of values and ethics addressed in these pages.

Many of these questions are perennial philosophical and religious questions faced by humans in all cultures over the ages. What does it mean to be a unique human individual? How can the individual self maintain and increase its uniqueness while also being an inseparable aspect of the whole system wherein there are no sharp breaks between self and the *other?* An ecological perspective, in this deeper sense, results in what Theodore Roszak calls "an awakening of wholes greater than the sum of their parts. In spirit, the discipline is contemplative and therapeutic."[2]

Ecological consciousness and deep ecology are in sharp contrast with the dominant worldview of technocratic-industrial societies which regards humans as isolated and fundamentally separate from the rest of Nature, as superior to, and in charge of, the rest of creation. But the view of humans as separate and superior to the rest of Nature is only part of larger cultural patterns. For thousands of

years, Western culture has become increasingly obsessed with the idea of *dominance:* with dominance of humans over nonhuman Nature, masculine over the feminine, wealthy and powerful over the poor, with the dominance of the West over non-Western cultures. Deep ecological consciousness allows us to see through these erroneous and dangerous illusions.

For deep ecology, the study of our place in the Earth household includes the study of ourselves as part of the organic whole. Going beyond a narrowly materialist scientific understanding of reality, the spiritual and the material aspects of reality fuse together. While the leading intellectuals of the dominant worldview have tended to view religion as "just superstition," and have looked upon ancient spiritual practice and enlightenment, such as found in Zen Buddhism, as essentially subjective, the search for deep ecological consciousness is the search for a more objective consciousness and state of being through an active deep questioning and meditative process and way of life.

Many people have asked these deeper questions and cultivated ecological consciousness within the context of different spiritual traditions—Christianity, Taoism, Buddhism, and Native American rituals, for example. While differing greatly in other regards, many in these traditions agree with the basic principles of deep ecology.

Warwick Fox, an Australian philosopher, has succinctly expressed the central intuition of deep ecology: "It is the idea that we can make no firm ontological divide in the field of existence: That there is no bifurcation in reality between the human and the non-human realms . . . to the extent that we perceive boundaries, we fall short of deep ecological consciousness."[3]

From this most basic insight or characteristic of deep ecological consciousness, Arne Naess has developed two *ultimate norms* or intuitions which are themselves not derivable from other principles or intuitions. They are arrived at by the deep questioning process and reveal the importance of moving to the philosophical and religious level of wisdom. They cannot be validated, of course, by the methodology of modern science based on its usual mechanistic assumptions and its very narrow definition of data. These ultimate norms are *self-realization* and *biocentric equality.*

I. SELF-REALIZATION

In keeping with the spiritual traditions of many of the world's religions, the deep ecology norm of self-realization goes beyond the

modern Western *self* which is defined as an isolated ego striving primarily for hedonistic gratification or for a narrow sense of individual salvation in this life or the next. This socially programmed sense of the narrow self or social self dislocates us, and leaves us prey to whatever fad or fashion is prevalent in our society or social reference group. We are thus robbed of beginning the search for our unique spiritual/biological personhood. Spiritual growth, or unfolding, begins when we cease to understand or see ourselves as isolated and narrow competing egos and begin to identify with other humans from our family and friends to, eventually, our species. But the deep ecology sense of self requires a further maturity and growth, an identification which goes beyond humanity to include the nonhuman world. We must see beyond our narrow contemporary cultural assumptions and values, and the conventional wisdom of our time and place, and this is best achieved by the meditative deep questioning process. Only in this way can we hope to attain full mature personhood and uniqueness.

A nurturing nondominating society can help in the "real work" of becoming a whole person. The "real work" can be summarized symbolically as the realization of "self-in-Self" where "Self" stands for organic wholeness. This process of the full unfolding of the self can also be summarized by the phrase, "No one is saved until we are all saved," where the phrase "one" includes not only me, an individual human, but all humans, whales, grizzly bears, whole rain forest ecosystems, mountains and rivers, the tiniest microbes in the soil, and so on.

