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UNDERCURRENTS

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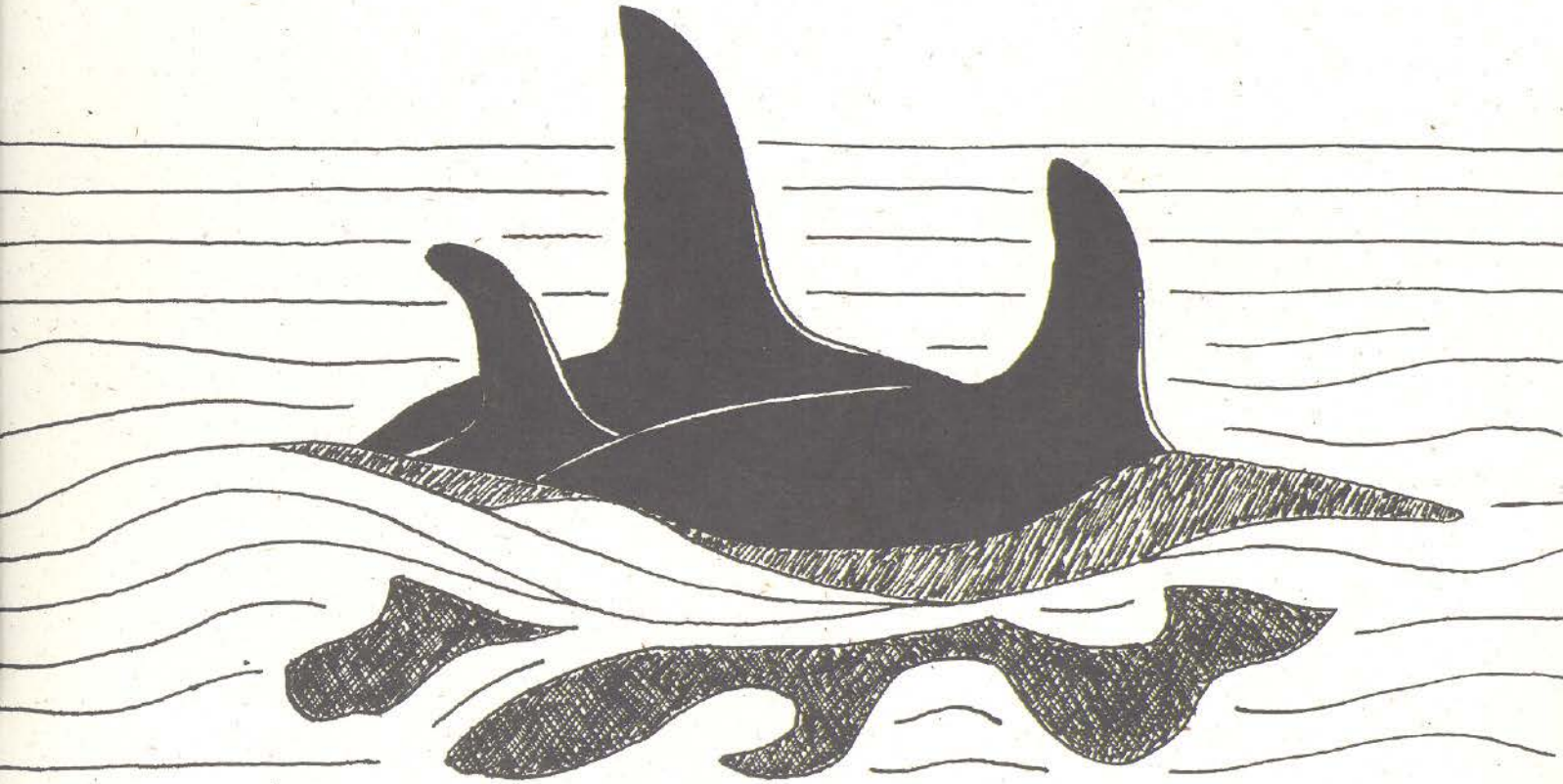

theme: human interaction with the natural environment

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Introduction

Welcome to the first issue of **Undercurrents**. This journal is the initiative of a group of graduate students at the Faculty of Environmental Studies at York University. Our motivation to publish a journal comes from a realization of the need for a forum to present critical and innovative graduate student work in the area of environmental studies. This, however, is an area of great diversity and a glance at the table of contents may leave some readers re-examining their assumptions about their notion of "environment." Indeed, it is the philosophy of **Undercurrents** to pursue the widest possible understanding of environment.

Working within the interdisciplinary setting of the Faculty, we found that we share the belief that one-dimensional or single discipline approaches to our complex contemporary social and environmental problems are inadequate. What is needed, we feel, are approaches that are informed by the different disciplines but not limited by them. We want to present scholarly, but also creative and accessible works that challenge conventional thinking in the area of our annual theme.

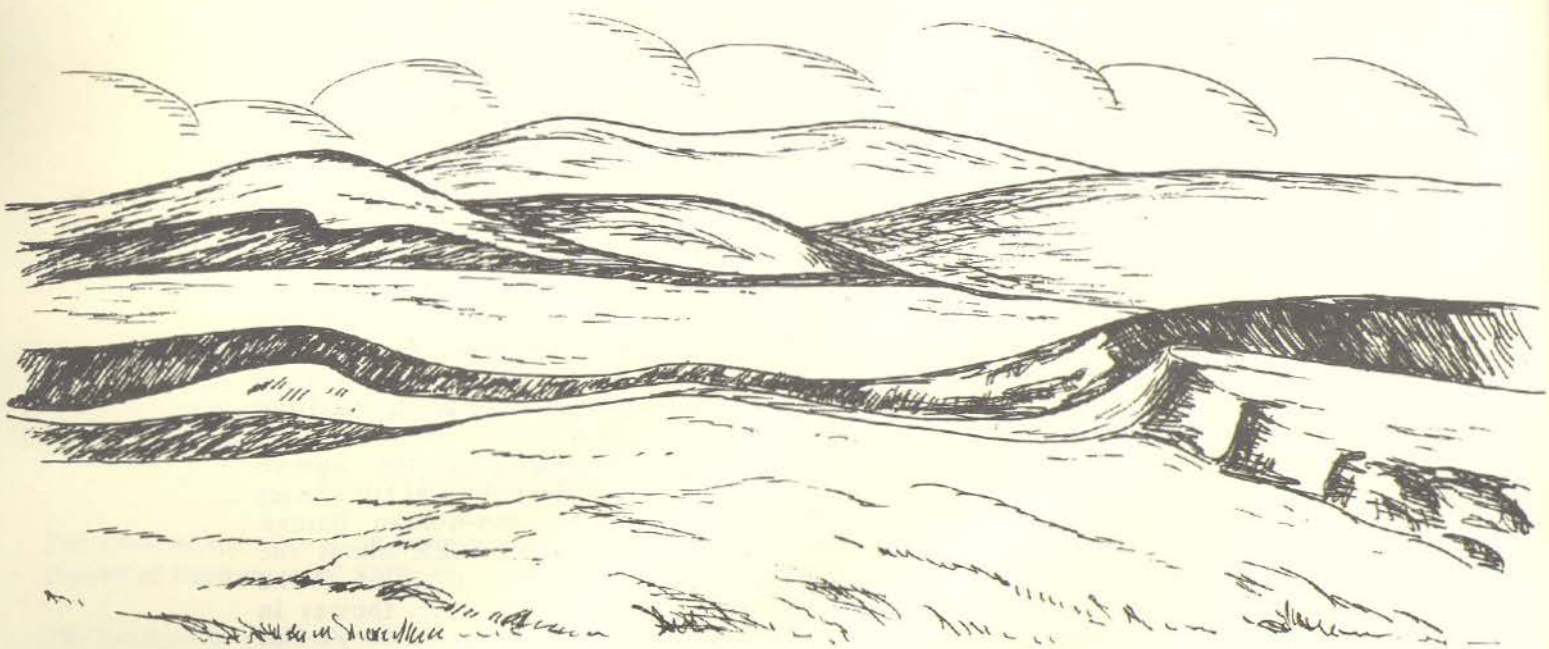
For this first issue we have chosen to explore the theme, "**Human Interaction with the Natural Environment.**" The thread that winds its way through each of the papers is that at the heart of our "environmental crisis" is a flawed, but pervasive view of nature. Certainly, many views of "nature" can be found within society, but overall patterns reflect a human-centered and narrow utilitarian perspective. If we hope to change the destructive trends in society, we have to start rethinking our relationship to nature by redefining what we mean when we say "nature" and perhaps, also, by redefining what it means to be "human." We believe healthy and dignified human relationships are inextricably linked to healthy and caring human/non-human relationships.

This issue begins with a paper by Jacqueline Pearce, in which she provides an overview of the various streams of thought within environmentalism and eco-feminism, and in turn, explores some of their common ground. The second paper by Gary Genosko offers a provocative re-reading of Rachel Carson's classic **Silent Spring**. His imagery gives new meaning to the concepts of "the war against nature" and "military zone," where women get caught in the crossfire and children are conscripted into the battle. In a different light, Leesa Fawcett's analysis of anthropomorphism is a hopeful re-evaluation of this once taboo form of metaphor. She suggests that anthropomorphism can be a positive characteristic of a caring relationship with non-human nature. Lori Scheffel's paper on traditional literary expressions of the human relationship to other animals asks us to re-consider the potential for stories as a means for fostering healthier attitudes to non-human beings. Following this paper is Adrian Ivakhiv's modern-day fable about the disrespect for life that seems to characterize Industrial civilization. Mike Carr's paper is an exploration of paganistic and pantheistic themes in Antoine de Saint Exupery's **The Little Prince**, and Timothy Findley's **Not Wanted on the Voyage**. Finally, John R. Livingston's paper on the **World Conservation Strategy** attempts to locate this influential document within a long tradition of utopian thought, and considers the ironic possibility that it is no more than a blueprint for the dystopian domestication of the planet.

At each stage of the Journal's development the Editorial Board has received a great deal of support from students, staff and faculty. What follows, then, must be considered a joint effort by those who are acknowledged as well as others who provided assistance, encouragement and helpful suggestions along the way. We are especially grateful to Steve Lloyd and Jean-Marc Daigle for their participation in the group. Credit must also go to Mark Jowett, Julia Murphy, and Anne Pyke who were instrumental in helping to plan the Journal when it was still an idea. We are also very thankful to Dean Edward Spence, Professor Gerry Carrothers, and to Frances Chan.

The presentation of critical environmental studies is, we think, one way of making academic research more relevant to our urgent social and ecological problems. With this Journal, then, we enter into and hope to encourage a thoughtful dialogue on these diverse issues. We wish to challenge mainstream thinking with these undercurrents of thought. We hope you enjoy the contributions to the dialogue in this issue.

The Editors



Approaches in Environmentalism and Feminism

by Jacqueline Pearce *

There is a global crisis. It manifests itself in war, in poverty and social injustices, in rape, in violence against children, and in the assault on nature. There are those who interpret all these problems as unrelated and temporary, and there are those who consider these problems, not as separate, but as the result of one single crisis of worldview, or world/self-consciousness. Environmentalists and feminists are two groups which have emerged in reaction to the crises of our time. While their initial concerns may have been quite separate, today the two focuses are beginning to come together as the interconnection of global problems is revealed.

Labels such as "environmentalism" and "feminism" tend to obscure the varieties of opinion which fall under each heading, and to imply only one definition. However, both feminism and environmentalism include a spectrum of proponents ranging from conservative to transformative. In this paper I would like to outline some general categories which I hope will help illuminate the various approaches within environmentalism and feminism. These are: maintainer, reformer, radical and visionary.[1] I call them "approaches" because they are ways of approaching the world (society and nature). It is my feeling that, while feminism and environmentalism originate from different concerns, at the transformation oriented end of the two spectrums the concerns and analysis of both begin to intersect. Their difference is in emphasis and terminology rather than substance.

In general, the maintainer approach falls outside of feminism and environmentalism. However, a recognition of the existence of the maintainer category is useful in helping set the other approaches in context. Maintainers see the world as set. They tend to cling on to the way things are, desiring to maintain rather than change things. They view any problems which arise in society, or which are caused by our society (that is, Western society), as superficial, temporary, and solvable through economics or technological application. Maintainers may at times use language which seems to imply a desire for change, but when they talk of "progress" and "development" they refer only to the spreading or escalation of the current way of doing things.

The reformers' approach to the world and problems within it is the least threatening to maintainers. By concentrating on individual issues and problems, reformers tinker with parts of the system, but leave the system (the way of things supported by the maintainer) intact. Reformers generally feel that problems or crises can be curbed through the regulation of behaviour, and that change can come about within the system, or within "the way things are."

Radicals feel there is a problem with the current way things are that mere reforms can't alter. They wish to overthrow the structures of society, and to change or replace the whole system. There is a danger in the radicals' approach in that it can lead to the substitution of one structure for another without any real change to the patterns of behavior and interaction. It is easy for the maintainer to turn general opinion against the radical by raising fear that the radical threatens society's cherished values and current way of life.

Visionaries[2] are perhaps the most threatening to maintainers because they attempt to transform those very values which the maintainers use as their defense. The visionary approach focuses on what it sees as the core or nerve centre of society, the mythology, values and self-understanding of the society, which are usually safely insulated from the effects of any tinkering or altering done to the society's structural manifestations. The visionary emphasizes the need for a change in culture and consciousness, feeling that any revolutionary changes in the behaviour and structure of society must evolve from this core. The visionary is inspired by long-term and utopian vision.

These four categories I have just described are a simplistic division of possible approaches, and are not without overlap. A maintainer, for example, may appear to welcome

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reforms in order to deflect attention, consciously or not, from the assumptions about the world that he/she clings to. A visionary on the other hand, may act out of the space of the reformer or radical because his/her personal vision is difficult to communicate, because of pressure to "act," or because results of a kind may be more recognizably and quickly seen in response to reforms.

Environmentalists are concerned with the way we, as a society, treat the natural environment. Even within this central concern there are a variety of approaches, and a variety of ways "environment" is understood and related to. The maintainer, for example, views nature as a collection of resources with varying degrees of potential for human use. Resources, whether minerals, animals, plants or "scenic" areas, are considered to be objects which are, for all intents and purposes, devoid of life. Humans, if considered a part of nature at all, are considered, by virtue of their rationality, to be superior and in control. Our current industry and economy depends on the maintenance of this view of nature.

Many environmentalists' arguments in defense of nature fall within the maintainer view, even though their sentiments may not. The terms "environment" and "environmentalist" are themselves products of the view which sees nature as external to humans. The resource conservation standpoint, for example, does not criticize society's way of thinking about nature or of doing things, it merely asks us to do things a bit more carefully, to "use" nature more "wisely" and with some thought for the availability of natural "resources" into the future. The typical reform-oriented environmentalist (environmentalists most visible in the media) attacks environmental problems piecemeal, focusing on individual issues rather than on common roots or deeper connections between the issues. This type of environmentalist tends to seek quick reforms (which, while urgently needed, may turn out to be stop gaps only).

In general the radical environmentalist category refers to those individuals or groups who claim that a switch in political ideology, or in the structuring of society, is what is needed to curtail environmental degradation. Marxists, for example, call for a redistribution of resources and a halt to their use for capitalist profit. However, this restructuring does not attempt to alter the maintainer's definition of nature as object. There are also a number of environmental groups, such as Greenpeace and Earth First!, who have been labeled "radical." However, this label is based more on the actions of the groups than on any overall plan they might have to restructure society. These groups practice direct action in an attempt to prevent specific activities such as whaling or the cutting of forests. The results are immediate and usually media catching, but are not necessarily long-term.

Visionaries see a link between how we conceive of nature and how we act. If we are able to define nature as "other" (which the word "environment" implies), then we will not be able to recognize our place within nature. Visionaries criticize the dominant worldview (that held by the maintainer) for its tendency to dichotomize (for example, to separate mind from body, intellect from intuition, culture from nature) and to assume one must be better than the other. Visionaries seek alternatives to hierarchical thinking through the validation of, for example, both intuition and reason, use-value and intrinsic value, action and vision. Visionaries wish to re-subjectify nature, and to make valid non-utilitarian arguments for the preservation of nature. They seek to challenge and transform the very conception of what it means to be human and what it means to be nature.

To summarize the three general environmental approaches, reform environmentalists concentrate on being more careful with resources, radicals concentrate on restructuring control and distribution of resources, and visionaries focus on altering the definition of nature so that "resources" no longer exist. The first focuses on changing behaviour, the second on restructuring the society in which behaviour occurs, and the third on transforming the consciousness from which behaviour flows.

While feminism in general does not specifically include the natural environment in its sphere of concern, many feminists have begun to include a concern for nature, and for connected issues such as peace and nuclear disarmament, into their analyses and focuses. In Western society women have traditionally been associated with nature, a devalued nature which is considered separate and inferior to the world of men and culture/intellect. Feminists are reacting to this association, as well as to environmental degradation, when they bring environmental concerns into feminism. Reaction may take a variety of forms.

Some feminists, who may be considered reformers, react to the women-nature connection

by attempting to sever women's association with nature and to join with male culture in its position over nature. This feminist perspective seeks to "better" women's position (or at least that of some women), but offers no more than superficial criticism of the "way things are." It simply calls for greater mobility of women within the hierarchy of the system, but does not at all call for a different kind of system (it questions neither the structures of society or the worldview).

Radical feminists such as Marxist feminists and socialist feminists have more extensive analyses, but generally do not incorporate the dominant conception of nature into their critiques. They seek to sever the connection of women with nature, recognizing it as socially constructed, but for the most part, they do not question the socially constructed nature-culture dualism. Marxist feminists, for example, associate themselves with male workers in an attempt to overthrow capitalism. They feel that problems will be alleviated once the capitalist system is replaced, but do not question the conception of nature as a resource which can be utilized to meet the material needs of humans. Some Marxist feminists have suggested that by associating nature with the oppressed class of workers, it too might be incorporated into the concerns of Marxists. Again, this assumes that altering of structures will alter relationships, but does not address the conceptual assumptions which influence relationships.

Another radical approach within feminism is a branch which is referred to specifically as "radical feminism." It roots women's oppression in reproductive biology and in male-control of women's fertility and sexuality, and believes women will be free only when they are "no longer bound by the constraints of compulsory heterosexuality and compulsory child-bearing and child-rearing roles".[3] Some radical feminists seek to emphasize women's association with nature rather than to sever it. These feminists see women's connection to nature as feeding into a separate "women's culture." They desire, not to gain a higher place in patriarchal society, but to separate from patriarchal society or to supplant patriarchy with a more matriarchal society based on values deemed already present in "women's culture." The "radical feminist" approach differs from the Marxist approaches in that, not only does it focus on changing the organization and structure of society, it often attempts to integrate alternative modes of knowing and being, such as women's mystical, intuitive or spiritual experiences and a celebration of the female body, into feminist theory and epistemology. In this respect it resembles the focus of the visionary. Although this type of radical feminism may wish to alter society's value and consciousness of nature and women, it tends to confirm or even exaggerate the dualistic conception of women and men as essentially different and separate. For this reason I have associated it with the general radical category rather than with the visionary, although it obviously has visionary elements.

Visionary feminism entails addressing the link between women's oppression and the oppression of nature, and the interconnections between all forms of oppression. While recognizing the structural forms oppression takes, it focuses on the conceptual basis. In other words, it seeks a transformation of the consciousness of both men and women so that the current structures and behaviours no longer have any foundation from which to stand. It seeks to reconceptualize what it means to be human, what it means to be man or woman, and what it means to live and interact on this earth. The visionary approach requires a new human vision of being and relationship which does not dichotomize or limit possibilities. The visionary feminist seems to be particularly sensitive to the need to address the current disjuncture between action and theory in order to form an approach to social change that is rooted in both.

