

Situated Knowledge

As a journal of environmental thought, *UNDERCURRENTS* is concerned with the configurations of knowledge that arise from the current environmental debate. Human transgressions against the natural world have made certain perspectives and knowledge visible and discussable. Both in terms of its critique of the modern human project and its prescriptions for the direction in which human society should be moving, environmental thought highlights connections between the destruction of the natural world and a crisis in human identity.

The papers presented in this edition of *UNDERCURRENTS* represent some of the perspectives that arise when negotiating the increasingly contested frames of reference and relevant information that mark relationships between human and nonhuman nature. They point toward the creation of contextual knowledge and, in so doing, focus on a process of formulating the kinds of questions we ask about the human relation to nonhuman nature.

With its concept of embodied knowledge, Karen Birkemeyer's article "Toward a Theory of the Body in Critical Social Change" addresses the mediated space our bodies offer as a way of understanding the natural world and at the same time critiquing social reality. Tzeporah Berman's "Law As If Nature Mattered" continues this critique of social reality by examining the human-centred view of law and the difficulty of developing some standing for the natural world in legal matters. In "Voices: Women's Music in Canada as Situated Knowledge," Joanne Nonnekes explores the ways in which the "partial perspectives" or "situated knowledge" of five Canadian folksingers operate in opposition to the universalizing aspects of an overarching patriarchal culture. The situated knowledge of night is the subject of Andrew Satterthwaite's article, "When the Eye Cannot See: Rethinking Night," as it wrestles with the contested meaning of night as a dark avenue into the relationship between humans and nature. The concluding article by Andy Fisher, "The Nonhuman in Human Psychological Development," rethinks many of the basic tenets of modern psychological theory in light of the current ecological crisis. The sense of self presented by psychologists ignores the embeddedness of humans in the natural world.

We present these papers, together with original artwork, poetry and prose, in an attempt to dialogue with you, the reader, around what we perceive as a human identity crisis. We believe that it is through reknowing and reconstructing the natural world and the relationship between human and nonhuman nature that new questions can be asked and new dialogue initiated.