II. BIOCENTRIC EQUALITY

The intuition of biocentric equality is that all things in the biosphere have an equal right to live and blossom and to reach their own individual forms of unfolding and self-realization within the larger Self-realization. This basic intuition is that all organisms and entities in the ecosphere, as parts of the interrelated whole, are equal in intrinsic worth. Naess suggests that biocentric equality as an intuition is true in principle, although in the process of living, all species use each other as food, shelter, etc. Mutual predation is a biological fact of life, and many of the world's religions have struggled with the spiritual implications of this. Some animal liberationists who attempt to side-step this problem by advocating vegetarianism are forced to say that the entire plant kingdom including rain forests have no right to their own

existence. This evasion flies in the face of the basic intuition of equality.[4] Aldo Leopold expressed this intuition when he said humans are "plain citizens" of the biotic community, not lord and master over all other species.

Biocentric equality is intimately related to the all-inclusive Self-realization in the sense that if we harm the rest of Nature then we are harming ourselves. There are no boundaries and everything is interrelated. But insofar as we perceive things as individual organisms or entities, the insight draws us to respect all human and non-human individuals in their own right as parts of the whole without feeling the need to set up hierarchies of species with humans at the top.

The practical implications of this intuition or norm suggest that we should live with minimum rather than maximum impact on other species and on the Earth in general. Thus we see another aspect of our guiding principle: "simple in means, rich in ends." Further practical implications of these norms are discussed at length in chapters seven and eight.

A fuller discussion of the biocentric norm as it unfolds itself in practice begins with the realization that we, as individual humans, and as communities of humans, have vital needs which go beyond such basics as food, water, and shelter to include love, play, creative expression, intimate relationships with a particular landscape (or Nature taken in its entirety) as well as intimate relationships with other humans, and the vital need for spiritual growth, for becoming a mature human being.

Our vital material needs are probably more simple than many realize. In technocratic-industrial societies there is overwhelming propaganda and advertising which encourages false needs and destructive desires designed to foster increased production and consumption of goods. Most of this actually diverts us from facing reality in an objective way and from beginning the "real work" of spiritual growth and maturity.

Many people who do not see themselves as supporters of deep ecology nevertheless recognize an overriding vital human need for a healthy and high-quality natural environment for humans, if not for all life, with minimum intrusion of toxic waste, nuclear radiation from human enterprises, minimum acid rain and smog, and enough free flowing wilderness so humans can get in touch with their sources, the natural rhythms and the flow of time and place.

Drawing from the minority tradition and from the wisdom of many who have offered the insight of interconnectedness, we recognize that deep ecologists can offer suggestions for gaining maturity and encouraging the processes of harmony with Nature, but that there is no grand solution which is guaranteed to save us from ourselves.

The ultimate norms of deep ecology suggest a view of the nature of reality and our place as an individual (many in the one) in the larger scheme of things. They cannot be fully grasped intellectually but are ultimately experiential. We encourage readers to consider our further discussion of the psychological, social and ecological implications of these norms in later chapters.

As a brief summary of our position thus far, figure 5-1 summarizes the contrast between the dominant worldview and deep ecology.

Figure 5-1

Dominant Worldview	*Deep Ecology*
Dominance over Nature	Harmony with Nature
Natural environment as resource for humans	All nature has intrinsic worth/biospecies equality
Material/economic growth for growing human population	Elegantly simple material needs (material goals serving the larger goal of self-realization)
Belief in ample resource reserves	Earth "supplies" limited
High technological progress and solutions	Appropriate technology; nondominating science
Consumerism	Doing with enough/recycling
National/centralized community	Minority tradition/bioregion

III. BASIC PRINCIPLES OF DEEP ECOLOGY

In April 1984, during the advent of spring and John Muir's birthday, George Sessions and Arne Naess summarized fifteen years of thinking on the principles of deep ecology while camping in Death Valley, California. In this great and special place, they articulated these

principles in a literal, somewhat neutral way, hoping that they would be understood and accepted by persons coming from different philosophical and religious positions.