While the reformer, radical and visionary may all have a role to play in bringing about needed change, it is the visionary that is most often neglected or maligned by the other groups, and marginalized by society in general. Much of the recent debate within environmental thought has focused on internal name calling and rivalry.[4] While recognizing the variety of focuses within environmentalism and attempting to break the general stereotype of "environmentalist," I also feel it is a mistake for different interests within environmentalism to alienate themselves from each other by emphasizing differences rather than commonalities. I feel that visionary feminism and visionary environmentalism, for example, have much in common, and can gain strength in relationship.

Both visionary feminism and visionary environmentalism developed in response to what they saw as lacking in feminism and in environmentalism. Within the broad environmentalist group, individuals began to criticize the tendency for environmental problems to be discussed in the utilitarian terms of the maintainers and to be treated as separate unrelated

issues. Many of these people felt a conflict between their own non-utilitarian love for nature and the approach they felt compelled to take as environmentalists attempting to bring environmental problems to the attention of the public and legal system. In 1973 Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess coined the terms "shallow ecology" and "deep ecology" to describe the reform oriented approach common to environmentalists and a deeper or spiritual oriented approach which developed from a sensitivity to the relationship between human and nonhuman life.

Deep ecology can be broadly defined to include all those individuals engaged in deeply questioning cultural assumptions about nature and the place of humans in nature.[5] Many deep ecologists are inspired by a personal experience of nature (especially wild nature) which leads them to intuit or sense that all components of nature have intrinsic value and that each depends, both physically and "spiritually," on its connection to the whole. Deep ecologists question the cultural assumption that human beings are superior to other components of nature, and that humans can and should control nature. In attempting to free themselves from this cultural baggage, they look to the above personal experience as a more valid informant about human-nature relationships (this validation of personal experience is similar to feminist reclamation of women's personal experience as knowledge source).

The basic difference between the deep ecological approach and the ecological feminist approach is that deep ecologists speak of anthropocentrism (human-centredness) as the root of our culture's destructive relationship with nature, while ecofeminists speak of androcentrism (male-centredness) as the root. This critical focus on anthropocentrism also differentiates deep ecologists from other visionaries, such as social ecologists who do not necessarily question the notion of human significance.[6] Deep ecologists advocate biocentrism, or life-centredness, rather than human-centredness, claiming that all organisms and entities are equal in intrinsic worth and have an equal right to grow and unfold within the pattern of the whole. In suggesting that human beings are not superior or more significant, the intention of deep ecologists is not to devalue human life, but to resacrilize all of nature.

Deep ecology draws from a variety of disciplines, including ecology, psychology, history and philosophy, and the traditions of Christianity, Taoism, Buddhism, and Native Indian spirituality. It considers itself to be more an approach than an ideology, seeking to facilitate the process of questioning and of stretching perceptions, rather than attempting to articulate a specific platform. Deep ecology is then, not a fixed theory or static set of ideas, and may be described with some variation from person to person. It is described by George Sessions and Arne Naess as based on the following 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 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.*[7]

These statements are intended not as dogma, but as suggestions which each individual can interpret, qualify, and elaborate in his/her own way.

To summarize, visionary environmentalists criticize the dominant worldview's em-

phasis on individualism, independence, competitiveness, rationalism, centralization, homogenization, and material consumption. They seek to reclaim values such as interdependence, cooperation, caring, intuition, decentralization, diversity, and simplicity of material wants, and to expand our concept of community to include the nonhuman. They are guided by a utopian vision of a transformed society, yet recognize that such a vision is important, not as an end to be reached, but as a transforming tool. The term "visionary" encompasses both interior and exterior vision, recognizing that there are many ways of "seeing" and knowing. Ideally, the visionary attempts to reevaluate and reawaken possibilities of understanding and consciousness that have been suppressed or unrealized, and does not attempt to suggest that there is one "right way."

Although I have used deep ecology here to represent the visionary environmentalist category, I in no way wish to suggest that the category is limited to deep ecology. In general, the term "visionary environmentalist" refers to those individuals who base their work on the intuition of interrelatedness between human and nonhuman components of the global ecosystem, and who look to the cultural obscuring and distorting of this relation as the source of crisis.

Visionary feminists have a similar focus, but their approach is from the perspective of feminist analysis, which is deeply concerned with the oppression of women and with the exclusion of women from stories about the world. These feminists have also been called "eco-feminists," as their concerns incorporate the ecosystem. However, not all eco-feminists can be considered visionary, as I have attempted to show in my discussion of the various responses to the woman-nature connection.

Karen Warren's description of what she calls "transformative feminism" articulates much of what I mean by visionary feminism. She criticizes the four leading versions of feminism, "liberal feminism, traditional Marxist feminism, radical feminism, and socialist feminism," and calls for an ecological feminism which expands upon the "traditional conception of feminism as 'the movement to end women's oppression' by recognizing and making explicit the interconnections between all systems of oppression."[8] Drawing from Warren's definition and from Ynestra King's description of eco-feminism[9] I have outlined what seem to be the main principles of a visionary feminism:

1) The domination of nature and the domination of sex, race and class are intimately connected and mutually reinforcing. The liberation of women requires the elimination of all systems of oppression.

2) Reality is socially constructed. Hierarchy is a social construction projected onto nature and used to justify domination. Life on earth is an interconnected web, not a hierarchy.

3) Although the women-nature connection is a social construction it may be used as a vantage point for creating a different kind of culture which transcends the nature-culture distinction, and which draws from so-called "female" values and ethics (caring, nurturing, reciprocity, community, etc.).

4) While, as a subordinate group, women's experiences and ways of knowing may differ from mens', those experiences are themselves diverse and varied. We need to recognize common interests, and to celebrate and provide room for diversity (in natural and social systems).

5) We need to rethink what it means to be human from a non-patriarchal framework, recognizing interconnections between human and nonhuman nature. This would involve a "psychological restructuring of our attitudes and beliefs about ourselves and 'our world' (including nonhuman world) and a philosophical rethinking of the notion of self such that we see ourselves as both co-members of an ecological community and yet different from other members of it."[10]

6) Transformation on a personal level

requires a corresponding restructuring of social relations, economic and political structures, and science and technologies, according to principles of care and reciprocity rather than of individualism and control.

These characteristics of visionary feminism, while worded differently, correspond in many ways to the characteristics of visionary environmentalism. Both are based on a recognition of interconnection, diversity, and of the need to transform our consciousness, institutions and technology to reflect this recognition. Both understand the current escalation of environmental and social injustices as rising from the Western cultural construction of reality, and as reversible only through the deconstruction of that reality in order that new possibilities are revealed.

The visionary is often dismissed as utopian or impractical because he/she strives for a reality different from the present. The visionary may be criticized for not being adequately "political" or action-oriented because she/he sees significant social change as arising slowly out of a transformation of individual and cultural consciousness. However, action for the visionary, can occur on many levels: on a personal level of inner growth and exploration, on the level of ideas and intellectual argument, on the level of lifestyle and relationships, on the level of political activism, and on the level of myth-making, ritual and art. The visionary agrees that we need to deal with issues now, but says this is not enough. Until we transform our very way of thinking and relating to the world, the rape, destruction and exploitive manipulation of life will continue.

When I speak of transforming consciousness it seems very abstract and amorphous because it points to a way of being that is not yet fully visualized or understood. Once possibilities become known and familiar they gain solidity and reality. The ideas of the visionary may seem unrealistic and incomprehensible now, because they have been excluded from the maintainer's (dominant society's) repertoire of possibilities. The transforming of consciousness requires a recognition of the limitation of one's repertoire so that what lies outside these limitations can be glimpsed. The visionary's task is to deconstruct the dominant western version of reality so that its foundations and limitations can be determined and revealed, and to open new ground (through the encouragement of wonder, and the opening to ever broadening possibilities of experience and relationship) so that the seeds of a new reality can be planted. For the visionary, it is only through such exercises that the global crisis can be recognized for what it is and the possibilities of hope glimpsed.

Notes

1. These categories were inspired by a set of categories developed by Steve Kline to describe environmentalists (activist, radical, visionary) and by dian marino to describe social change (maintenance, reform, structural). Kline and marino are Professors at the Faculty of Environmental Studies, York University, North York, Ont.

2. I use the term "visionary" to give a sense of a broad, overarching perspective, rather than a narrowly focused perspective. The transformation orientation differentiates the visionary approach I describe from the more general use of the term "visionary." I considered using the term "transformative' instead of "visionary" in order to avoid any association of "vision" with sight dominance, but I felt "visionary" was a word with more resonations. For me, the word "vision" takes on a metaphorical quality which evokes an inner sense which is informed by more than sight or visualization

3. Karen Warren, "Feminism and Ecology: Making Connections," **Environmental Ethics**, 9:1 (1987), p.14.

4. See Murray Bookchin, "Social Ecology vs Deep Ecology" and Janet Biehl, "It's Deep, But is it Broad? An Eco-feminist Looks at Deep Ecology," **Kick It Over**, July 1988. These articles, while bringing up some important points, are written in a combative tone, dismissing deep ecology because of statements made primarily by Dave Foreman, founder of the activist-oriented environmental organization Earth First! While criticizing comments made by Foreman is justified, it is inaccurate to suggest that his personal opinion represents deep ecology as a whole, or even Earth First! as a whole. For a responsible comment on the deep ecology/eco-feminism/social ecology debate see Warwick Fox, "The Deep Ecology/Eco-feminism Debate and its Parallels," **Environmental Ethics**, 11 (1989).

5. This broad use of the term deep ecology includes many individuals who do not call themselves "deep ecologists" and who, in fact, prefer to steer away from the label for various reasons. John Livingston and Neil Evernden are Canadian examples. See Livingston, **The Fallacy of Wildlife Conservation** (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1981), Evernden, **The Natural Alien** (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), and other writings by Evernden and Livingston.

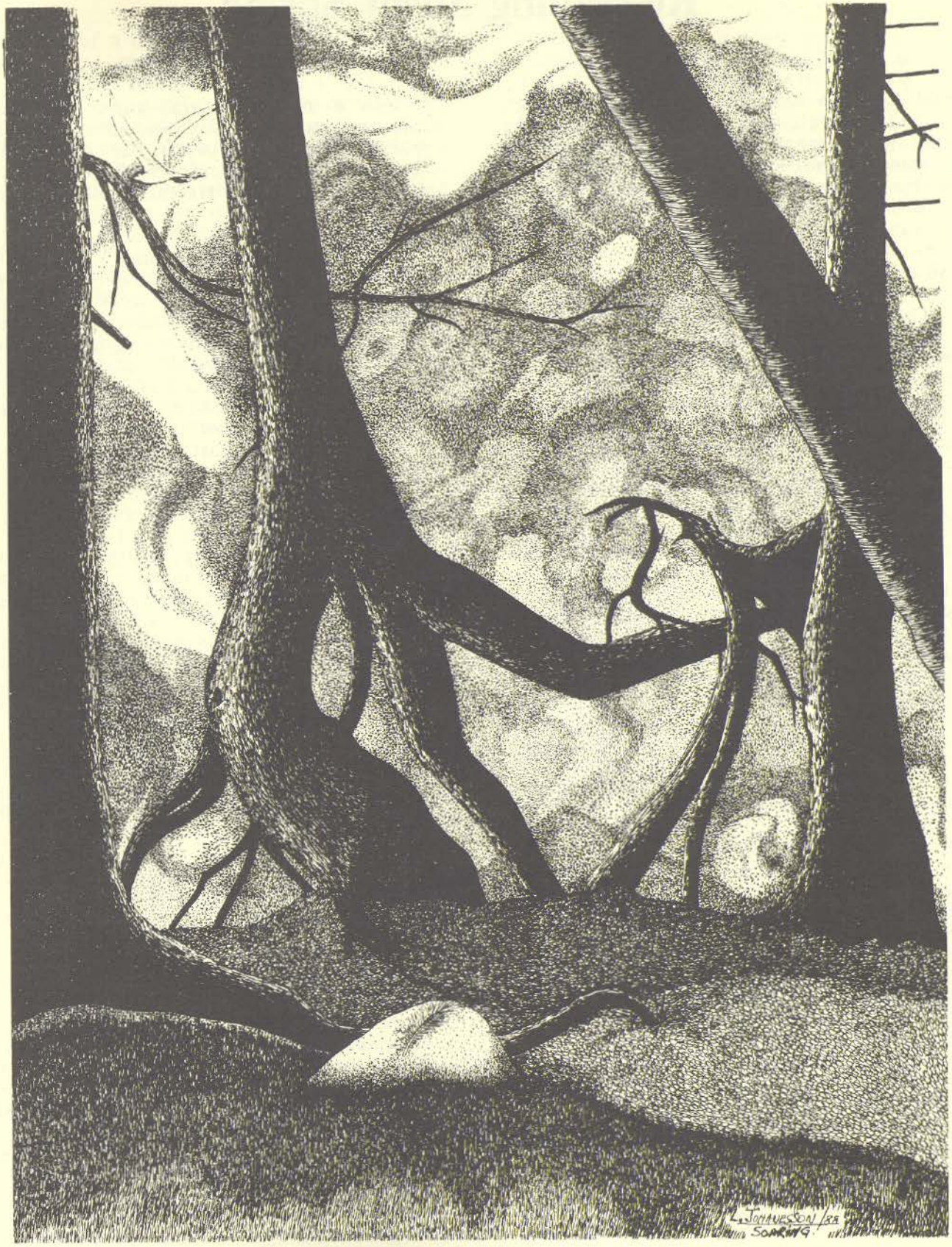
6. Social ecology is a visionary approach with roots in Marxism and anarchism. Although social ecology attempts to dissolve the hierarchical model of nature in which humans dominate, Murray Bookchin's writings imply that humans are the most significant species by virtue of their self-consciousness. For an elaboration of social ecology see **The Ecology of Freedom** (Palo Alto: Cheshire Books, 1982) and other writings by Murray Bookchin.

7. Bill Devall and George Sessions, **Deep Ecology** (Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith, 1985), p.70 (principles recorded in April 1984).

8. Warren, p.18

9. Ynestra King, "The Ecology of Feminism and the Feminism of Ecology," Harbinger: **The Journal of** Social Ecology, vol. 1 (1983), pp. 16-22.

10. Warren, p.19.



*Lars Johanesson is a Masters student in social psychology. His ambition is to write a sociological text and illustrate it, combining the rational and the intuitive. For him, trees are symbols of this combination.

Re-reading Silent Spring

by Gary A. Genosko *

Rachel Carson's historic book **Silent Spring**[1], published in 1962, may not have marked the beginning of what we might call modern environmentalism -- although she might have been the mother of such a movement -- but it did make a major contribution to the development of a widespread ecological consciousness and encouraged environmentally sound practices.

The fact that it was a major force does not explain why we should re-read it today. However, many "environmentalists" today are prepared to reproduce moments from their personal experiences of the public furor which the book caused. At their worst, such reminiscences may prove to be plastic enough to generate life-style advertisements based on the late 1980's near ubiquitous theme of nostalgia for the real, which can only be found in "the 1960's." At their best, one might recall that Carson made the idea of the interrelatedness of all living beings the central tenet of all her work and did so in an especially poignant way in **Silent Spring.**[2] In reflecting upon the life of the theme of interrelatedness, one may inquire into the implications of Carson's understanding of it in causal terms, thus implicating herself in what has been called the crisis of environmentalism.[3]

These are not so much reasons "why" we should re-read **Silent Spring** as they are expressions of the sense that in environmental thought one is constantly re-reading it, if only in bits, touching lightly upon the ideas (both deep and superficial) which it helped to popularize, and even being touched by the book in the oddest ways -- as one passes a dog-eared copy on the shelf of a used book store, or perusing the re-readings which placed it in a before-after frame: Frank Graham's **Since Silent Spring** (1970) and James Whorton's **Before Silent Spring** (1974).

The re-reading that I will present may be likened to a stone skipping across the surface of a pond: just as the stone makes contact with the water at certain points along its trajectory, my reading touches down upon an apparently disconnected series of images in the text. The images of men with spray guns, with assorted spraying paraphernalia and the accounts of women who lived with the indiscriminate application of pesticides and herbicides will serve to define the trajectory of this line of flight.

I consider these images because they represent moments of epiphany in my ongoing engagement with Carson's work in the larger context of a concern with the problematic status of military concepts in environmentalism and social science in general. Carson lead us to reconsider a certain kind of soldier: the man with the spray gun. As she put it: "under the philosophy that now seems to guide our destinies, nothing must get in the way of the man with the spray gun" (p. 83). Carson's use of "our" must be seen to refer to the destiny of humankind. However, the revelation that the **man** with the spray gun is a functionary of a destructive philosophical notion which holds sway over the destiny of humankind, gathers force from the reports and accounts of women. For instance, in **Silent Spring** we find that women wrote in despair about the disappearance of birds (p. 97), about the dread of having beautiful birds dying in the backyard (p. 101), about finding 12 dead robins lying on the lawn (p. 103), about the meaning of elm trees (p. 107), and the destruction of wildflowers (p. 72). It is insofar as women provide striking eyewitness accounts of spraying operations and report changes that have occurred around the home -- from the house-hold to the homeland -- after the "control men" have used their spray guns, that Carson's critique carries an affective force. Women, then, are victims of the spray gun because they stand in between the gun and its target.

In one instance Carson noted that a group of "field men" (United States Forest Service, Bridger National Forest, Wyoming) "considered it hilariously funny that an old lady had opposed the plan [spraying of sagelands] because the wildflowers would be destroyed" (p. 72). Still, women's action seeks to mitigate the "philosophy that seems to guide our destinies." What **seems** can be exposed, unmasked and debunked, thus opening up the

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possibility of a different destiny.

The noun **sprayer** has come to refer to a device which is used for spreading or diffusing insecticides and herbicides over vegetation. Early instruments for applying spray included the splint-broom which, circa 1885, was used to apply "bouillie Bordellaise," the so-called Bordeaux mixture, against fungal diseases of grapevines.[4] Indeed, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, wet arsenical poisons were sprayed by bucket, knapsack and barrel pumps, horse drawn, power and tower sprayers. Further, the noun **spray-er**, derived from the Greek **speirein** (to sow, scatter) retains the idea of spreading something but does so at the expense of what is spread. Ironically, one spreads a poison on what one has sown in order to reap what one has sown. Such is the work of the Reaper.

The question of the relationship between the fluid which moves through the adjustable nozzle and the target of the gun raises an important issue. If we say that the spray gun has a "target," as the "nozzle men" are want to say, we might mean an area, species, disease, or micro-organism. It is more appropriate to say of a gun that sprays that it has a direction since it is only in virtue of the folly of isolation that a target can be said to be taken down cleanly. Even if one wants to insist that the targets can be and are hit, such "targets" do not have clearly defined boundaries and neither, since we are dealing with a spray, does the ammunition. A central theme of **Silent Spring** is the dark folly of isolation in the light of the basic premise of ecology: the literal interrelatedness of the parts of the ecosystem. The facile, separative logic of the gun club, if you will or, as Carson put it, "the shotgun approach to nature," has outlived its uselessness. Even the man who shapes "our destinies" cannot escape nor protect himself from the vapors which he spreads because he wears them like a shroud.

Carson's explicit polemic against entomology culminates in her use of a remark made by F.H. Jacobs: "the activities of many so-called economic entomologists would make it appear that they operate in the belief that salvation lies at the end of a spray nozzle" (p. 229). The spray gun is the tool **par excellence** of the overzealous entomologist. Indeed, for Carson, many "outstanding entomologists" were no more than lackey's of the chemical industry. The spray gun has been and is a choice weapon in all environmental warfare. To think of the spray gun, however it has been modified, in the context of environmental warfare is to foreshadow and gather retrospectively its military applications in anti-plant warfare and area-denial operations. Although Carson did not explicitly investigate environmental warfare in **Silent Spring**, the equally disastrous consequences of non-military spraying programs might have been a revelation for some. That is, if Carson was right about the devastation wrought by spraying, then such spraying may be conducted on enemy territory against "foreign" soil, plants, water, human and non-human populations. By a diabolical subversion, **Silent Spring** could be read as a text for military planners.

In **Silent Spring** women quite literally speak out from under the spray gun: "they sprayed the quarter-acre lots of suburbia, drenching a housewife making a desperate effort to cover her garden" (p. 143). Under the misty veil spread by the spray planes, women and specifically housewives, as Carson was careful to note on several occasions, have been covered with strange airs because they were at home during the daytime sprayings. While it would be incorrect to insist that women are targeted by the "control men" in the spray planes, suffice it to say that the situation of women at home made them part of the target of the daytime aerial bombardments. Throughout **Silent Spring** women who have been sprayed request that the practice of spraying cease (p. 144) and, if they use aerosol sprays in the home, they contract "environmental diseases" (pp. 202-3).

Recall that **Silent Spring** began with reference to the strangest of all "airs," those which suit no one. The "Fable for Tomorrow" stands apart from the text not as a preface or an introduction but as a vision of a spring of the future without non-human (and likely human, as well) life. It is not a legend, although it makes general references to disasters which have happened some-where (and are brought together by the opening phrase, "There was once a town in the heart of America ..."), nor is it strictly fabulous since Carson describes in detail later in the book many of the disasters which loosely shape the fable. We are lead to believe that Carson's "Fable" is a likely story if the misuse of certain agents goes unchecked.

When Carson writes that "everywhere was a shadow of death" and describes this shadow as a "strange blight," "evil spell," a "white granular powder" which fell like snow a few weeks earlier, her model is nuclear fallout. The radioactive isotope Strontium-90 "was a tool to help her explain the properties of pesticides."[5]

Strontium-90, which appears before DDT in **Silent Spring**, is her yardstick of pollutants.

A silent spring is a mild nuclear winter.

Remarking upon Carson's attention to "the connotations of words," Carol B. Gartner observes that: "when she writes of a 'world that is urged to beat its plowshares into spray guns', she introduces a sardonic play on words reversing the biblical injunction to beat swords into ploughshares."[6] Carson's message of peace is clear: let there be no nuclear winters, even "mild" ones.

Concerning the social meaning of spraying paraphernalia, Carson writes:

> *The mores of suburbia now dictate that crabgrass must go at whatever cost. Sacks containing chemicals designed to rid the lawn of such despised vegetation have become almost a status symbol. These weed-killing chemicals are sold under brand names that never suggest their identity or nature.*
>
> *The descriptive literature that may be picked up in any hardware - or garden-supply store seldom if ever reveals the true hazard involved in handling and applying the material. Instead, the typical illustration portrays a happy family scene, father and son smilingly preparing to apply the chemical to the lawn, small children tumbling over the grass with a dog.* (p. 161)

While much has been said about the uses and effects of pesticides and herbicides, little if anything has been said, in the context of critical environmental thought, about how the chemicals became part of everyday life.

Like hunting and fishing, the application of weed-killer is represented as an activity for father and son. The ability to handle a gun lies with the father and will be passed on to the son; the spray gun is a weapon that is embedded in a patrocentric complex. The chemical lawn tools also acquire value in terms of competitive consumption: the very presence of a sack of chemicals, says Carson, is a conspicuous reminder of the social standing of the family relative, of course, and primarily so, to the block and the neighbourhood, the places where such sacks and their results are visible and open to inspection or display. It is the lawn or "the grounds," as it were, that is a tangible sign-complex or sign-cluster of social success and control.

The image-fetish of the nuclear family which one finds in the product literature serves to mask the intrinsic features, the physical properties, of the chemicals in question and, in addition, hides the ecological relations into which they enter and out of which they were produced.

The spray gun targets dandelion, clover, creeping charlie, chickweed and other types of undesirable vegetation in a sign system in which keeping one's grass "clean and cut" is a desirable social goal and practice. Further, the aforementioned plants have been transformed into weeds and thus are exiled from the lawn in virtue of their difference from certain highly engineered species of grasses. The place for weeds is other than the lawn in relation to an image of what a lawn should be -- a set of arbitrary inclusions and exclusions. The possession and use of the spray gun marks one's ongoing battle against wildness, and wild plants, which threaten the tranquil domesticity of the home front. Weeds cause rifts in the home's green apron.

In contemporary advertising material for C-I-L Inc. ("Guide To The Perfect Lawn" and "How To Protect Your Garden Against Insects And Disease"), there is a readymade semiotics of the yard. We are told that there are: i) problems; ii) places where problems occur; iii) symptoms of problems; iv) the answer or solution; v) a time when one should solve the problem. For instance, if one's problem is aphis at the tips of branches and on the undersides of the leaves of fruits, vegetables and ornamentals, and one reads the symptoms as sticky deposits and the curling of leaves, the solution includes Fruit and Garden Insect Killer (Diazinon), Ornamental Insect Killer (Malathion) and Tree and Shrub Insect Killer (DUTOX), which should be applied when the aphis are first noticed -- "repeat as necessary." This set of procedures gives one a clear cut way of decoding one's yard and assigning meaning to insects in relation to plants. What is important is that one acquires the competence to communicate about the yard and how to treat it with the knowledge and language provided by the chemical industries and their advertising agencies.

There has not been a significant negative investment at the level of chemicals themselves. A defetishization of the product literature and the chemical-based logic of yard care might produce the widespread understanding that: if

brand "x" or product "x" contains a certain substance "y," or even appears to be connected with "y" and "y" is known to kill certain animals, or can be shown to be found in certain animals in "unusual" amounts, then brand "x" signifies "kills animals" in a system of meaning in which weed killers contain deadly poisons and kill more than crabgrass. One needs to learn how to reverse the meaning of "blemishes" in one's yard so as to attribute their appearance to the very things which purport to correct them.

A visit to a garden-supply store reveals that at present women are a target group in the marketing of spray guns. While the target audience has expanded, we still find that it is the man who uses the leisure tools ("no more digging or pulling") of the chemical industry. The fact that women have become part of the target audience perhaps seeks to undermine the lessons of **Silent Spring** as we have read them to the extent that women have testified against the man with the spray gun in what might be called a nascent eco-feminism.

The notion of a "problem" in the yard that has a chemical solution which may be delivered by the spray gun does not and cannot overcome the folly of isolation since the solution, insofar as pesticides have led to the destruction of non-targeted, non-problems, is itself a problem. The solution to the multiplication of problems (identifiable and at present or for a time unidentifiable) cannot be found within the logic of the "care" of the yard and garden because problems and targets may only be isolated in an abstract sense which is contrary to the literal, material and living interrelatedness of the ecosystem. The logic of the problem-symptom-solution does not -- and this should come as no surprise -- take into account the valuative insights and scientific evidence presented in **Silent Spring**.

Can one reinvent the lawn? Carson does not ask us to do so, but points, however unwittingly, to the dangers associated with taking chemical solutions to lawn problems for granted, as natural decoding practices. The idea of the lawn: of color, length, vegetative monotony, flatness, etc., is so rarely challenged. The thorough domestication of the yard -- through grafting, cutting, pulling, dividing, spraying, fencing -- will not give way easily to a new encoding in the form, perhaps, of a woodlot-like area or a meadow. But the possibility of a radicalization of the lawn, of the emergence of a relatively undisciplined space, one which does not stew in its own stupefying juices, is blocked by the fence: frontyard and backyard. The fence, like the bar of the sign, no matter if it is thin as paper or as difficult to cross as some borders, separates and must be overgrown.

The operations of the strange soldier of ecological fortune which Carson identified, the man with the spray gun, amount to an ongoing war against enemy insects. Certain maggots, worms and moths "tunnel" into fruits; beetles "invade" tomatoes and corn; caterpillars conduct "defoliation" operations on ornamental trees. In response to these enemy incursions, the man with the spray gun chooses the Garden Insect Killer "Ambush," for instance, and gives his veggies "a fighting chance," as C-I-L teaches him to say. The field of battle is the yard: lawn and garden.

With a final skip to no other, the audible landscape of our adventure falls silent. All quiet, except on the home front.

Notes

1. Rachel Carson, **Silent Spring** (New York: Ballentine, 1962). The page numbers of all citations from this edition are given in the body of the paper.

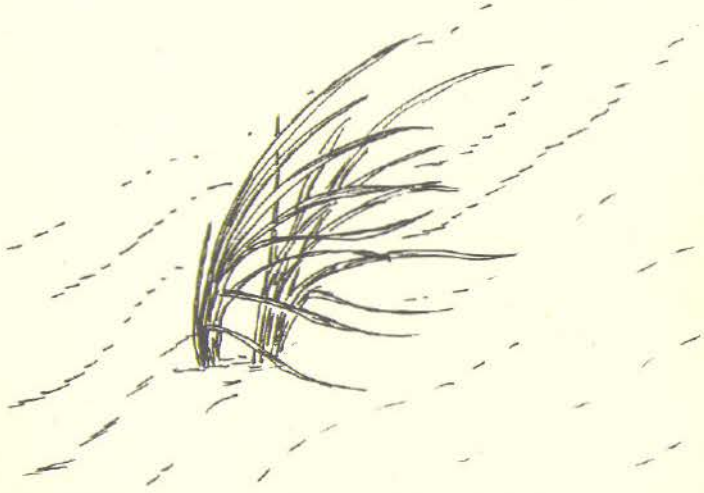
2. See Kevin P. Shea, "A Celebration of **Silent Spring**," **Environment**, 15:1 (1973), p. 5.

3. See Neil Evernden, **The Natural Alien: Humankind and Environment** (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), pp. 7-8.

4. L.H. Bailey, **The Standard Encyclopedia of Horticulture**, Vol. II (New York: MacMillan, 1922), pp. 1058-59.

5. Ralph H. Lutts, "Chemical Fallout: Rachel Carson's **Silent Spring**, Radioactive Fallout, and the Environmental Movement," **Environmental Review**, 9:3 (1985), p. 221.

6. Carol B. Gartner, **Rachel Carson** (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1983), p. 94.



Anthropomorphism: In The Web of Culture

by Leesa Fawcett *

As a conservationist and an environmental educator, I am intrigued by human relationships with animals. The umbrella question for me is in what ways do people relate to animals at this moment in Western history? I have focussed here on one type of relationship that humans have with animals -- the anthropomorphic relationship.

How would you know anthropomorphism if you bumped into it? The Greek word "anthropomorphos" literally means "shaped like a man." The range of meanings in the Random House dictionary (1966) includes the following: "anthropomorphic 1. ascribing human forms or attributes to a being or thing not human, esp. to a deity; and anthropomorphize: to ascribe human forms or attributes to (an animal, plant, material object, etc.)."[1] The commonly accepted definition of anthropomorphism implies a distinct separation between the human and the non-human. I do not assume that we, humans, are so neatly separated from the animal world. I believe Nature and "animalness" is not only found "out there" in the shrinking wilderness areas, but is just as much "in here," inside us. Hence my fascination with the anthropomorphic relationships began.

Traditionally, to anthropomorphize was heretical because one was ascribing human characteristics to a deity -- an unforgivable insult to the integrity of the deity to be likened to a mere mortal. Nowadays, the major "faux pas" lies in ascribing human characteristics to animals or "beasts," thus slandering the sacred character of humans. So at first it was a defamation to see a god as like a human, and now it is sacrilegious to see a human as like an animal. This, in and of itself, is an intriguing historical change.

Neil Evernden, in "Nature In Industrial Society," suggests that this taboo against anthropomorphism has something to do with the fact that we live in an age of secular humanism.[2] God is supposedly dead and human individuals are the main source of value and meaning. The general feeling is that anthropomorphism is a cultural no-no, and definitely unscientific, yet it keeps reappearing. We tend to be anthropomorphic.

The way in which people conceive of anthropomorphism is intimately connected to the way in which they perceive their relationship to nature. Anthropomorphism is not an isolated phenomenon. It is found hanging precariously in a web, connected to all the "facts" and values, thoughts and feelings that we, as individuals, hold and collectively reinforce among ourselves as a culture. The definition of anthropomorphism one works from depends on one's focal point. **Do you see humans as the centre point, and then you magnanimously ascribe human characteristics to animals? Or do you see humans in relationship with (historically and bodily), and continuous with nature?** From this latter reference point one could identify commonalities in our shared experience of life. Of course there are many possible places to start, but I am concentrating on these two polar ones and their consequences.

The dominant way of seeing the world is an anthr**opocentric** one. Humans are generally thought to be the centre of the world and the pinnacle of evolution. This type of thinking is reflected in the embedded concept of "man as the measure of all things."[3] The anthropocentric view is expressed implicitly in the commonly reiterated ideas of "dominance over nature" and "nature valued as a human resource." In stark opposition to this dominant framework, alternative environmental worldviews believe in "nature valued in and of itself," and "harmony with nature."

Tables I and II illustrate this point by juxtaposing the dominant paradigm with: a well outlined generic environmental paradigm by Stephen Cotgrove (Table I), and the beliefs of deep ecology as presented by George Sessions and Bill Devall (Table II). I was struck by the similarities between the two descriptions of the dominant paradigm. Cotgrove explains that the dominant social paradigm is "dominant not in the statistical sense of being held by most people, but in the sense that it is the paradigm

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Table I: COUNTER PARADIGMS

	Dominant Paradigm	Alternative Environmental Paradigm
Core values	Material (economic growth)	Non-material (self-actualization)
	Natural environment valued as a resource	Natural environment intrinsicly valued
	Domination over nature	Harmony with nature
Economy	Market forces	Public interest
	Risk & reward	Safety
	Rewards for achievement	Incomes related to need
	Differentials	*Egalitarian
	Individual self-help	Collective/social provision
Polity	Authoritative structures: (experts)	Participative structures: (citizen/worker involvement)
	Hierarchical	*Non-hierarchical
	Law and order	*Liberation
Society	Centralized	Decentralized
	Large-scale	Small-scale
	Associational	Communal
	Ordered	*Flexible
Nature	Ample reserves	Resources limited
	Nature hostile/neutral	Nature benign
	Environment controllable	Nature delicately balanced
Knowledge	Confidence in science and technology	Limits to science
	Rationality of means	Rationality of ends
	Separation of fact/value, thought/feeling	Integration of fact/value, thought/feeling

*Some environmentalists want a return to small-scale communities because they provide a traditional organic order -- differentiated, hierarchical, and stable.

(From: Cotgrove, Stephen, **Catastrophe or Cornucopia** (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1982), p. 27.)

held by dominant groups in industrial societies, and in the sense that it serves to legitimate and justify the institutions and practices of a market economy."[4]

To be anthropo**morphic** does not necessarily mean one is anthropo**centric**. For instance, I am anthropomorphic with my dogs (as I'm sure are many companion animal owners), and I believe that humans are continuous with nature and not the most important member. We are "plain members and citizens" of the earth as Aldo Leopold succinctly declared in his idea of a land ethic.[5]

Table II: DEEP ECOLOGY AS AN ALTERNATIVE WORLDVIEW

DOMINANT WORLDVIEW	DEEP ECOLOGY
Dominance over nature	Harmony with nature
Natural environment as a resource for human equality	All nature has intrinsic worth/biospecies
Material/economic growth material for growing human population	Elegantly simple 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; non-dominating science
Consumerism	Doing with enough/recycling
National/centralized community	Minority tradition/bioregion

(From: Sessions, George and Bill Devall, **Deep Ecology** (Layton, UT: Gibbs M. Smith Inc., 1985), p. 69.)

John Livingston maintains that it is natural to be anthropomorphic, and that there is no other way to be. We are human so we can only see the world from a human viewpoint. Livingston goes on to say that just as we anthropomorphize dogs, dogs "canimorphize" humans, and so on. I know my dogs definitely act as if I am part of their pack, and under their immediate care. Perhaps it's part of a natural caring process to relate the world of others (whoever they may be) to your own experience of the world.

Anthropomorphism is a specific fact which the dominant worldview finds troublesome. Humans in Western society tend to dominate and be separate from animals, and yet we persist in attributing human characteristics to them at the same time. Theoretically,

the dominant paradigm and anthropomorphism should be mutually exclusive, but they are not. According to Hans Jonas, "Any problem is essentially the collision between a comprehensive view (be it hypothesis or belief) and a particular fact which will not fit into it."[6] The problem I am defining is the collision between the unchallenged anthropocentric world-view and the enduring fact of anthropomorphism which it denies.

In the course of defining the scope of this problem I looked to others who have disagreed with the "comprehensive view" which sees humans as the centre of the world. Erazim Kohak advocates a philosophy of personalism, in which humans are continuous with nature. He eloquently asks:

> *Shall we conceive of the world around us and of ourselves in it as* ***personal****, a meaningful whole, honoring its order as continuous with the moral law of our own being and its being as continuous with ours, bearing its goodness -- or shall we conceive of it and treat it, together with ourselves, as* ***impersonal****, a chance aggregate of matter propelled by a blind force and exhibiting at most the ontologically random lawlike regularities of a causal order? Is the Person or is matter in motion the root metaphor of thought and practice?*[7]

For Kohak a "person" is not limited to humans, it is "a being who stands in a moral relation to us, a being we encounter as a Thou."[8] Therefore his philosophy of personalism incorporates the non-human as well as the human. The idea of relating to non-humans as "subjects" or "thous" is beautifully expressed by Evernden in **The Natural Alien**, in which he advocates "regarding ourselves less as objects than as sets of relationships, or as processes in time rather than as static forms."[9]

Elaborating this idea, (with insights from Merleau-Ponty), Evernden says, "If we were to regard ourselves as 'fields of care' rather than as discrete objects in a neutral environment, our understanding of our relationship to the world might be fundamentally transformed."[10] This idea of understanding ourselves as "fields of care" is nothing short of a new metaphysical approach to the human/non-human relationship. We are not merely unique individuals all bundled up in our own needs and feelings. Our very selves extend beyond our bodies, to the beings, human and non-human, to whom we are connected.

> *Heidegger's reply is that man does not look out upon an external world through windows, from the isolation of his ego: he is already out-of-doors. He is in the world because, existing he is involved in it totally. . . . My Being is not something that takes place inside my skin . . . my Being, rather, is spread over a field or region which is the world of its care and concern.*[11]

In more recent work Evernden suggests a differentiation between "nature-as-object," "nature-as-self" and "nature-as-miracle." **Nature-as-object** is "a bare-bones nature with no subjectivity and no personal variables at all: just stuff."[12] These objects of nature may be as precious as pearls, as highly useful as oil, or as common as dandelions but they are still just objects, just "stuff."

Nature-as-self incorporates the earlier idea of seeing ourselves as "fields of care" and thus nature is an extended part of ourselves. Nature-as-self may also imply "an extension of self-hood to nature -- an understanding of nature as 'like-self' or as a community of selves, of persons, with whom one has relationships similar to those within human society."[13] This classification can pose potential problems if your self-image is a destructive one and you treat others as "like-self."[14]

Nature-as-miracle is more difficult to define, mainly because we don't generally believe in miracles anymore. I understand nature as miracle to refer to the wondrous, the inexplicable and unpredictable in nature. This of course flies in the face of mainstream modern science which is predicated on the predictability of nature, and our belief in the "laws" of nature. Loren Eiseley defines a "miracle" as "an event transcending the known laws of nature." He continues:

> *Since . . . the laws of nature have a way of being altered from one generation of scientists to the next, a little taste for the miraculous in this broad sense will do us no harm. We forget that nature itself is one vast miracle transcending the reality of night and nothingness. We forget that each one of us in his personal life repeats that miracle.*[15]

These three conceptualizations of nature beg three different types of questions.