Readers are encouraged to elaborate their own versions of deep ecology, clarify key concepts and think through the consequences of acting from these principles.

Basic Principles

1. The well-being and flourishing of human and nonhuman Life on Earth have value in themselves (synonyms: intrinsic value, inherent value). 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 *vital* 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. These 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 value) 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 try to implement the necessary changes.

Naess and Sessions Provide Comments on the Basic Principles:

RE (1). This formulation refers to the biosphere, or more accurately, to the ecosphere as a whole. This includes individuals, species, populations, habitat, as well as human and nonhuman cultures. From our current knowledge of all-pervasive intimate relationships, this implies

a fundamental deep concern and respect. Ecological processes of the planet should, on the whole, remain intact. "The world environment should remain 'natural'" (Gary Snyder).

The term "life" is used here in a more comprehensive nontechnical way to refer also to what biologists classify as "nonliving"; rivers (watersheds), landscapes, ecosystems. For supporters of deep ecology, slogans such as "Let the river live" illustrate this broader usage so common in most cultures.

Inherent value as used in (1) is common in deep ecology literature ("The presence of inherent value in a natural object is independent of any awareness, interest, or appreciation of it by a conscious being.")[5]

RE (2). More technically, this is a formulation concerning diversity and complexity. From an ecological standpoint, complexity and symbiosis are conditions for maximizing diversity. So-called simple, lower, or primitive species of plants and animals contribute essentially to the richness and diversity of life. They have value in themselves and are not merely steps toward the so-called higher or rational life forms. The second principle presupposes that life itself, as a process over evolutionary time, implies an increase of diversity and richness. The refusal to acknowledge that some life forms have greater or lesser intrinsic value than others (see points 1 and 2) runs counter to the formulations of some ecological philosophers and New Age writers.

Complexity, as referred to here, is different from complication. Urban life may be more complicated than life in a natural setting without being more complex in the sense of multifaceted quality.

RE (3). The term "vital need" is left deliberately vague to allow for considerable latitude in judgment. Differences in climate and related factors, together with differences in the structures of societies as they now exist, need to be considered (for some Eskimos, snowmobiles are necessary today to satisfy vital needs).

People in the materially richest countries cannot be expected to reduce their excessive interference with the nonhuman world to a moderate level overnight. The stabilization and reduction of the human population will take time. Interim strategies need to be developed. But this in no way excuses the present complacency—the extreme seriousness of our current situation must first be realized.

But the longer we wait the more drastic will be the measures needed. Until deep changes are made, substantial decreases in richness and diversity are liable to occur: the rate of extinction of species will be ten to one hundred times greater than any other period of earth history.

RE (4). The United Nations Fund for Population Activities in their State of World Population Report (1984) said that high human population growth rates (over 2.0 percent annum) in many developing countries "were diminishing the quality of life for many millions of people." During the decade 1974-1984, the world population grew by nearly 800 million—more than the size of India. "And we will be adding about one Bangladesh (population 93 million) per annum between now and the year 2000."

The report noted that "The growth rate of the human population has declined for the first time in human history. But at the same time, the number of people being added to the human population is bigger than at any time in history because the population base is larger."

Most of the nations in the developing world (including India and China) have as their official government policy the goal of reducing the rate of human population increase, but there are debates over the types of measures to take (contraception, abortion, etc.) consistent with human rights and feasibility.

The report concludes that if all governments set specific population targets as public policy to help alleviate poverty and advance the quality of life, the current situation could be improved.

As many ecologists have pointed out, it is also absolutely crucial to curb population growth in the so-called developed (i.e., overdeveloped) industrial societies. Given the tremendous rate of consumption and waste production of individuals in these societies, they represent a much greater threat and impact on the biosphere per capita than individuals in Second and Third World countries.