Evernden writes, "The question one asks of nature-as-object is 'what's in it **for me**?'" Once answered this question leaves us free to concern ourselves only with **how** we will use nature to serve our own ends, the hallmark of our techno-centred culture. "[W]hereas of nature-as-self one might ask 'what is it **to me**?'" which "implies a concern with the relationship of humans and non-humans." Finally, nature-as-miracle "does not prompt questions of control or even questions of kinship" instead it asks "'what is it?' -- a metaphysical question rather than an economic or a political one."[16] If Evernden and Livingston are correct in their belief that our environmental crisis is a metaphysical crisis, perhaps this is the only question with which we need concern ourselves.

It would seem that the way in which we understand our relationship to nature affects both the type of anthropomorphism we practice, and our behaviour in decision-making situations involving ourselves and nature. And this "understanding of nature which we take as obvious is in fact a rather complex and abstract one which we acquire in a lengthy cultural exercise in indoctrination."[17]

Morris Berman's concept of "participating consciousness" or "mimesis" also flies in the face of the dominant worldview by proclaiming the importance of "the state of consciousness in which the subject/object dichotomy breaks down and the person feels identified with what he or she is perceiving."[18] The kind of anthropomorphism I am calling attention to is only understandable in the context of concepts such as "participatory consciousness," "fields of care" and "personalism." This type of anthropomorphism entails a **spontaneous identification** with other life. Spontaneous because it is without effort or premeditation, and it is a form of identification because there is envelopment of another into oneself.

Arne Naess explains this process of spontaneous identification when he says:

> *We tend to see ourselves in everything alive. As scientists we observe the death struggle of an insect, but as mature human beings we spontaneously also experience our own death in a way, and feel sentiments that relate to struggle, pain, and death.*[19]

This spontaneous identification is a precursor to the types of anthropomorphism that see nature as self or nature as miracle, as opposed to the dominant mode of seeing nature as object. Spontaneous identification is not an abstract, psychological process irrelevant to the environmental movement. Naess argues that the **identification** process is the most important in making "intense personal appreciation of diversity of life forms and the whole ecosphere possible."[20]

To make this goal more easily digestible Naess points out that, "There is nothing unduly romantic or poetic here. Given our biological endowment each of us has the capacity to identify with all living beings," and "the capacity of experiencing the intimate relations between organisms and the nonorganic world."[21]

These ideas of being **in relationship and in the world**, coupled with the emphasis the different authors placed on values and morals led me to Carol Gilligan's work on moral development.[22] Moral systems have developed as a part of our "connectedness" to other humans, but they have not, and may never, fully develop with respect to other life-forms. In spite of this, Gilligan's "ethic of care" theory has a great deal to offer the environmental movement. The idea of an "ethic of care" resonates with similarities to Evernden's "fields of self" and Heidegger's "Being in the world." Although they are all from very different disciplines, each of them offers a significant challenge to the dominant worldview in which anthropomorphism is imbedded.

Gilligan's work challenges and complements the work of Lawrence Kohlberg whose long-standing theory of moral development was originally based on a biased sample of 84 boys. He equates morality with the ability to reason and to be just; consequently, Gilligan refers to his theory as an "ethic of justice." Gilligan's thesis is that by leaving out the female voice, the different or other voice, and the accompanying "ethic of care," we arrive at an incomplete picture of human development: "half of the dialectic is currently missing from most psychological accounts."[23] Half of the logical argumentation necessary to paint a picture of human development is absent. Table III summarizes and juxtaposes some of the characteristics of these two constructs of moral development. I believe it is important to understand these theories in order to locate the problem of anthropomorphism in our culture.

In the past decade there has been an increasingly loud and anxious cry for a biocentric environmental ethic as an alternative to the ruling anthropocentric ethic. The idea of an environmental ethic has always appeared

problematic. Ethics and morals are reached by rational dialogue among community members. This implies that we would have to confer with other life forms and decide together on a certain, reciprocal system of values. I strongly suspect other life forms would have no idea, nor interest, in what we are talking about. It would seem that humans are the only animals that need a system of morals to deal with their existence. Most other animals just **are**.

Table III: SUMMARY OF THE MORAL DIALECTIC

Characteristics	Ethic of Care	Ethic of Justice
Image	Web of connection	Hierarchy of power
Thought	Narrative and Contextual	Formal logic
Language	...of responsibilities that sustains relationships & informs the activity	...of rights that justifies separation and fosters & protects autonomy
Mode of Moral Discourse	Dialogue Narration	Logical deduction
Concepts and Key Vocabulary	Contextual Concepts: -harmony -relationship -care -love -hurt -friendship -betrayal	Analytic Concepts: -fairness -equality -balance -equalibrium -reciprocity -truth -deceit
Premise of Moral Judgements	...non-violence; no one should be hurt.	...universality of rights.
Individual/ Society	See individuals as interdependent in a network (web) of social relations.	Balance separate individuals in a social system equalibrated by the logic of equality and recoprocity.
Tension between	...particularly of responsibility.	...universality of rights.
Problems	Relationship betweenself & other	Conflict of self versus other.
Maturity	Interdependence/ Connection	Autonomy/ Separation

Livingston equates our need to be moral with the fact that we must live with unnatural population densities, and in a state of unceasing stress. He speaks of our moral systems as "prosthetic devices" and states: "To extend concepts of rights into nature . . . would be to export and legitimate a pathological obsession with hierarchical relationships."[24] To extend only an "ethic of justice" into nature would be disastrous **but** if we were to extend an "ethic of care" balanced by an "ethic of justice" the vision would be a much more hopeful one. Gilligan asserts:

> *These disparate visions [an ethic of care and an ethic of justice] in their tension reflect the paradoxical truths of human experience -- that we know ourselves as separate only insofar as we live in connection with others, and that we experience relationship only insofar as we differentiate other from self.*[25]

This is what anthropomorphism is. We know ourselves as **human**, only insofar as we live in connection with, and experience non-humans. We also know ourselves as individuals only if we are able to compare and differentiate ourselves from other humans and non-humans.

In a thoughtful essay entitled "Life, Death,and the Body in the Theory of Being," Hans Jonas states: "When man first began to interpret the nature of things -- and he did this when he began to be man -- life was to him everywhere, and being the same as being alive." Much later the Renaissance ushered in "Modern Thought" which decreed that reality could only be discovered "through abstention from projecting into its image our own felt aliveness. In the process the ban on anthropomorphism was extended to zoomorphism in general."[26]

Jonas traces the curse on anthropomorphism to the historical development of dualism -- the rendering of matter (body) and spirit (mind) into two separate spheres. This in turn led to the two extremes: modern materialism and modern idealism, respectively. Jonas says that a "fundamental assumption of modern metaphysics in the interest of science is that there is a basic difference of being between the nature of man and the nature of the universe." Descartes' principle that "exterior reality . . . [is] entirely detached from the interior reality of thought" exemplifies this assumption. In order to know this exterior reality vision became the primary mode of perception and brought with

it its own biases, as Jonas observes:

> *This dominance of "distancing" and objectifying perception concurred with the dualistic rift between subject and object . . . in putting a severe ban on any transference of features of internal experience into the interpretation of the external world . . . Anthropomorphism at all events, and even zoomorphism in general, became scientific high treason.*[27]

Dualism denies human continuity with nature, and does not allow the attribution of any internal, human experiences to our understanding of the external world -- the world outside ourselves. In this interpretation anthropomorphism becomes just another case of misguided projection. The verb "to project" means to "regard something within the mind, (as a feeling, thought or attitude) as having some form of reality outside the mind."[28] Projection assumes we are not supposed to be in any way extended into our environment, and it reinforces a distinct separation between the self and other, the human and non-human. And, as stated earlier, we know ourselves as separate and human, only insofar as we know ourselves connected together with other life forms.

The following argument historically traces the course of anthropomorphism in modern thought, and points out the inevitability of anthropomorphism as a fact of being. Western science from its birth rejected the notion of teleology and final causes, as part of its rejection of Aristotelianism.[29] Teleology is defined in vitalist philosophy as the doctrine that phenomena are guided not only by mechanical forces but that they also move towards the goals of self-realization. Final causes refers to Aristotle's belief that a thing or being has a reason for existence, a purpose. (Note that evolutionary biology and ecology also believe this).

Hans Jonas shows that the rejection of Aristotle's beliefs occurred without any evidence that final causes didn't exist in nature. In fact science rejected the idea of even searching for final causes: "The mere search for them was quite suddenly, with the inauguration of modern science, held to be at variance with the scientific attitude, deflecting the searcher from the quest for true causes."[30] So if life is merely a conglomeration of unrelated matter and has no reason for existence except to be propelled by mechanical forces, it is no wonder anthropomorphism is forbidden. To be anthropomorphic and ascribe the feeling of exuberance to a singing chickadee definitely contradicts a solely mechanical interpretation of the chickadee's vocal apparatus.

Modern science has had to wage war against the notion of final causes and against anthropomorphism, in order to salvage itself. As Jonas confirms: "Thus the struggle against teleology is a stage in the struggle against anthropomorphism which by itself is as old as Western Science."[31] What an odd predicament to put humans in. If anthropomorphism is unscientific, and should be denied, humans would have to deny their own subjective experience. Simplified, it is the traditional argument that objectivity truly exists. Quantum mechanics and Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle have already shown us that there is no such thing as an objective observer. "What we observe, said Heisenberg, is not nature in itself but nature exposed to our method of questioning."[32]

Darwin's theory of evolution and its acceptance in the world of today also adds to the accumulated proof that humans and nature are inseparable. Consequently, "the case against anthropomorphism in its extreme form becomes problematical and is on principle reopened," leaving us two alternatives. We can either: "take the presence of purposive inwardness" in humans as valid affirmation of the universal relatedness of life forms or we can "extend the prerogatives of mechanical matter to the very heart of the seemingly heterogeneous class of phenomena and oust teleology even from the 'nature of man', whence it had tainted the 'nature of the universe' -- that is, to alienate man from himself and deny genuineness to the self-experience of life."[33]

Jonas has obviously reflected at great length on the position and meaning of anthropomorphism in the web of knowledge that constitutes our culture. Basically, he is saying that the denial of anthropomorphism is untenable, unless you want to alienate humans from their experience of life. Humans, along with the rest of nature have a "purposive inwardness," and if unencumbered they will move towards their purpose, their goals of self-realization. In a later essay he states: "there is no organism without teleology; there is no teleology without inwardness; and: life can be known only by life."[34] Anthropomorphism is a way for life (humans) to know life (non-humans).

If one agrees with the philosophical stances of Gilligan's "ethic of care," Evernden's "fields of self," and Jonas' "purposive inwardness," it is impossible to deny anthropomorphism. Anthropomorphism stands as an example of the realization that we are an integral and continuous part of the living world: bodily, emotionally and mentally.

Notes

1. **The Random House Dictionary of the English Language** (Unabridged Edition), ed. Jess Stein (New York: Random House, 1966), p.63.

2. See Neil Evernden, "Nature in Industrial Society," in **Cultural Politics in Contemporary America**, ed. Sut Jhally and Ian Angus (New York: Routledge, Chapman and Hall, 1988), p. 154.
Also refer to Evernden's course notes entitled "Anthropomorphism" (p. 1) for the course "Cultural and Historical Perspectives of Nature," held in 1987 at the Faculty of Environmental Studies, York University, Toronto, Ontario.

3. It is not an accident that "woman" has never been proposed as the measure of all things. Feminism has also dissented from the "dominant" world-view, and could have much to offer a more critical environmental movement.

4. Stephen Cotgrove, **Catastrophe or Cornucopia: The Environment, Politics and the Future** (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1982), p. 27.

5. Aldo Leopold, **A Sand County Almanac: and Sketches Here and There** (New York: Oxford University Press, 1949 reprint 1981), p. 204.

6. Hans Jonas, **The Phenomenon of Life: Toward a Philosophical Biology** (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, Ltd., 1966 reprinted 1982), p. 9.

7. Erazim Kohak, **The Embers** and **the Stars: A Philosophical Inquiry Into the30**
Moral Sense of Nature (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1984), pp. 124-125.

8. Ibid., p. 129.

9. Neil Evernden, **The Natural Alien: Humankind and Environment** (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), p. 40.

10. Ibid., p. 47
Refer to Chapter 2 , "The Fields of Self," to get the full gist of his argument.

11. Heidegger as quoted in William Barrett, **Irrational Man** (New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1962), p. 217.

12. Neil Evernden, "Nature in Industrial Society," p. 157.

13. Ibid., p. 159.

14. Hans Jonas and many others talk about our culture as a culture that worships death. If that is extrapolated to the level of the "self," and we treat others as "like-self" it would follow that we would be destructive in our relationships with others, human and non-human alike.

15. Loren Eiseley, "How Natural is Natural," in **The Star Thrower** (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978), p. 291.

16. Evernden, "Nature in Industrial Society," p. 159, and p. 163.

17. Ibid., p. 162.

18. Morris Berman, **The Reenchantment of the World** (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981), p. 346.
Berman's idea of participatory consciousness, referred to as mimesis, is discussed throughout the book.

19. Arne Naess, "Intrinsic Value: Will the Defenders of Nature Please Rise?" in **Conservation Biology**, ed. Michael E. Soule (Sunderland, Mass: Sinauer Associates, Inc., 1986), p. 506.

20. Ibid., p. 506

21. Ibid., p. 507.

22. Carol Gilligan, **In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development** (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982). Also check the journal Signs, for more recent work.
I attended an intensive day long workshop entitled "Introduction to the Theory and Practice of Research in Moral Development: The Work of Kohlberg and Gilligan." The workshop was excellent and led by 2 doctoral students at Harvard; Mark Tappan a student of Kohlberg and Lyn Mikel Brown a student of Gilligan. Gilligan and Kohlberg also spoke at this conference on "Controversial Issues in Moral Education," held November 7-9, 1985 at OISE, Toronto.

23. Carol Gilligan, "Do the Social Sciences Have an Adequate Theory of Moral Development?" in **Social Science as Moral Inquiry**, ed. N. Haan, R. Bellah, and P. Rabinow, & W. Sullivan (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), p. 35.

24. John Livingston, "Rightness or Rights," **Osgoode Hall Law Journal**, 22:2 (1984), p. 310.

25. Gilligan, **In a Different Voice**, p. 63.

26. Hans Jonas, **The Phenomenon of Life**, p. 7, and p. 9-10.

27. Jonas, Phenomenon, p. 35.

28. **The Random House Dictionary** of the English **Language**, p. 1150.

29. Aristotelianism is derived from Aristotle's notion of four forms of causation that are necessary for the coming into being or movement of a thing. They are the material cause, the formal cause, the efficient cause and the final cause.

30. Jonas, Phenomenon, p.34.

31. Ibid., p.36.

32. Werner Heisenberg, as quoted in Morris Berman, **The Reenchantment of the World** (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981), p. 145.

33. Jonas, Phenomenon, p.37.

34. Ibid., p.91.

The Nature of Story

by Lori Scheffel *

As oral and written record reflects, throughout history humankind has vacillated between acknowledging its kinship with the natural world and denying it. A great deal of human culture has consisted of stories concerning animals, though modern literature has relegated animals, as a subject of imaginative writing, to children's fiction. One would be hard pressed to name many great works of the past two centuries which include animals as the focus of the narrative. The old animal stories, however, took place in a time and realm when humans and animals were able to communicate and these narratives constituted the mainstay of oral storytelling. This kind of story is an element of the "Golden Age" theme and refers to a time when the world was a harmonious place where people were happy, blessed and "without evil in their hearts." These stories of an ancient and oral character spoke of our place alongside the other animals.

John Berger, in his essay "Why Look at Animals?" says animals first entered the human imagination as messengers and promises[1]. Animals were many things to early human cultures, moving together with humanity at the centre of the world:

> *. . . the choice of a given species as magical, tameable and alimentary was originally determined by the habits, proximity and "invitation" of the animal in question.*[2]

Berger suggests animals were the first metaphors as there is "a universal use of animal signs for charting the experience of the world"[3] -- an experience which is largely lost or reduced in meaning in modern times. Everywhere in myth and folklore, animals offer explanations for the world -- "they lent their names or characters to a quality, which like all qualities, was, in its essence, mysterious."[4] Modern science has gone far in robbing other life forms of their mystery and ambiguity. Once we feel that we know everything we want to know about something, it often is dismissed from our imaginations and resides there in some form unrecognizable to itself. Animals have become the objects of our ever increasing stockpile of knowledge about an objectified world. The more we think we know of them the further removed they become physically, intellectually and spiritually from us. Animals cease to be the mysterious gifts of a divine creator or even challenging puzzles for the scientist. After all, through popular culture or the "wonders" of bioengineering, we are able to create whatever imaginary and actual animals we wish.

Traditional narratives gave animals a voice whereby they could communicate with humans and this made the distance between us seem less. The influence of scientific method has led us to dismiss such stories as naive, anthropomorphic imaginings suitable (perhaps) for the entertainment of children. We have silenced other life so completely that:

> *. . . its silence, guarantees its distance, its distinctiveness, its exclusion, from and of man.*[5]

The traditions of earlier ages which mediated between humanity and the rest of nature have become like so much quaint and superfluous bric-a-brac gathering dust on the shelves of the Western imagination. But perhaps we are at last beginning to reconsider the value of our narrative heritage. Interestingly, oral storytelling is being "rediscovered" as an important means of communication, and of making connections with our past and with ourselves. We cannot plainly see but we sense the hidden value in traditional stories and that they might help to restore certain things to the creative human experience.

Literature[6] and other records of the human imagination are valuable for searching out human perceptions of the world. Literature can and does encompass all of life's stories. In **The Comedy of Survival**, a work which delineates correspondences between literature and ecology, Joseph Meeker describes that ability of literature to influence our lives:

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Literature expresses deep human needs and represents the forms of behaviour peculiar to a consciousness-bearing animal. It is not primarily a medium of communication or an educational instrument for perpetuating certain kinds of behaviour but it is often treated as if it were both. . . . Consciously and unconsciously, people imitate literary characters and often try to create in their own lives the circumstances depicted in literature or the motivations which produce its events. Literature which provides models of man's relationships with nature will thus influence man's perceptions of nature and his responses to it.[7]

Literature can have explicit intentions of didacticism such as those found in proverbs, parables and fables -- all genres which have a particular moral to convey which is meant to guide our conduct in the world. The figures are often merely ciphers and the message leaves little work for the imagination. As an example of this type consider Caxton's Christianized version of Aesop's fable, "Of the Bee and of Jupiter":

Now the evil which men wish to others comes to him which wishes it, as it appears by this fable of a bee which offered and gave to Jupiter a piece of honey.

And then Jupiter said to the bee, Demand of me what thou wilt and I shall grant it to thee. And then the bee prayed him, God almighty, grant that whosoever shall come for to take away my honey, if I prick him he may suddenly die.

And because Jupiter loved humankind he said to the bee, Suffice that whosoever shall go to take thy honey, if thou prick or sting him, immediately thou shalt die. And thus her prayer was turned to her own great harm. For men ought not to demand of God but such things that are good and honest.[8]

But perhaps we are more affected by the implicit messages which may lie deep in a narrative or which are created by the individual's experience being brought to bear on the story. Compare the above fable with this one of the Winnebago Indians:

The Animals Gave Freely of Their Medicine

A man was going to die.
He went to the top of a hill and lay down.
Briefly he slept.
When he awoke there was a circle of animals.
Each animal gave the man his own personal
Medicine.

Raven said -- e-he-a! e-he-a!
Then he spit on the man and gave of his own
Medicine.

The man felt better.

Turtle said -- ahi! ahi! ahi!
Then he gave the man of his own boiled Medicine.

The man felt better.

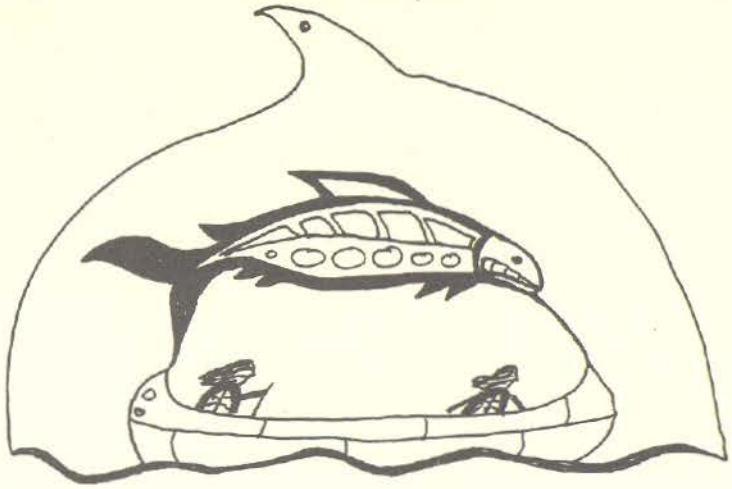
Black Hawk said nothing.
He gave the man of his medicine right on the place
Where the man hurt the most.

The man felt much better.

Then all the animals said --
"Human, in a similar way,
You will cure your fellowmen!"

And the man was given the Flutes of Power.
And he became a great Healer, a powerful
Medicine Man and it was because the animals
Gave freely of their medicine.[9]

This piece speaks to us of a very different understanding of the meaning and motivation of non-human beings than does the classical fable and seems, in the end, to be a richer lesson. Literature, however, cannot assume a universal reader and so a singular interpretation of a work can never really emerge in a general audience. There is no common external reality which we all share so it is difficult to evaluate or predict the ability of literature to affect our values or emotions yet it still might serve to suggest the values of the culture that produced the story.



Literature has been a major source of models used to perpetuate our past,[10] that is, in literature we are given evidence of the mediating metaphors (viz. conscious or unconscious allegories or symbol systems) which people used to explain the world, such as the organic cosmological model of the Middle Ages or the mechanical model of the Renaissance period. We learn from literary depictions of cultural models by positing questions -- discerning relatedness among world, self and "text," whatever form that text may be in, and we test the usefulness of these models by applying them to our own social context and perceiving the effect.[11] Through this process we are educated by our culture about what sorts of participation might be expected of us:

> *Education acquaints each new human generation with the models of life and thought available from previous generations. A crisis of consciousness occurs when there is a widespread recognition that many important models of reality inherited from the human past are inadequate, irrelevant, or destructive when applied to present circumstances.*[12]

The growing realization that humanity has become a kind of unnatural blight on the Earth has arisen from just such a crisis of consciousness. Our inherited models of human superiority, reason and progress are grossly overrated and imminently destructive on a global level. Somehow, we have the perpetuation of them. We cannot endure scientific callousness. Humanistic arrogance and complacency towards ecological destruction cannot be endured if we are to continue to live on this planet of such diverse life. We may as a species survive in some manner but we may be alone here and if alone, we are inevitably doomed.

Literature, a creation of culture, has had a role in turn, in creating culture, and it may be able to assume a wondrous shape in becoming a tool of social change in our search for a new balance with the processes of nature. As Meeker points out, we have in our society generally regarded artists and philosophers (and I might add other types of storytellers to these groups) as being exempt from ecological guilt -- "but strangely, they are largely responsible for beginning or perpetuating harmful beliefs and attitudes towards nature."[13] The Humanities are to be challenged for giving their questionable sanction to environmental exploitation but they should not be dismissed by environmental educators, for therein may also lie the tools for social change.

Perhaps the creation of a different, ecologically sound literature, that is, literature that encourages a positive, balanced human-nature relationship, can arise from a re-consideration of the value of age-old traditions. The historical, myth-related narrative can still speak to us even as we move through our modern, artificial environments, perhaps because we recognize at some level our tenacious connection to a real life; we somehow understand the tale's message that we are indeed, nature's animals. In **Tales From Eternity**, Rosemary Haughton points to the "folk wisdom" inherent in fairy tales and draws meaningful insight from them for the modern world in its ecological and spiritual state of disquietude:

> *[Fairy tales] do not express what any particular society considers should occur, or even what does occur in normal practice. They are about much more basic facts of human nature. They are telling us what is the case no matter how strenuously society tries to modify or suppress it.*[14]

And the "case" is that "the lord of creation is totally dependent on the well-being of his vassals, and that to rule the earth means to serve it."[15]

In the stories and myths of many peoples and times, animals are important figures. They do not appear to be representing the animal world as such -- the fact that they have human attributes, motivations and abilities tells us that they are not "really" animals. Rather their roles are as representatives of the non-conscious and non-rational qualities of human life, part of which links humans to their animal ancestry. In narratives about animals, the animals speak to us from that seat of human unconsciousness

that conscious reason often pays no attention to in its narrower view of the world. The abstractions of the animal voices are pointing out that there are other equally "real" realities of human life besides those which reason shows us. Haughton explains how important these types of tales are, especially for us now:

> *It is just because the fairy-tale animals are not "proper" animals at all, but rather express a humanness which we ignore at our peril, that they are necessary for us at a time when failure to listen to this aspect of our humanness has led us to despise and misuse the world of nature to which we also belong. For the openness to experience, the humility and the sense of respect which is necessary in order to appreciate the value of the wise animals of the tales is exactly what we need if we are to live at peace with and within nature, instead of ignoring it and arousing its powers of revenge.*[16]

Our past tendency as a species to see in the other animals a source of wisdom, guidance and grace is remarkable and indicative that we were not always disinclined towards them. Children also find nature to be intensely animate and fascinating, at least until the adult world teaches them that this is inappropriate. The polytheistic-like tendency exhibited in folk narrative and legend is not confined to cultures whose mythologies link vitally the spirits of humans and animals, such as that of aboriginal peoples of the Americas and Africa. The folktales of late Medieval Europe, in a culture that had a utilitarian and increasingly callous attitude towards animals in everyday life, show the same array of creatures "who know better than the cocksure hero who ignores their advice at his own peril."[17] The environmental crisis itself has shown us what ensues when we fail to listen and act with humility. However, for a long period in our history, humans looked to the other species as sources of wisdom or simply as teachers of useful skills, and we preserved what we learned from them in story.

Animals have always provided metaphors for us to explain and relate human experience. When we participate in the use of animal-inspired explanations of experience we assign to non-human life human qualities and aspirations. The compendium of animal stories and images which we have from ages past testifies to a recognition that animals are something like us -- living, exhibiting will and their own forms of intelligence and emotion -- yet at the same time occupying a different realm of experience than that of the human. Other species allow us a basis for comparison; we need them to help us define ourselves.

The quality which is perhaps most characteristic of animal story is its anthropomorphism -- the projection of human meaning onto non-human life. Anthropomorphizing may be seen as an obvious thing for humans to do since the only meanings we can create are human ones. We have seen that this aspect of the human imagination can have positive results in our attempt to understand ourselves and our place in the world. However, some types of animal story (for example, fable and animal epic) are so anthropomorphic that the animal figures are recognized as thinly disguised humans, and we might want to be wary of the harm such treatment might unintentionally provoke. For instance, in some tales innocent beings suffer merely because they are "ugly" animals or carnivores. The only "ugly" animal that is vindicated is the one that is really a transformed human such as the creature of **Beauty and the Beast** or the frog of **The Frog Prince**. Also, animals tend to get typecast negatively in some kinds of traditional tales, for example, the sly fox, the stupid donkey, the wise owl or the evil wolf and we might wonder whether such stories might prejudice children against wildlife if this is the only kind of information they receive and their experience with animals is limited.

If we want to tell stories about ourselves why is it that we choose to make animals deputize for humans? In **Animal Land: The Creatures of Children's Fiction**, Margaret Blount suggests this:

> *The answer lies perhaps in the way people create, and the kind of life they would secretly wish to lead. . . . Animals are beautiful, innocent, funny, strange, and their built-in appeal can be used as a half-way stage towards comment on the human race.*[18]

The attractive power of animals and narrative is thus taken advantage of in order to convey an often didactic message -- to sugar-coat the pill. This attractiveness of the animal story could be of use still as an educating tool for people of all ages, as it always has been, but perhaps especially now in the context of discussing contemporary attitudes about nature.

Woodcut from Ernst Voullieme's facsimile edition of the German **Esopus** *printed in 1477, reproduced from* ***Caxton's Aesop****, ed., R.T. Lenaghan, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967).*

Traditional stories, such as those collected by the brothers Grimm among the rural people of late nineteenth-century Europe or the legends of the native people of our country in which the world was depicted as an animated and magical place, are important to us now, in this time when nature and its inhabitants are becoming so remote from us.[19] In **Tales From Eternity**, Haughton's message is particularly addressed to contemporary Christians who share similar obstacles in the world with the youngest child in the fairy tales because their approach to life seems anomalous to the society in which they live. In the familiar pattern of the fairy tale, it is the youngest child who is successful in the end, often by relating to nature and animals as a friend and with an essentially ecological perspective, treating all he meets with equal respect and courtesy (see **The Golden Bird, The Poor Miller's Son and his Cat, The Two Brothers, The Hut in the Forest** -- all tales in which good fortune comes to people through their kindness to animals). Our environmental problems are the result of having approaches and pursuits similar to those of the elder siblings of the fairy tales who are proud, arrogant and scornful of the old, the young, the poor, the ugly, and of animals.

Haughton describes how the traditional stories link us to our cultural, historical and mythical past while also offering us wisdom with which to make decisions about our future:

> *We can use them to orient ourselves in the present, and discover which way to go. They can help us to do this because they link us to our Christian past, link the Christian past to its pagan pre-history, and link it also to its equally "pagan" subcultures.*[20]

The traditional folk stories have always made it clear that humanity must respect other animals:

> *The would-be hero who ignores the needs or advice of animals invariably lands in trouble, whereas the real hero or heroine has compassion on the trapped bird, or listens to the advice of the faithful old horse.*[21]

Animals are often cast in traditional tales in the roles of helper, guide, prophet and friend. These helpers speak not only with the voice of instinctive wisdom that our culture has come to despise, but also with the voice of common sense from the people of the past who lived intimately with nature.[22] This knowledge is required for the hero's success because he or she must understand, accept and carry forward the work of the past, good or bad. The wisdom of the animals is helpful and available for good ends only and is intended only for those who

will bring love and humility to their task. These kinds of stories must not be lost to us because they are able to show us how to live a more balanced existence with other life if we could recognize the way to world health that folk sense sometimes points out. Traditional tales are often rich with the spirituality and ecology of life. In them:

> *We shall recognize that we are part of creation; we are called out from it, but we must not with scorn reject the parts of ourselves that we share with the other animals and even plants, or try to cut the threads that weave us, body and soul into the intricate and subtle fabric of living things. If we try to detach ourselves from all this we destroy ourselves, spiritually and physically; that is the lesson of modern ecology and of tales so old that their origins are often untraceable.*[23]

We sometimes sense that the animal figure of story is us -- both animal and human simultaneously -- and is speaking to us from a place deep in shared ancestral memory. Interestingly, children seem to prefer these older, other-worldly tales over the artistic or contemporary children's story.[24] The conception of the world reflected in the traditional fairy tale, for example, is, for better or worse, one of specific boundaries concerning goodness and justice which perhaps corresponds to the stage at which a young child is at in developing his or her theories about the world.[25] If this is so, then perhaps we could make better, critical use of these stories in attempting to understand our environmental history and in trying to foster an appropriate environmental ethic -- but first we must somehow restore them to their former significance within society.

Notes

1. In John Berger, **About Looking** (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), p. 1.

2. Ibid., p. 2.

3. Ibid., p. 6.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid., p. 4.

6. For the purposes of this paper, by the term "literature," I mean to imply the collective body of writings produced in the history of a culture (in this case Western culture) which may range in content and form from recordings of unsophisticated folklore to the reflections of learned people on any given subject, to aesthetic prose and poetry. In the sense I use it, literature is any work of a place or period that serves to record and reflect impressions of the world in which it was produced in a creative or imaginative manner.

7. Joseph Meeker, **The Comedy of Survival** (Los Angeles: Guild of Tutors Press, 1980), p. 28.

8. B. and C. Gascoigne, eds., **Caxton's Aesop's Fables** (London: Hamish Hamilton Ltd., 1984), p. 4.
This fable can also be regarded as an etiological or origin tale which explains the reason why things are as they are, in this case, why the honeybee dies when she stings someone.

9. "The Animals Gave Freely of Their Medicine" (Winnebago), in Gerald Hausman, **Meditations with Animals** (Santa Fe, New Mexico: Bear and Co., 1986), pp. 41-42.

10. Meeker, op. cit., p. 28.

11. Folklorist Barre Toelken, in an article called "The Pretty Language of Yellowman," interviews a Navajo story teller about the Coyote stories he tells. Asked why he tells these stories, Yellowman said: "If my children hear the stories, they will grow up to be good people; if they don't hear them, they will turn out bad." Asked why he tells the same stories to adults, he answered: "Through stories everything is made possible." In **Folklore Genres**, ed. Dan Ben-Amos, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1976) P. 55.

12. Meeker, op. cit., p. 28.

13. Meeker, op. cit., p 51.

14. Rosemary Haughton, **Tales From Eternity** (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1973), p. 50.

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid., p.52.

17. Ibid., p. 55.

18. Margaret Blount, **Animal Land: The Creatures of Children's Fiction** (London: Hutchinson of London, 1980), pp. 16-17.

19. The Irish tale, "The Dead Moon," is one such interesting story. It concerns the most primitive elements in the nature of the world -- light and darkness. The tale tells of the personified full moon's (almost always in folklore the moon is female) struggle with the evil creature of a bog. (Landscape types have specific characteristics and inhabitants in folklore. The swampland or fen is an especially sinister one, seemingly because it is a mixture of categories: the land and the water are not distinct.) When the Moon is dark these creatures hold sway over the land so the light of the Moon is a greater blessing to the people rather than the haunting light it is described as elsewhere. In this tale, the Moon becomes imprisoned in the bog and the common people must overcome their fear of the place in order to save her and thus, must participate directly in the affairs of nature and the realm of magic.

20. Haughton, op. cit., p. 15.

21. Ibid., p. 51.

22. Berger suggests in "Why Look at Animals," **About Looking** (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), that these people have been marginalized historically and in the present along with animals.

23. Haughton, op. cit., p. 56.

24. Andre Favat, **Child and Tale: The Origins of Interest** (Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1977), p. ii.

25. Ibid., p. 32.

Red Riding Hood by Gustave Dore from ***French Fairy Tales.***

Shedding Our Skin, Dropping Leviathan's Armour:

A Meditation on the Spirit of Disrespect and the Crisis of Civilization

by Adrian Ivakhiv *

In the beginning, was
the seed:
the cosmic egg.

Beginnings are useful, because they contextualize change. Once upon a time, there was changelessness. A point at which the nothing and the All were One, but which contained all possibilities. All-potent. All-promising.

And then, the Big Bang. The Great Beginning. Movement. Dynamism. The great unravelling of energies and of differences, the cosmic dance, gushing outwards, issuing forth Force only to integrate inwards again into crystallized Form. The out-breath of the universe becoming the in-breath of the infinitely many smaller universes it gave birth to.

And then, one day, *we* enter the myth. Accompanied by Choice. "We" here can take as the definition of ourselves those beings that have so altered their surroundings that evolved, instinctual relations no longer speak through us, and, as a consequence, we are somewhat lost, uncertain as to what we are to do. But this lostness registers with us only as a vague premonition, and we continue as if all were as it should be (though our myths betray us). We sense the existence of different possibilities, between which we must choose, or else be led blindly. To help ourselves choose, we posit the existence of Good and Evil.

But hold: rewind . . . Good and Evil are surely subjective concepts, relative, dependent on many things. Depending on our questions, the answers float somewhere between the poles of a continuum; they make up a complementarity, not an irreconcilable dualism.

Let us propose the Good. Human beings, ourselves and others, living in relatively harmonious communities (being social animals) with each other, with the biosphere of living beings, with the cosmos around us, in relations of mutual respect, respectful of the mysteries and ultimate unknowability of the Selfhood of Others, the Mystery of all Other, of Being, of Life. (Is this idealism? Of ourse, but without ideals there is no sense of direction or of value.)

Let us then look around ourselves, and observe. It is not so, says the world. Life is not easy; it sometimes seems a burden. We must work to survive. Some succeed, others fail. Some succeed at others' expense. Humanity succeeds at nature's expense. Humanity learns to dominate its world. Some of us learn to dominate others (according to our physical abilities, our social status, our sexual or racial identities, our economic means); we create institutions of domination. Relations revolve around manipulation, objectification; they are no longer founded on respect, on the acceptance of mutual mystery, but are ordered according to their use and value for the subject. (We can ask: am I respectful of the mystery, the sacredness of the people I live with and encounter in daily affairs? Is a corporation, a state, an institution respectful of the mystery and sacredness of those with whom it deals, the humans, animals, plants, the biosphere of life, the earth and

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water and fire and air?)

Now we have Good and Evil. But Good, as an ideal, is unattainable. Because desires contradict. Because respect of another's sacred selfhood requires one's own vulnerability, one's own sacrifice. The wolf seems to care little for the selfhood of the caribou, which run in what appears to be fear from their predator. There is apparent conflict, contradiction. Polarity, dynamism. A dance of energy, to and fro, with parts feeding off other parts, all weaving its own kind of natural logic and beauty. Life and Death. And through it all, the continuity of Life.

The dance can be one of ongoing change, vitality, exuberance, celebration. Or its vitality can become locked up, frozen, institutionalized into repetitive patterns of behaviour, such that the identities tighten, close in, formalize, become fixed and restrictive, and the selves floundering within the identities begin to come apart, to fragment, disassociating that which fits their identities from what doesn't. Troubled by their inner confusion, they begin to clutch at the straws offered them. The person stops being a deep mystery, a conscious human being whose essence is found in the freedom between various possibilities, and becomes a Worker, a Boss, a Servant, a Slave, a Wife and Mother, a Criminal, a Schizophrenic, a Sinner. And these crippling dimensions, crippling because they curb the flowering of the person's developmental potentials, are passed on through social and cultural institutions, through the canalized locks of repetitive imitation, each generation moulding the next in its own image.

Fredy Perlman, in a torrent of historical passion entitled **Against His-Story, Against Leviathan**[1], called this Life-Ordering and Life-Controlling, Dominating, Civilizing, Structuring, Power-Wielding force in history "Leviathan."[2] Leviathan, the Earth Plunderer, the Community Destroyer. I will be nice and call Leviathan the Spirit of Disrespect. Of course, this hardly does justice to Leviathan's vehemence, when "His" Spirit combines with the fanatic's energized, desperate Misunderstanding of Self and World, to launch His crusades, His wars, exterminations and genocides.