RE (5). This formulation is mild. For a realistic assessment of the situation, see the unabbreviated version of the I.U.C.N.'s *World Conservation Strategy.* There are other works to be highly recommended, such as Gerald Barney's *Global 2000 Report to the President of the United States.*

The slogan of "noninterference" does not imply that humans should not modify some ecosystems as do other species. Humans have modified the earth and will probably continue to do so. At issue is the nature and extent of such interference.

The fight to preserve and extend areas of wilderness or near-wilderness should continue and should focus on the general ecological functions of these areas (one such function: large wilderness areas are required in the biosphere to allow for continued evolutionary speciation of animals and plants). Most present designated wilderness areas and game preserves are not large enough to allow for such speciation.

RE (6). Economic growth as conceived and implemented today by the industrial states is incompatible with (1)-(5). There is only a faint resemblance between ideal sustainable forms of economic growth and present policies of the industrial societies. And "sustainable" still means "sustainable in relation to humans."

Present ideology tends to value things because they are scarce and because they have a commodity value. There is prestige in vast consumption and waste (to mention only several relevant factors).

Whereas "self-determination," "local community," and "think globally, act locally," will remain key terms in the ecology of human societies, nevertheless the implementation of deep changes requires increasingly global action—action across borders.

Governments in Third World countries (with the exception of Costa Rica and a few others) are uninterested in deep ecological issues. When the governments of industrial societies try to promote ecological measures through Third World governments, practically nothing is accomplished (e.g., with problems of desertification). Given this situation, support for global action through nongovernmental international organizations becomes increasingly important. Many of these organizations are able to act globally "from grassroots to grassroots," thus avoiding negative governmental interference.

Cultural diversity today requires advanced technology, that is, techniques that advance the basic goals of each culture. So-called soft, intermediate, and alternative technologies are steps in this direction.

RE (7). Some economists criticize the term "quality of life" because it is supposed to be vague. But on closer inspection, what they consider to be vague is actually the nonquantitative nature of the term. One cannot quantify adequately what is important for the quality of life as discussed here, and there is no need to do so.

RE (8). There is ample room for different opinions about priorities: what should be done first, what next? What is most urgent? What is clearly necessary as opposed to what is highly desirable but not absolutely pressing?

Interview With Arne Naess

The following excerpts are from an interview with Arne Naess conducted at the Zen Center of Los Angeles in April 1982. It was originally published as an interview in *Ten Directions.*[6] In the interview, Naess further discusses the major perspective of deep ecology. We include it at the conclusion of this chapter so that the reader can gain further information in preparation for reading the remaining chapters.

"The essence of deep ecology is to ask deeper questions. The adjective 'deep' stresses that we ask why and how, where others do not. For instance, ecology as a science does not ask what kind of a society would be the best for maintaining a particular ecosystem—that is considered a question for value theory, for politics, for ethics. As long as ecologists keep narrowly to their science, they do not ask such questions. What we need today is a tremendous expansion of ecological thinking in what I call ecosophy. *Sophy* comes from the Greek term *sophia,* 'wisdom,' which relates to ethics, norms, rules, and practice. Ecosophy, or deep ecology, then, involves a shift from science to wisdom.

"For example, we need to ask questions like, Why do we think that economic growth and high levels of consumption are so important? The conventional answer would be to point to the economic consequences of not having economic growth. But in deep ecology, we ask whether the present society fulfills basic human needs like love and security and access to nature, and, in so doing, we question our society's underlying assumptions. We ask which society, which education, which form of religion, is beneficial for all life on the planet as a whole, and then we ask further what we need to do in order to make the necessary changes. We are not limited to a scientific approach; we have an obligation to verbalize a total view.

"Of course, total views may differ. Buddhism, for example, provides a fitting background or context for deep ecology, certain Christian groups have formed platforms of action in favor of deep ecology, and I myself have worked out my own philosophy, which I call ecosophy. In general, however, people do not question deeply enough to explicate or make clear a total view. If they did, most would agree with saving the planet from the destruction that's in progress. A total view, such as deep ecology, can provide a single motivating force for all the activities and movements aimed at saving the planet from human exploitation and domination.

". . . It's easier for deep ecologists than for others because we have certain fundamental values, a fundamental view of what's meaningful in life, what's worth maintaining, which makes it completely clear that we're opposed to further development for the sake of increased domination and an increased standard of living. The material standard of living should be drastically reduced and the quality of life, in the sense of basic satisfaction in the depths of one's heart or soul, should be maintained or increased. This view is intuitive, as are all important views, in the sense that it can't be proven. As Aristotle said, it shows a lack of education to try to prove everything, because you have to have a starting point. You can't prove the methodology of science, you can't prove logic, because logic presupposes fundamental premises.

"All the sciences are fragmentary and incomplete in relation to basic rules and norms, so it's very shallow to think that science can solve our problems. Without basic norms, there is no science.

". . . People can then oppose nuclear power without having to read thick books and without knowing the myriad facts that are used in newspapers and periodicals. And they must also find others who feel the same and form circles of friends who give one another confidence and support in living in a way that the majority find ridiculous, naive, stupid and simplistic. But in order to do that, one must already have enough self-confidence to follow one's intuition—a quality very much lacking in broad sections of the populace. Most people follow the trends and advertisements and become philosophical and ethical cripples.

"There is a basic intuition in deep ecology that we have no right to destroy other living beings without sufficient reason. Another norm is that, with maturity, human beings will experience joy when other life forms experience joy and sorrow when other life forms experience sorrow. Not only will we feel sad when our brother or a dog or a cat feels sad, but we will grieve when living beings, including landscapes, are destroyed. In our civilization, we have vast means of destruction at our disposal but extremely little maturity in our feelings. Only a very narrow range of feelings have interested most human beings until now.

"For deep ecology, there is a core democracy in the biosphere. . . . In deep ecology, we have the goal not only of stabilizing human population but also of reducing it to a sustainable minimum without revo-

lution or dictatorship. I should think we must have no more than 100 million people if we are to have the variety of cultures we had one hundred years ago. Because we need the conservation of human cultures, just as we need the conservation of animal species.

". . . Self-realization is the realization of the potentialities of life. Organisms that differ from each other in three ways give us less diversity than organisms that differ from each other in one hundred ways. Therefore, the self-realization we experience when we identify with the universe is heightened by an increase in the number of ways in which individuals, societies, and even species and life forms realize themselves. The greater the diversity, then, the greater the self-realization. This seeming duality between individuals and the totality is encompassed by what I call the Self and the Chinese call the Tao. Most people in deep ecology have had the feeling—usually, but not always, in nature—that they are connected with something greater than their ego, greater than their name, their family, their special attributes as an individual—a feeling that is often called oceanic because many have it on the ocean. Without that identification, one is not easily drawn to become involved in deep ecology. . . .

". . . Insofar as these deep feelings are religious, deep ecology has a religious component, and those people who have done the most to make societies aware of the destructive way in which we live in relation to natural settings have had such religious feelings. Rachel Carson, for example, says that we *cannot* do what we do, we have no religious or ethical justification for behaving as we do toward nature. . . . She is saying that we are simply not permitted to behave in that way. Some will say that nature is not man's property, it's the property of God; others will say it in other ways. The main point is that deep ecology has a religious component, fundamental intuitions that everyone must cultivate if he or she is to have a life based on values and not function like a computer.

". . . To maximize self-realization—and I don't mean self as ego but self in a broader sense—we need maximum diversity and maximum symbiosis. . . . Diversity, then, is a fundamental norm and a common delight. As deep ecologists, we take a natural delight in diversity, as long as it does not include crude, intrusive forms, like Nazi culture, that are destructive to others."

Now I see the secret of the making of the best persons.
It is to grow in the open air, and to eat and sleep
with the earth.
—*Walt Whitman,* Leaves of Grass