The ways of Leviathan disconnect, they close off from experience, from the sharing, mutually respectful, mutually vulnerable, commonwealth of interpenetrating Selves. They build edifices, fortresses, and bask in their own self-proclaimed glory. Their goal is Power, Control, the Domination of the Other, and of the World. The Spirit of Disrespect emerges often unwittingly, as a response to a worse enemy, as a defense. The virus of Power, once unleashed (and, historically, it seems to have emerged as a result of ecological "caging" in the Mesopotamian river valleys, in the Nile region, the Indus, and elsewhere[3]) spreads easily. Once it contacts a human community, it is difficult to extricate. Defense against an aggressor requires the adoption of similar methods. Walls created to keep the enemy out, in time, create social institutions for their own maintenance, social levies, professionalization, bureaucracy. Gradually, the stratified empire-states spread and grow, their tentacles and entrails cannibalizing more and more of the humanity in their midst.

The formerly free members of human communities become Leviathan's inmates. "The armour once worn on the outside wraps itself around the individual's insides. The mask becomes the individual's face."[4] The once free development of humans in communities that cherished the life around them, that communicated with their relations ritually, and recognized their place within the whole, becomes crippled. Seemingly harmless agriculture, domestication, the control of other life forms for our benefit, private property, the accumulation of surplus capital, all increase the fear of the Other, the fear of the Wild and Untamed, counterpoised against the arrogant

Ego. A somatic, emotional, intellectual and psychic rigidity sets in and becomes the character armour of individuals, of social institutions, of ideologies. Human society becomes schizophrenically disconnected from the Biosphere of Life, unable to communicate any more with the shared consensus of the living commonwealth around it. It begins to talk only to itself, mainly through commands, decrees and proclamations, and eradicates whatever it cannot comprehend.

This is the Evil, the Failure, the Unwholeness in our way about the world. But the Good, the Ideal, exists, because in some form its elements have been felt and experienced, at one time or another. Sharing, respect, love, awe, wonder, felicity, genuine relationships that touch on the immense, unfathomable, unbounded depths within and between selves, between friends and relations -- these all exist. On rare occasions, we still experience them. Perhaps they were once the prevalent state of being, says a voice filtering through the noise. The voice speaks of the "original affluent society" of gatherer-hunters, where gathering and hunting were not economic chores, but were the joyful activities of life interpenetrated by the stories, the celebrations, the rituals, that animated the world and its co-celebrants. Myths tell us, with greater persistence, of the "golden age."

The memory of the Good gives birth to resistance, in various forms, against Leviathan's pretensions. But the inmates, maimed and crippled by generations of life surrounded and defined by the Spirit of Disrespect, have not found it easy to walk away and create the Good from the ground up. Their armour doesn't come off. "Segments of the decomposed worm remain scattered over the countryside, and each segment tends to recompose itself into a complete worm. . . . The segments are like machines. If they've merely been abandoned and haven't rusted too badly, they can be oiled and put back into operation by any good mechanic."[5] The ways of society, its culture, develop over many generations, and likewise, a culture free of Leviathan's deformations requires many generations of cultivation.

Resistance has taken the form of solitary or small group withdrawals, of massive rebellions, of carefully planned and strategized revolutions, of haphazard and spontaneous upsurges of violent emotion and aggression. The attempts at resistance are not the Good fighting the Evil. They are more often instinctive reactions, humanity's ecological response against Leviathan's repressive order. Some of the reactions are less coherent than others; some lead to worse ends than the order they toppled. (Many make the mistake of localizing the blame in too small a frame. Marxism generally reduces the problem to economics, treating the ethical and ideological as merely the "superstructure." Religious and psychological stories tend toward the opposite, advocating a personal salvation that expects social transformation to come about as a result of changed consciousness, ignoring how the consciousness is shaped by institutions. Still others search for scapegoats elsewhere: in religion, or in males' inferiority complex that comes about with the realization of their marginality in the perpetuation of the species. But these, perhaps unfairly, ignore the ecological limitations that gave birth to hierarchy and power institutions in the first place.)

And so the stories of resistance emerge, incomplete as they are, alongside and in between all of the stories churned out by the Leviathanic organism in its ongoing myth-making enterprise -- its proclamations about human "progress," used to justify all the wars and battles, the repression and persecution -- all in the name of the "national interest" or some other social god, always demanding allegiance towards the common good, however it be defined by Power.

It has been left to the storytellers and artists and the less visible

maintainers of the wisdom tradition, the gnostics of the soul, to continue cultivating the Spirit of Reverence in small enclaves, hidden from Leviathan's gaze, in individual lives. The prophets (Blake, Thoreau, and the countless others) have proclaimed it aloud, occasionally reawakening a memory of it for others.

Today there are not *many* Leviathans, but one Immensity, whose estate has become the whole planet. The tentacles of this many-headed colossus stretch into every available, unclaimed space, subjugating and devouring the Biosphere in manageable chunks, and defecating out bits and pieces of real estate property, statistics on paper, commodities, fashions and fetishes, consumer goods and consumers themselves; and behind it all -- the spectre of war, the threat of the Enemy, abstracted and projected onto some racial or political or religious group against which we must defend ourselves with our precious slogans and flags. Leviathan's human form, the Corporate-Industrial Class, are all of us, to the extent that we participate in the buying and selling of the planet and of our own and others' Being. In the interstices of corporate-industrial consciousness, between Leviathan's winding entrails, lives and breathes the planetariat, the sparks of free, human Community, Life in all its sacredness and mystery mutually affirmed and respected by all its constituent beings.

Stuck as we are on this battlefield between the Divine and the not yet conscious, human as we are with a taste of our immense power, homeless as we are having long ago broken out of our evolutionary, eco-geographic perimeters, we can safely assume that the battle between the two Spirits will continue. Leviathan's grasp has become so all-encompassing that it endangers the future of all life. Yet the conditions today are not those of the past. No matter how sharp the incisors with which Leviathan had been extricated from a community, there were always fresh, still untouched frontiers for Him to wind His way into. Today, those frontiers have diminished; there is no place left to run -- not for Leviathan, not for us. With the planetisation of the Beast, the bull of His Power can be faced squarely and grasped by its horns. Yet His cages are built and will not go away, His armour will persist, and again it may be the ecological conditions of the planet's finitude that press this armour down onto our bodies, preventing an easy return to the free flow of Life.

For my own sake, I would be happy to express the Good, and to do it in the critically multi-dimensional way that makes it dangerous to Leviathan. Only a Spirit of Disrespect coherently contributes to its own future, the future of Community, Sacredness, and Life. It is by loosening the screws that hold Leviathan's armour in place, but loosening them all at once, so that His energy cannot relocate in other niches, that takes place the Healing of the World. . . .

* * *

A Self-Critical Note on Sources and on Metaphors:

"Leviathan" and His constituent parts have been analyzed for as long as there has been some awareness of there being a problem at all. Modern, relatively comprehensive analyses of a socio-political character appear in the writings of Andrew Bard Schmookler, Murray Bookchin, Michael Mann, Marilyn French, Lewis Mumford, Frederick Turner, Fredy Perlman, and, to some extent, in the critical traditions of various "isms" and critical theories every good academic knows of. And then there are those of a more philosophical character, the spiritual critics of Leviathan, the insightful healers of humanity's psychological and spiritual wounds, whose tradition extends from well before Lao Tzu to our own century's prophets and soul

attendants, those like Carl Jung, Martin Heidegger, G.I. Gurdjieff, Wilhelm Reich, Martin Buber, Theodore Roszak, Susan Griffin, Starhawk, Mircea Eliade, to name just a few.

The very need to use language, however, jeopardizes the thoughts of anyone wishing to speak of the "Spirit of Disrespect." The use, in this essay, of terms such as "Leviathan," "tentacles," "entrails," "the Beast," conjure up a particular set of images, a lens of metaphors through which to view the world. Their power is somewhat removed from the realities they point toward. Language is a medium whose apparent instrumentality pretends to a neutrality that doesn't exist; it is forever being used to manipulate emotions and responses. My point is not to apologize, but rather to underline my awareness of the need for the critical reading of texts. One might ask, for instance, need we resort to metaphors such as "tentacles" and "beast" that reflect a fear of the worm-like and slimy animal nature that is within us, but that we perceive as being other?

Extreme usage of language tends to divide readers into camps -- those familiar with the usage, and who "agree" with it, are emotionally empowered by it; those unfamiliar with it think it extreme, absurd, or even dangerous. The ability to see things from different points of view is made possible by a familiarity with different and contrasting descriptions of the world, and it is this flexibility in the capacity to describe the world that loosens the grips of the "armour" that maintains the world as it is. A metaphor is a way of describing the world (and, more dangerously, of constructing our world); we must learn to "unglue" ourselves from our metaphors, and for this reason, the above mediatation should be seen as an exercise in seeing the world through a particular set of lenses, and its validity should be judged by the validity and pragmatic usefulness of the lenses it provides.

Notes

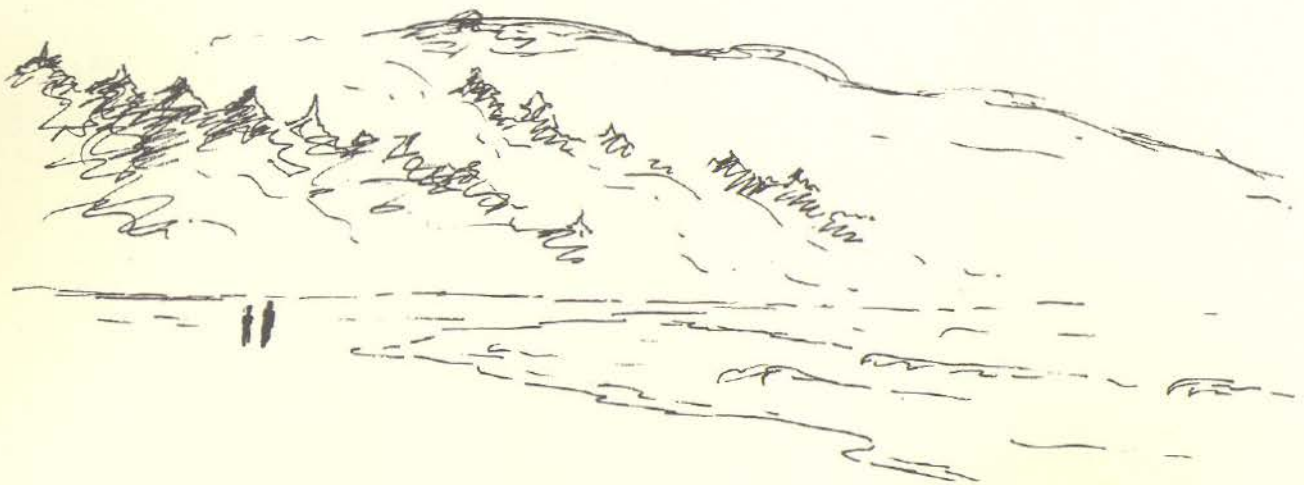
1. Fredy Perlman, **Against His-Story, Against Leviathan** (Detroit: Black and Red Press, 1983).

2. Perlman follows, and, at the same time, subverts Thomas Hobbes' notion of "Leviathan." In his work entitled, **Leviathan**, Hobbes discusses "leviathan" as a positive socializing force, while Perlman considers it negative.

3. See for example, Micheal Mann, **The Sources of Social Power: A History of Power from the Beginning to A.D. 1760** (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

4. Perlman, p. 38.

5. Ibid., pp. 43-45.



Ecology, Witchcraft and the Enchanted World

by Mike Carr *

Pagans, or more properly neo-pagans have been growing in numbers and influence over the past decade or so in the U.S. and Canada. This is evidenced in the feminist, peace, green (or ecology), and anarchist movements. Margot Adler, author of **Drawing Down the Moon**, an examination of contemporary neo-paganism, has estimated that there are about 100,000 people in the U.S. alone who describe themselves as pagan or neo-pagan.[1] Over the past 5 or 6 years, I have developed a strong sympathy, more, an empathy with the neo-pagan sensibility and earth centredness. Apart from reading **Dreaming the Dark** by Starhawk, I had not studied paganism or ritual practice. This summer however, both at the North American Anarchist Survival Gathering and the North American Bioregional Congress the presence of pagans was very obvious to me. At the Bioregional Congress I had the chance to experience paganism directly, through earth-bonding rituals which had a powerful effect on many participants.

The following essay, presents a particular reading of two literary works, **The Little Prince** by Antoine de Saint-Exupery and **Not Wanted on the Voyage** by Timothy Findley. In reading these two modern tales it seemed to me that each in its own way contains a pagan sensibility or, at least, can be interpreted from a pagan sensibility to reveal new insights the authors may not have been conscious of. The first section of the essay attempts to show how a discussion of the symbols used in **The Little Prince**, informed by a neo-pagan symbolic understanding, can evoke images of a very different way of knowing from the dominant Western scientific one. **The Little Prince** is the story of a little prince from a tiny planet who comes down to earth, after visiting several other planets, meets an enigmatic and magical serpent, a wise fox, and an adult (the narrator). Through his adventures, the Little Prince learns some lessons about love, relationships, and adult life. In this tale, a pagan understanding of the self has resonances with currently developing ecological insights of a self which goes beyond the boundaries of our skin. The second section of the essay, focuses on the character of Lucy in **Not Wanted on the Voyage**. It is the story of the great flood and the first time the world ended, the story of Noah's ark. Yet, it's a kind of modern magic realism with a mythology of its own. Lucy, is Lucifer the rebel male angel who comes to earth as a seven foot white-faced woman of considerable beauty and charm with long, jet-black hair. In both these stories, an examination from a pagan perspective can illuminate imagery and symbolism out of which we can draw many lessons.

As Anton Ehrenzweig states in **The Hidden Order of Art**:

> *The complexity of any work of art, however simple, far outstrips the powers of conscious attention, which with its pin-point focus can attend to only one thing at a time. Only the extreme undifferentiation of unconscious vision can scan these complexities. It can hold them in a single, unfocused glance and treat figure and ground with equal impartiality.*[2]

The Little Prince is certainly exemplary of the "hidden order of art." However simple in appearance or form, the reality dealt with in **The Little Prince** is most difficult to express in language, especially for those of us who are from a literate, historical, linear, visually oriented culture. In **The Little Prince** what is most essential in life is not visible at all. The secret of life, the fox tells the Little Prince, the essential, is invisible to the eyes. What then is this story, apparently written for children, that treats of the hidden order of the universe?

When I first read **The Little Prince**, it was for a literature course given by a Priest at Saint Michael's College. For him, the story of the Little Prince was a modern tale of the Christ, his wanderings and his crucifixion and resurrection.

Art, like life, is open to interpretation and **The Little Prince** presents a number of riddles not readily interpreted. I myself don't have a clear-cut interpretation of this tale but I do see some resemblances to mythology. The

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earliest legends go back long before Christianity of course. In **The Spiral Dance**, Starhawk points out that the legends of Wicca, or Witchcraft predate all the so-called great religions.[3] The cycle of death and re-birth dealt with in Christianity and which we will see **The Little Prince** also deals with is certainly a subject of a broad range of mythologies. But perhaps the symbolisms in **The Little Prince** can be interpreted more satisfactorily from the older pagan perspective. Yet **The Little Prince** is clearly a modern tale, set in the 20th century with asteroids, airplanes, geographers, businessmen, hunters with guns, and enormous telescopes. Clearly, this story is not a myth, at least not a traditional myth. This puzzle can be resolved if we consider how myths and tales are compared by Mircea Eliade in **Myth and Reality**:

> *Though in the West the tale has long since become a literature of diversion (for children and peasants) or of escape (for city dwellers), it still presents the structure of an infinitely serious and responsible adventure, for in the last analysis it is reducible to an initiatory scenario: again and again we find initiatory ordeals.*[4]

In the case of **The Little Prince**, the ordeals which Eliade speaks of take the form of riddles to be solved. The enigmatic behaviours of adults, the puzzling behaviour of the Prince's rose, and the riddle of "taming" the fox are among the many "ordeals" the Prince faces. In reflecting on the nature of the tale, Eliade continues:

> *Its content proper refers to a terrifyingly serious reality: initiation, that is, passing by way of a symbolic death and resurrection, from ignorance and immaturity to the spiritual age of the adult.*[5]

For Eliade, it is not always true that the tale shows a desacralization of the mythical world: "It would be more correct to speak of a camouflage of mythical motifs and characters."[6]

Of course, in the world of **The Little Prince**, becoming an adult after meeting up with all the narrow pathetic representatives of the adult world -- the narrator excepted -- growing up is a very dubious fate.

I don't know what Saint-Exupery had in mind when he wrote **The Little Prince**. There are many enigmas in this tale: the elephant in the boa, the fox who wants to be domesticated, the lamplighter, the danger of the baobab trees, the mystery of the rose, of the golden cobra, and of the Little Prince himself, both so naive and so wise. At least some of these enigmas can be illuminated through a pagan understanding of self. By drawing upon some symbols from mythology certain correspondences are suggested which evoke a different epistemology, an epistemology which has a fundamental ecological meaning. There are many elements of early mythology in **The Little Prince**. The Prince himself has magic powers not the least of which is his ability to "dream" into existence the village well in the desert, or his ability to read the narrator's mind. In this tale animals talk, as well as flowers, just as in mythology.

The story opens with the drawing of a coiled serpent. In **The Women's Encyclopedia of Myths and Secrets** by Barbara Walker, the serpent which sheds its skin periodically is symbolic of the cycle of death and rebirth.[7] In this metaphor, snakes don't die of old age but in shedding their skins they are continually being reborn into a new life. The serpent is identified with the goddess, the life force constantly re-newing life through the cycles of birth and death. For Eliade, myth, "an extremely complex cultural reality . . . can be approached and interpreted from various and complementary viewpoints."[8] In his appendix Eliade comments:

> *The tale takes up and continues "initiation" on the level of the imaginary. If it represents an amusement or an escape, it does so only for the banalized consciousness, and particularly for that of modern man. . . . Today we are beginning to realize that what is called "initiation" co-exists with the human condition, that every existence is made up of an unbroken series of "ordeals," "deaths," and "resurrection," whatever be the terms that modern language uses to express these originally religious experiences.*[9]

Eliade's discussion of initiation resonates with Paul Shepard's reflections on initiation in pre-historic societies. For Shepard, initiation in these societies symbolizes passage from one stage of life to another, and actually helps to achieve the transition. Shepard suggests in his book, **Nature and Madness**, that Western society is "sick" because it has rigidified at the juvenile

stage in development, failing to provide the nurturing which will help adolescents into the more mature stage of bonding with nature, and of being at home in the world.[10]

Drawing from the Fairy Tradition of Witchcraft, Starhawk explains in **The Spiral Dance** that the unconscious mind is called the "Younger Self"; the conscious mind is called "Talking Self." Because they function through different "modes of awareness," that is they have different epistemologies, communication between the two is very difficult.

The Younger Self directly experiences the world through images, emotions, sensations, dreams, visions, and physical symptoms. Starhawk says Younger Self corresponds roughly to Jung's personal and collective unconscious. Younger Self's verbal understanding is limited. Talking Self organizes the impressions of Younger Self, gives them names, and classifies them into systems. Talking Self speaks through words, abstract concepts, and numbers. Younger Self corresponds to the "child," Talking Self to the "adult" or "parent" in the tale of **The Little Prince**. The Little Prince himself is the child, a magical child whose way of knowing is so different from the adult world. The parent is the narrator, the adult who helps the Little Prince understand the weird world of adults. This is one level of understanding of **The Little Prince**, but there is another deeper one.In the Fairy Tradition, a third "self" is recognized, what Starhawk calls the "High Self" or "God Self," "the ultimate and original essence, the spirit that exists beyond time, space, and matter."[11] In the Fairy Tradition, this "self" is our deepest level of wisdom and compassion.

The High Self often appears as the "Spirit Guid.". Sometimes the Spirit Guide appears in dual form. Starhawk relates John C. Lilly's account of his L.S.D. experience in an isolation tank where he reports meeting two helpful beings:

> *They say that they are my guardians, that they have been with me before at critical times and that in fact they are with me always, but I am not usually in a state to perceive them. I am in a state to perceive them when I am close to the death of the body. In this state there is no time. There is an immediate perception of the past, present, and future as if in the present moment.*[12]

Starhawk then comments that the High Self is connected to the Younger Self, but that the conscious mind with its abstract concepts, its numbers, the Talking Self never actually communicates with the Divine, the Higher Self. To do this we have to resort to symbols, art, poetry, music, myth, and the actions of ritual.

Ritual is actually only mentioned once in **The Little Prince**. Significantly though it is the fox -- the character who reveals the secret of life -- that says ritual is necessary and that it has been too much forgotten. The Little Prince himself does not know what ritual is and the fox's explanation is not very elaborate. From the story though, it's clear that ritual does involve time, dance, and a break from ordinary life. For Eliade, by living the myths through ritual, "one emerges from profane, chronological time, and enters a time that is of a different quality, a 'sacred' time at once primordial and infinitely recoverable."[13]

In **The Little Prince** the break from ordinary time that the fox describes can be interpreted as that "sacred time" in which we connect with our high self. Starhawk, in considering ritual for moderns warns:

> *Aspects of Witchcraft rituals may sometimes seem silly to very serious-minded people, who fail to realize that ritual is aimed at Younger Self. The sense of humour, of play, is often the key to opening the deepest states of consciousness. Part of the "price of freedom," then, is the willingness to play, to let go of our adult dignity, to look foolish, to laugh at nothing. A child make-believes that she is a queen, her chair becomes a throne. A witch make-believes that her wand has magic power, and it becomes a channel for energy.*[14]

All the above descriptions, John Lilly's, Mircea Eliade's, Starhawk's, and Saint-Exupery's are attempts to explain to Talking Self or linear-logical modern **man** what in the last analysis can never really be explained in terms of Cartesian reductionism, namely, that what is most real, most vital for human life on earth, can never really be explained on the level of ordinary reality. It is in fact another way of knowing reality, an epistemology of the enchanted world, an epistemology of the heart. From such a reading of **The Little Prince**, we can understand that an epistemology of the heart leads us into the enchanted world of relationship where everything is interconnected. This is the world of the High Self.

The High Self or Divine self is very much analogous to "deep ecology" perspectives of the extended self, the self which includes an ever widening sphere of beings and natural processes, the self which bonds to the biosphere and ultimately beyond it to the cosmos. We identify with other species in our enchanted world because in this sense they and we are connected ecologically. Their home is our home, we are related, connected. As Starhawk says:

> *Love for life in all its forms is the basic ethic of Witchcraft. Witches are bound to honour and respect all living things, and to serve the life force . . . oneness is attained not through losing the self, but through realizing it fully. Honour the Goddess in yourself, celebrate your self, and you will see that Self is everywhere.*[15]

In the Fairy tradition of Starhawk, the High Self is often symbolized as two linked spirals, or as the infinity sign. It is the sign of a fully realized being, one who has attained, experienced and realized the wisdom of the ancients.

In Timothy Findley's **Not Wanted on the Voyage** this kind of realized being is represented by the character of Lucy. Like the Goddess symbol in Wicca, Lucy includes both male and female aspects. For Starhawk, "the femaleness of the Goddess is primary, not to denigrate the male, but because it represents bringing life into the world, valuing the world."[16] It is clear that Lucy values the world. Her purpose in joining the human race is both to "survive the holocaust in-heaven and to prevent the holocaust on earth."[17]

Not Wanted on the Voyage is not an openly "pagan" novel. Like **The Little Prince**, its paganism (if such it is) is hidden. Even though Lucy tells Mrs. Noyes (at the end of book three) that she, Mrs. Noyes, is beginning to understand the meaning of her sign "infinity," this is the closest we get to an explicit explanation of the sign. However, we do know that Lucy/Lucifer, the bearer of light, was intolerant of heaven because there was only light "merciless light," no shadows, no storms, no rain. Neither does Lucy support the opposite situation where there is only rain, no sun. She dreams of a world "where darkness and light are reconciled."[18] Lucy values diversity, diversity in all things, light and dark being symbols of course of good and evil. Lucy knows that real evil is a place where opposites don't exist, a place like heaven where "a person's clothes were always at the cleaners, being improved, or else, the person was always at the cleaners, being improved."[19] Lucy's desire to reconcile light and dark is essentially a pagan sensibility. In **The Spiral Dance**, Starhawk writes of the "wheel of the year" with its waxing and waning of light and dark:

> *. . . the Dark and Light Twins are clearly understood to be aspects of the same divinity. But when we see the God as split, we run the risk of suffering a split within ourselves: of identifying totally with the Light and ascribing the Dark to an agent of evil. . . . In Witchcraft, the dark waning aspect of God is not evil -- it is a vital part of the natural cycle.*[20]

Lucy's sexuality is representative of this pagan sensibility. Lucy's female aspect contains within it a male aspect. In Wicca, male and female forces represent difference, but not in essence. Starhawk says:

> *They are the same force flowing in opposite, but not opposed directions. The Chinese concept of Yin and Yang is somewhat similar, but in Witchcraft the description of the forces is very different - Neither is "active" or "passive," dark or light, dry or moist - instead, each partakes of all these qualities. The female is seen as the life-giving force, the power of manifestation, of energy flowing into the world to become form. The male is seen as the death force, in a positive not a negative sense: the force of limitation that is the necessary balance to unbridled creation, the force of dissolution, of return to formlessness. Each principle contains the other: Life breeds death, feeds on death; death sustains life, makes possible evolution and new creation. They are part of a cycle, each dependent on the other.*[21]

Lucy herself goes through several "sheddings of skin" in the course of "the voyage," perhaps symbolic of the Wiccan perspective of the universe as fields of energy, vortexes of moving forces, currents in an ever changing sea, congealing temporarily into forms, only to dissolve and coalesce again into new forms. Lucy can be seen then as a representation of a

pagan concept of self, an extended mature self having undergone many transformations throughout her long struggle against the forces of evil in heaven which are "under the protection of Michael Archangelis."[22]

In a discussion on the spiritual self, Harold Wood refers to the pantheistic concept of the "ecological self" in which one's personal self becomes identified with the ecological self or ultimate being.[23] This is also referred to as "extended identity," a basic principle of pantheism. Regardless of the differences between pantheism and paganism, this concept of self is very similar to the extended self concept in paganism (and in deep ecology).

The mature being, a being for whom being matters in all its diverse forms will naturally be opposed to absolutism. As we have seen, this is the crux of Lucy's fight against the evil of absolutist heaven and of its chief representative on earth the patriarch Dr. Noah Noyes. As Starhawk says in **The Spiral Dance**:

> *The Judeo-Christian heritage has left us with the view of a universe composed of warring opposites, which are valued as either good or evil. . . . Dualism slides over into what I call the "Chosen People Syndrome." When there is One Right True and Only Way -- Ours! -- and everybody else is wrong, then those who are wrong are damned and the damned are evil.*[24]

For Starhawk, Wicca is a practice for activists. Its insight is that polarities are in balance, not at war. Energy moves in cycles at times flowing outward, pushing us to change the world, at times inward, transforming ourselves. It must always turn and return, and so be renewed. In paganism, the Goddess does not rule over the world as in monotheism. On the contrary, in paganism, the Goddess is the world: "The Goddess is ourselves and the world -- to link with Her is to engage actively with the world and all its problems."[25]

Lucy does just this. As we have seen she has joined the humans to try to prevent a holocaust on earth. She helps to organize the "Great Revolution of the Lower Orders" on the ark. She is helpful and loving to humans and animals alike. She brings light to the lower orders of the ark, where the humans out of favour with Noah (and therefore with God) and the animals are kept. Lucy bonds strongly with the other animals and, after her final "shedding of skin," she herself while still "human" has become more animal-like: "The face -- this time -- was neither round nor angular, but wide and flat, with extraordinary eyes of an almost golden colour: animal eyes, fierce and tender."[26] Lucy is an activist in the best sense of the word, an earth activist.

In his article, "Paganism as Resistance," Christopher Manes writes:

> *The rise of radical environmentalism and neo-paganism occurred almost simultaneously, no doubt in response to the same concerns over the desacralization of the earth that modern culture represents. . . . The large number of neo-pagans in the radical environmental movement confirms the fact that people involved in the struggle against accumulated power sense an affinity between Deep Ecology and "The Old Ways" as Gary Snyder calls the primal religions.*[27]

There is now a growing convergence in the ecology movement between religion and science. In **Not Wanted on the Voyage**, this convergence is represented by the marriage of Lucy, the "pagan devil," and Ham, the "scientist." But what are we talking about when we say "science" and "scientist" in this context? The debate between pantheism and paganism illuminates this.[28] The "science-oriented" pantheists stress the mystical approach to science. Pantheist author Harold Wood refers to geneticist Barbara McClintoch and her concept of a science which "embraces the world," and to Spinoza, Ernst Haeckel, John Muir and Rachel Carson as examples of pantheistic scientists. He could have added Gilbert White and Henry David Thoreau. These individuals are part of what historian of ecology, Donald Worster, calls the Arcadian tradition in ecology, clearly not the reductionist mechanists of classical renaissance science or "systems" ecology.[29] In **Not Wanted on the Voyage**, Lucy's husband Ham is such a scientist.

Now, if we look at the "pagan" side of the debate Starhawk speaks, for example, of the new physics as evidence of pagan support for a non-reductionist science.[30] In fact, Starhawk points out in **The Spiral Dance** that the split between religion and science is a false duality of absolutism:

> *When God is felt to be separate from the physical world, religion can be split off from science. . . .*

But the Goddess is manifest in the physical world, and the more we understand its workings the better we know her. Science and religion are both quests for truth -- they differ only in their methodology and the set of symbols they use to describe their findings. The field of inquiry is the same. . . . Observation is meditation as the builders of Stonehenge -- temple, astronomical observatory, calendar, and calculator -- knew well.[31]

Lucy is very in touch with science. She is able to produce tungsten lamps when they have not even been invented. She knows about Einstein even though he has not even been born yet and both she and Ham share that deep sense of inquiry that always questions everything. This is why she eventually has to leave heaven. What she and Ham share most is that love of the earth, that deep bonding common to naturalist and pagan alike.

I find some excellent and inspiring considerations from both the pagan and pantheistic perspectives on science. Certainly, when both perspectives recognize the on-going development of a spiritually inspired, earth-centred science, then a sharper distinction can be made between this kind of science, a "hands-off" science of curiosity and joy, and the old reductionist science of manipulation and domination.

What I have called the "epistemology of the heart" is an epistemology for the enchanted world, our world if we open ourselves up to it. The beings represented by the Little Prince and by Lucy, whole beings in touch with their high selves, are really our own selves, our deepest selves. This ecological mode of perception, "extraordinary consciousness" as Starhawk puts it "is broad, holistic, and undifferentiated, sees patterns and relationships rather than fixed objects."[32] It is what Starhawk calls starlight vision "dim and silvery, revealing the play of woven branches and the dance of shadows, sensing pathways as spaces in the whole."[33] It is the mode of perception of the unconscious mind, younger self and high self.

Dolores LaChapelle, in **Sacred Land, Sacred Sex: Rapture of the Deep**, speaks of nature's patterns as the "old ways," both deep inside us from our own deep past (including our pre-human animal past) and those patterns outside us in the natural environment. In trying to express the inexpressible, she speaks of the Chinese concept of the dynamic pattern of the universe, the web of relationships, a web "woven by no weaver."[34] Although this is Taoist, I think it fairly expresses a pagan understanding of the web of life. This is a very ecological metaphor as well. As such, it is both very ancient and completely contemporary, the web of life of our enchanted planet earth. The pagan understanding of the goddess is another metaphor for it.

Notes

1. Margot Adler, **Drawing Down the Moon** (Boston: Beacon Press, 1979).

The words pagan and neo-pagan do not admit to an easy definition. Very often the two are used interchangeably by people who ascribe to paganism. Although there is a semantic overlap, neo-paganism refers to the contemporary revival of paganism, whereas pagan can refer to the contemporary movement or to the past as far back as palaeolithic times when it was the "universal religion." Today, some use the word palaeopaganism to refer to those pre-civilized pagans. Religion, by the way, originally meant and still means for most pagans, "linking back" or "connecting back." Adler gives an account of the history of the contemporary revival of paganism, which I find most useful as an introduction to the movement and to the pagan "world-view." However, the term "pagan world-view" is itself misleading since there is a very great diversity of views within paganism. Hence, the difficulty with definitions. Adler cites several different definitions from people calling themselves pagan. She herself uses Pagan (Adler capitalizes the noun as do other religions) to mean "a member of a polytheistic nature religion, such as the ancient Greek, Roman, or Egyptian religions, or in anthropological terms, a member of one of the indigenous folk and tribal religions all over the world." Adler also attempts a generalized description by which neo-pagans "usually mean the pre-Christian nature religions of the West, and their own attempts to revive them or to re-create them in new forms" and she adds "the modern Pagan resurgence includes the new feminist goddess worshipping groups, certain new religions based on the visions of science fiction writers, attempts to revive ancient European religions -- Norse, Greek, Roman -- and the surviving tribal religions." Adler further points out that one of the "foremost characteristics of Neo-paganism is the return to the ancient idea that there is no distinction between spiritual and material, sacred and secular." For Adler, most neo-pagans sense an aliveness and "presence" in nature, are usually polytheists, animists, or pantheists, or two or three of these at once; that share the goal of living in harmony with nature and tend to view humanity's "advancement" and separation from nature as the prime source of alienation, seeing ritual as a tool to end that alienation.

2. Anton Ehrenzweig, **The Hidden Order of Art** (London: Paladin, 1967), p. 35.

3. Starhawk, **The Spiral Dance** (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1979). Wicca, or Witchcraft, also known as "the craft" has many traditions within it. Wicca is defined by most of its practitioners as the craft of the wise. Wicca is part of the pagan tradition.

4. Mircea Eliade, **Myth and Reality** (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), p. 201.

5. Ibid., p. 200.

6. Ibid.

7. Barbara Walker, **The Womens Encyclopedia of Myths and Secrets** (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1983).

8. Eliade, op. cit., p. 5.

9. Ibid., p. 202.

10. Paul Shepard, **Nature and Madness** (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1982), chapter 6, pp. 109-130.

11. Starhawk, op. cit., p. 22.

12. Ibid.

13. Eliade, op. cit., p. 18.

14. Starhawk, op. cit., p. 23.

15. Ibid., p. 11.

16. Starhawk, **Dreaming the Dark** (Boston: Beacon Press, 1982), p. 9.

17. Timothy Findley, **Not Wanted on the Voyage** (Toronto: Penguin Books, 1984), p. 110.

18. Ibid., p. 284.

19. Ibid., p. 338.

20. Starhawk, **The Spiral Dance**, p. 29.

21. Ibid., p. 27.

22. Findley, op. cit., p. 321.

23. Harold Wood, "Modern Pantheism: Seeking a Personal Relationship With the Universe," **The Trumpeter**, 5:3 (1988), pp. 100-106.

24. Starhawk, **The Spiral Dance**, p. 189.

25. Ibid., p. 189.

26. Findley, op. cit., p. 344.

27. Christopher Manes, "Paganism as Resistance," **The Trumpeter**, 5:3 (1988), pp. 110-112.

28. For the debate between paganism and patheism see **The Trumpeter**, 4:3 (1987), 5:1 (1988), and 5:3 (1988).

29. Donald Worster, **Nature's Economy** (Cambridge: Cambridge Univesity Press, 1977).

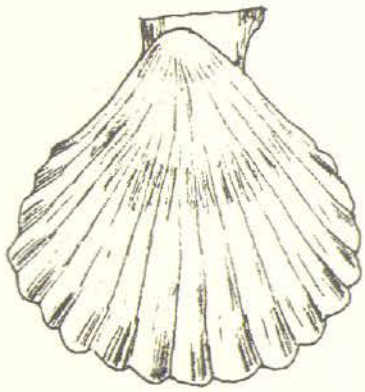
30. Monika Langer, "Valuing Diversity: No One Can Speak for All," **The Trumpeter**, 5:3 (1988), pp. 106-109.

31. Starhawk, **The Spiral Dance**, p. 191.

32. Ibid., p. 18.

33. Ibid.

34. Dolores Lachapelle, **Sacred Land, Sacred Sex: Rapture of the Deep** (Silverton: Fine Hill Arts, 1988).



The World Conservation Strategy As A Dystopian Vision

by John R. Livingston *

The World Conservation Strategy (WCS) was published in 1980 by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN), the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).[1] Its mandate was to establish a universal understanding of environmental problems and to secure the acceptance of planetary management goals. In the face of massive desertification, deforestation, the erosion of soils, the pollution of freshwater supplies, the extinction of species and many other ecological disasters, it seemed prudent to have one overall strategy for dealing with environmental ills. The authors of the WCS agreed that non-human resources had to be identified and protected in order to secure the integrity of ecosystems as well as our own future.

The question of the value of the WCS is debated by those who want to protect wild nature (preservationists) and those who want to manage it (conservationists), that is, by those who reject the industrial growth ethos and its conservation/development imperatives and those who want to remain on the path that industrial society is following. The approach that the WCS takes toward nature is clearly not new. In fact, its philosophical roots appear to extend deep into the history of Western thought where it finds its place in a tradition of utopian speculation that asserts the dichotomy between reason and emotion.

In this paper I will examine the WCS as expressive of that utopian tradition, a tradition which only helps, in the end, to do the bidding of the industrial growth society. Contrary to the utopian tone of the WCS, I think that the premises upon which it rests are flawed, and as such give us good reason to locate this document in a dystopian tradition of thought, a tradition which has shown itself to be intolerant of nature.

The aim of the WCS is to help advance the achievement of development through the conservation of living resources. The Strategy specifically states that it:

1) explains the contribution of living resource conservation to human survival and to sustainable development;

2) identifies the priority conservation issues and the main requirements for dealing with them;

3) proposes effective ways for achieving the Strategy's aim.[2]

Its three main objectives are:

1) to maintain essential ecological processes and life-support systems (such as soil regeneration and protection, the recycling of nutrients, and the cleansing of waters) on which human survival and development depend;

2) to preserve genetic diversity (the range of genetic material found in the world's organisms) on which depend the functioning of many of the above processes and life-support systems, the breeding programmes necessary for the protection and improvement of cultivated plants, domesticated animals and micro-organisms, as well as many scientific and medical advances, technical innovations and the security of the many industries that use living resources;

3) to ensure the sustainable utilization of species and ecosystems (notably fish and other wildlife, forests and grazing lands) which support millions of rural communities as well as major industries.[3]

These, however, were only its overall aims. Its specific goals and their justification were more fully delineated along six lines:

1) development, the modification of the biosphere, should be undertaken to "satisfy human needs and improve the quality of human life" (sec. 1.3).

2) conservation, the management of the biosphere, must "yield the greatest sus-

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tainable benefit to present and future generations," must be "positive, embracing preservation, maintenance, sustainable utilization, restoration and enhancement of the natural environment" (sec. 1.4).

3) the preservation of genetic materials entails "the protection and improvement of cultivated plants and domesticated animals" for scientific advance, technical innovation, and the security of industry (sec. 1.7).

4) since much of the planet will be transformed, such alterations must achieve the social and economic objectives of development (sec 1.7).

5) "where agriculture can supply more food, more economically and on a sustainable basis, than can the utilization of wildlife, the conversion of wildlife habitat to farmland is rational" (sec. 7.7).

6) for "global solidarity," a new "economic order [must be] achieved, a new environmental ethic [must be] adopted, human populations [must] stabilize and sustainable modes of development [must] become the rule rather than the exception" if we are to prevent further environmental deterioration (sec. 1.12).[4]

As it stands, the WCS seems to be very reasonable and common-sensical. How else can we proceed? Human life will be improved and benefited, and nature will be conserved. Throughout, the WCS is written in a tone that suggests that it is beyond being impugned, that its tenets demand an adherence that is morally obligatory. On the surface it appears to allay even the objections of those who decry a managerial approach to nature. After all, the Strategy appears to advocate solutions that are positive and embracing, solutions which seem to speak on behalf of nature. According to the stated goals of the WCS, however, the economic goals of industry will take precedence over the preservation of nature. This is evidenced by the status that agriculture is accorded by the "rational conversion of wildlife habitat to farmland," and by the reduction of domesticated species to "genetic information." What is more, with the acceptance and implementation of the WCS, it is reasoned that a new environmental ethic will be adopted, that human populations will stabilize, and that all humans will benefit from the new economic order that would result from a stabilized population and the adoption of an environmental ethic. However, to achieve such an economic order we need global solidarity. As the WCS states in section 16.11, the only problem facing the strategy is "not one of not knowing what to do, but of getting agreed action done." Shortly after the WCS was published, people who examined the document began to wonder what the WCS was really trying to say. It became clear to readers who are defenders of wild Nature that the main problem facing the strategy was not one of "getting agreed action done." What came under attack was the WCS's underlying assumption that it offers the solution to all environmental problems by its definitions of "environmental" and "problem."

Clearly there are at least two problems which advocates of the protection of non-human phenomena felt were not sufficiently addressed by the WCS. The WCS never sets forth a clear argument for the use of Nature to feed a growing human population. Since an exponentially growing human population would necessitate the resource development of natural areas, and protection of such areas would, consequently, become virtually impossible, we have to wonder why the WCS only makes brief mention of the need for human populations to stabilize. Preservationists also argue that the non-quantifiable and non-economic values which they attribute to nature are given insufficient treatment in the document. The WCS concludes that wildlife has only "symbolic, ritual or cultural importance" (sec. 4.9).

What is perhaps most significant, though, is the underlying worldview of the WCS which such omissions illuminate. It is clear that the WCS assumes that salvation lies in increased productivity, and that conservation is not an attitude or an activity but the centre of authority, the ground of ethical obedience. (Notice that throughout, strategies are to be adopted because conservation demands "X"; moral responsibility lies not in the individual but in obedience to the development ethic, and grounds for accepting or rejecting this authority are never set for in premises. Conservation/development is given a strange independent, transcendent status.) The WCS also assumes that development is a global necessity, that science and technology can solve any environmental problem, and that the status quo must be maintained. The bottom-line is that it assumes global utility and insists on global unity, universal acceptance and application of the industrial growth ethos and the conservation/development imperative. We notice, however, that because the WCS takes their assumptions to be obvious and insists on objectives that are taken for granted, the worldview the Strategy espouses is never clearly

set forth. We now turn our attention to see how these assumptions, objectives and western bias came to be obvious or taken for granted.

The purpose of the remainder of this paper is to sketch the historical root of the commodification of nature in Western culture and to illuminate how the WCS embraces and perpetuates this ideology. The intended product is to show how the utopian speculation in much of Western philosophy has lead toward a dystopian relationship with nature once it has been put into practice.

The World Conservation Strategy did not spring out of a vacuum. Its nature-intolerant cosmology has been around in some form seemingly forever. Many authors[5] have claimed that Western society's relation to nature was perverted in the original Judeo-Christian notion of Genesis which gave us the first concrete statement of our separation from nature:

> *Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea,and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.* (Genesis 1:28)

Very early then, it seems that we have a recipe for planetary management. Humans, created in God's image, stand at the apex of creation and are custodians of God's power on earth. There is a problem of interpretation, however, with this role. In one view human beings may be seen as stewards who must act responsibly towards that which they have proprietary rights over. In another view, the concepts of power and subdual seem to act as imperatives compelling humans to adopt certain attitudes and realize certain courses of action. In neither case, however, is the absolute dominion over nature questioned. Viewed as despot or responsible steward, humanity, in either interpretation, has full rights to do what it wants with its natural resources.

Clearly the human/nature schism has been around a long time. It was certainly in place when Plato began to ruminate about humanity's role on earth and the perfectly just state: Utopia. In **The Republic**[6] Plato attempted to give humanity, now thoroughly removed from nature conceptually, a notion of how the perfectly just state, predicated on reason, might work. Human beings, supposedly freed from any ecological system, required a rational, artificial system to regulate and structure their actions in relation to one another. What subsequent generations inherited from Plato was the explicit argument that no system could be considered utopian unless it fully stressed harmony, order and stability, and reason above any emotional or physical concerns.

Even though Plato set the precedent for a Utopia grounded in the separation of humanity and nature, reason and emotion, he was no despot over nature. The identification of Utopia with the despotic treatment of the non-human arose some twenty centuries after Plato with the advent of scientific inquiry. Francis Bacon in particular, viewed science as the handmaiden of Utopia. He declared that by means of science, humanity was in a position to not only have knowledge of nature's secrets, but also to master it. Not one to mince words, Bacon declared that "natural science therefore has no other goal than to more firmly establish and extend the power and domination of humanity over nature."[7] Bacon, like Rene Descartes, clearly voiced the basic values, beliefs and assumptions of humanism predicated on Plato's dualism and emphasis on reason.[8] He steadfastly maintained though, in contrast to Plato, that power, control and subdual must direct our perceptions, decisions and actions if we take reason to be the means by which to establish Utopia. He viewed natural objects with contempt for they represented the antithesis of reason. They were impediments that had to be overcome. In order to realize Utopia we had to rid ourselves of anything non-rational. Freedom lay in the emancipation from determined bodily responses, from biological constraints.

Though there were other interpretations of humanity's role on earth, humanistic speculation shared some common features. It was assumed that in knowledge of Nature and the self all humans could be liberated from superstitious and false doctrines and made socially equal through advances in science. For humans to realize their utopian ideals, they had to exist in a thoroughly rational, human-centered universe. Emotion, being antagonistic to Reason, had to be expunged from human nature. These attributes -- the control of Nature, the control of self, faith in human abilities and a belittling of the physical and the natural -- were endorsed under the new set of beliefs, assumptions and values that became a major strain of humanism. By the sixteenth century human interests and values were given a completely superordinate position with regards to the interests of non-human nature. Within humanism utopian thinkers asserted the dignity and worth of humans and their capacity to

achieve self-realization through the use of Reason and the scientific method.

Humanistic conceptions of Utopia took on a new dimension with the union of science and technology. The union of scientific research, technological innovation and industrial mass-production allowed Nature to be productively managed and "harvested." Once machines made it possible to suit our own ends, the utopian ideal of all humans being equal materially, if not socially, seemed to be at hand. In hindsight we know this did not occur. The reason equality did not occur is because there are implicit contradictions in the humanistic, rational conception of Utopia that thwart its realization.

Bacon's rationalism and dualism allowed him to view the utopian state like the mind/body dualism. Just as the mind must rule the body so in Utopia the rulers must govern the people. However, if humanism believes a goal of Utopia is the social equality of the people, where is social equality in a state that emphasizes rulers and subjects, the governors and the governed? Reason dictates the subject/-object split between the rulers and the ruled in Utopia. Hence, as long as we stress rationalism and dualism as necessary conditions of Utopia, we cannot establish the perfect state, a state with social equality. Since, on the one hand, a major strain of humanism asserts the essential dignity and equality of humans, and rationalism, on the other hand, dictates a subject-object relation in Utopia, there is a contradiction between the egalitarian ideal of the former and the necessarily elitist view of the latter. The very ideals of humanism, when united with rationalist imperatives, form a contradiction that makes the realization of those selfsame ideals impossible. One cannot have a social structure that is at once egalitarian and elitist. Thus most critics of rationalism agree that humanistic ideals tend to be rejected in favour of a reasonable, functionally efficient Utopia. Consequently, the formal structure of Utopia tends to supplant the human content. Therefore when Utopia is taken to its logical extreme, Dystopia is the inevitable result.

Utopia becomes Dystopia in a particularly evident way in two twentieth century novels, Aldous Huxley's **Brave New World**[9] and George Orwell's **1984**[10]. Rather than demonstrating this trend theoretically, both authors set out to portray a completely rational, ordered Utopia. The novels are horrifying because they express the logical conclusion of Platonic and humanistic values. Themes basic to both works grow out of Utopian beliefs such as freedom through reason, the denial of the emotions, the denial of the self, the mastery of Nature (including human Nature -- genetically and conceptually), the sense of power entailed in the subject/object split, the dignity of humans, the desire for social equality, the need for systemization and the need for standardization. Huxley and Orwell conclude that such notions when solely rationally-based are, if not blatantly chimerical or self-contradictory, then decidedly inhuman. They show in their fiction that reason, as the sole organizing principle of Utopia, debases humans by stripping them of their dignity and individuality. In order to maximize social utility, people are reduced to the status of objects useful to the state. In **Brave New World** we see the individual defined solely in terms of concepts such as "progress,"[11] "improvement,"[12] "wasted,"[13] "gratuitous,"[14] and the list goes on. All human elements, such as freedom, self-expression, and spontaneity, are superceded by the person's functional role in the state. In such a state, each person must fulfill his/her appointed task without thought of freedom or equality (in **1984** Orwell achieves this by making the concepts of freedom and slavery tautological). Such concepts are dangerous because they are inefficient. As Huxley points out, the worst that can be said of such a state is that it is inefficient rather than inhuman. In Utopia humans lose those things that make them human (emotions and the desire to create), and become slaves to their own creation. Furthermore, because humans have no access to history in Utopia (that is, to the roots of their beliefs and concepts) they have no idea who they are. Not knowing who they are or what they want, freedom and equality cease to be their goals.

What Orwell and Huxley attempted to show in their texts was that the very human attitude that commodifies Nature, that turns it into a source of resources for the attainment of human goals, turns in on itself and commodifies humans. In denying human physical existence, human emotions and human individuality in the hope that their rationality will liberate them and make them equal with others (as the Platonic-humanist tradition assumes) humans lose their essence, their intrinsic worth.

1984 was published in 1949, the WCS in 1980. The authors of the WCS should have known that dualistic and humanist utopian speculation merged with science and technology and taken to its logical extreme, yields Dystopia. As I see it, the WCS is the apotheosis of dystopian irrationality and inhumanity. The

WCS ignores Huxley's and Orwell's call to examine history and to trace the roots of our assumptions. The central flaw of the WCS is that the authors utterly ignore the past. Perhaps this is because the past is threatening since it indicates the cultural relativity of ideas, and the possibility of alternate images, interpretations and values. An awareness of the past carries with it a demand to provide the basis or justification for our goals and assumptions. The past is, in some sense, our conscience. It is the enemy of dogmatic pronouncements and ideologies. It judges our institutions and makes us uneasy about our self-justifications and rationalizations. Perhaps, more than anything else, it challenges our belief in "necessary" activity and "absolute" truth. The only way to make us feel better is therefore to forget the past. In this way we can deem our activity right, appropriate and necessary, and our decisions and objectives valid. It seems to me that, above all else, the WCS is an avoidance of the past.

In ignoring history it is easier for the WCS to claim that it is rational and it is also easier to justify a strategy which would otherwise appear to be a confusing, if not contradictory, set of recommendations, suggestions and objectives. By ignoring history, the WCS finds it is easy to equate Reason very narrowly with efficiency, productivity and utility and to overlook its much broader base of curiosity, humility and wonder. The WCS assumes the Platonic division of reason and emotion is an absolute truth. It debases reason by identifying rationality with expediency. Reason, in the WCS, becomes rationalization, a cynical justification for behaviour that acts without reflection. Every page of the WCS carries objectives that are justified because they improve and enhance, are efficient or useful. Where, though, are the anticipated criticisms that force definitions and arguments? Why does Nature require improvement and enhancement? Should non-human nature be reduced to useful commodities for us? Should appropriate behaviour be defined simply in terms of efficiency?

In **1984** Orwell made it clear that, in order for the stable, efficient and rational Utopia predicated on power, control and subdual to work, it **must** invent the past. It must be completely standardized/systematized/homogenized and must have the complete obedience of the members of the state. To achieve its ends, the perfect state must destroy individuality. Individuality presupposes questioning and self-expression, characteristics that undermine authority. To protect its sovereignty the state must ensure individuals view themselves solely in terms of their efficient functioning. This is most easily realized through genetic engineering and through the destruction of language, in other words, the elimination of **real** dichotomies. By making dualistic concepts tautological (that is, self-contained, self-perpetuating and self-justified) the state ensures that the individual cannot think or question. In controlling the individual, both biologically and conceptually, the state ensures that its objectives are realized, and its commands are obeyed.

What if we view the WCS as a utopian vision? The WCS's perfect world is modelled on the Platonic and humanistic Utopia of order, efficiency and Reason. Its insistence on the need for global solidarity entails the complete standardization and homogenization of worldviews. There is no room for unique cultural conceptions of conservation. Idiosyncratic conceptions and behaviour undermine the industrial growth ethos. As I said at the beginning, the security of industries employing living resources is specifically mentioned in two of the three central aims of the Strategy. Control through genetic engineering is also a given, though not yet for the human species.

Perhaps the greatest indication of the WCS's dystopian vision is its equating of conservation with development. Historically, naturalists, among others, have regarded these concepts as polar opposites. By making these concepts tautological the WCS clearly exhibits the role it believes it plays, as the ultimate authority on planetary management. It won't tolerate opposition and its mandate requires no justification. By pre-empting individual questioning (tautologies are necessarily true) it hopes to convince the reader that its pronouncements and objectives are unquestionably necessary. Every strategy is seen to be logically entailed by the initial tautology. Definitions are to be seen as superfluous, unnecessary. As in **1984**, obedience is ensured by making thought and questioning impossible. The destruction of language and the violation of the rules of rationality, permits the WCS to be self-justifying. The Strategy's conclusion that opposition to the strategy "is not one of not knowing what to do, but of getting agreed action done" really does cease to be a problem once informed dissent is disallowed and once conceptual flexibility is lost. Having dissolved the distinction between conservation and development, the WCS assures the fulfillment of its utopian objectives. With the demise of

critical acuity the WCS can effect the worldwide acceptance of its resourcist bias, of the industrial growth ethos and the conservation/development imperative. The utopian goal of global solidarity can be achieved through a standardization of beliefs and values.

The WCS embraces Plato's dualism and hierarchy of values/virtues, Bacon's notions of control and power, and the humanistic ideal of liberty and salvation achieved through science and technology. At the same time the Strategy seeks to make Reason the sole organizing principle of Utopia. It thus overlooks the implicit social contradictions entailed by the realization of a completely rational system and the implicit contradictions for the preservation of wild non-human Nature. In short it fails to see the Orwellian ramifications of its tunnel-vision. The following ingredients of the WCS's worldview indicate, I think, a dystopian vision:

1) it assumes utility/efficiency and productivity;
2) it assumes improvement and enhancement;
3) it assumes global economic solidarity;
4) it assumes unquestioned obedience to the conservation/development imperative;
5) there is a lack of definitions, and reasoned arguments;
6) there is no sense of history, of the possibility of revising images and values;
7) the language is tautological;
8) it assumes genetic engineering is positive;
9) it disregards individuality;
10) it assumes systemization/standardization/-homogenization;
11) it assumes domination and control;
12) it over-emphasises Reason;
13) it has complete faith in technology and management;
14) it provides its own self-justification.

That these ingredients mirror those of **1984**, and that **1984** is seen as completely inhumane and cruel suggests to me that something very dangerous has happened to our thinking. I think that the almost universal acceptance of the WCS is cause for alarm.

Notes

1. International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, United Nations Environmental Programme, and World Wildlife Fund, **The World Conservation Strategy**, 1980.

2. Ibid., p. iv.

3. Ibid., p. vi.

4. Ibid.

5. Lynn White Jr., "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis," **Science** (Washington, D.C.: American Association for the Advancement of Science, 1967), 155:1203-1207.

6. Plato, **The Republic**, translated by G.M.A. Grube (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1974).

7. William Leiss, **The Domination of Nature** (Boston: Beacon Press, 1972), p. 48.

8. Ibid., p. 49.

9. Aldous Huxley, **Brave New World** (London: Panther Books, 1977).

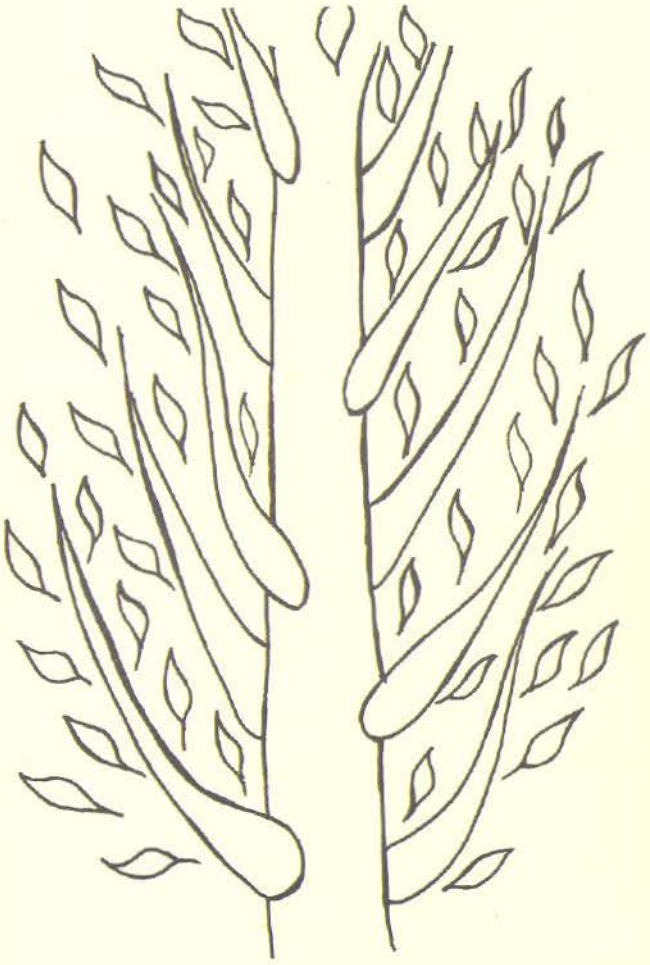
10. George Orwell, **Nineteen Eighty-Four** (London: Penguin Books, 1954).

11. Huxley, p.17.

12. Ibid., p. 18.

13. Ibid., p. 23.

14. Ibid., p. 29.



Water on Fire

A hand
holds
Water on Fire

A palm
bleeds
Invisible in Silence

The rain forest
lemur
quetsal
ornate hawk
Burn Drowning
in
A shower of shards

Sprinkled
by
Dust and Blood

The hourglass
holds
us
all

by Lynn Ackerman

Night Geese

Night geese
know
the shores of sky.
They flow inked blind
on vapour currents
voices only
in the warm spring air.

By the pond
spring peepers
tone in dialogue,
tuning forks
struck on sky.

In a field
unseen
night geese move.

Channels of air
are arteries
in a universal
shift and pulse
of thought.

by A.C.

Drawing by Lissa Chipps-Sawyer, commissioned by the Native Canadian Relations Theme Area, Faculty of Environmental Studies, York University.

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