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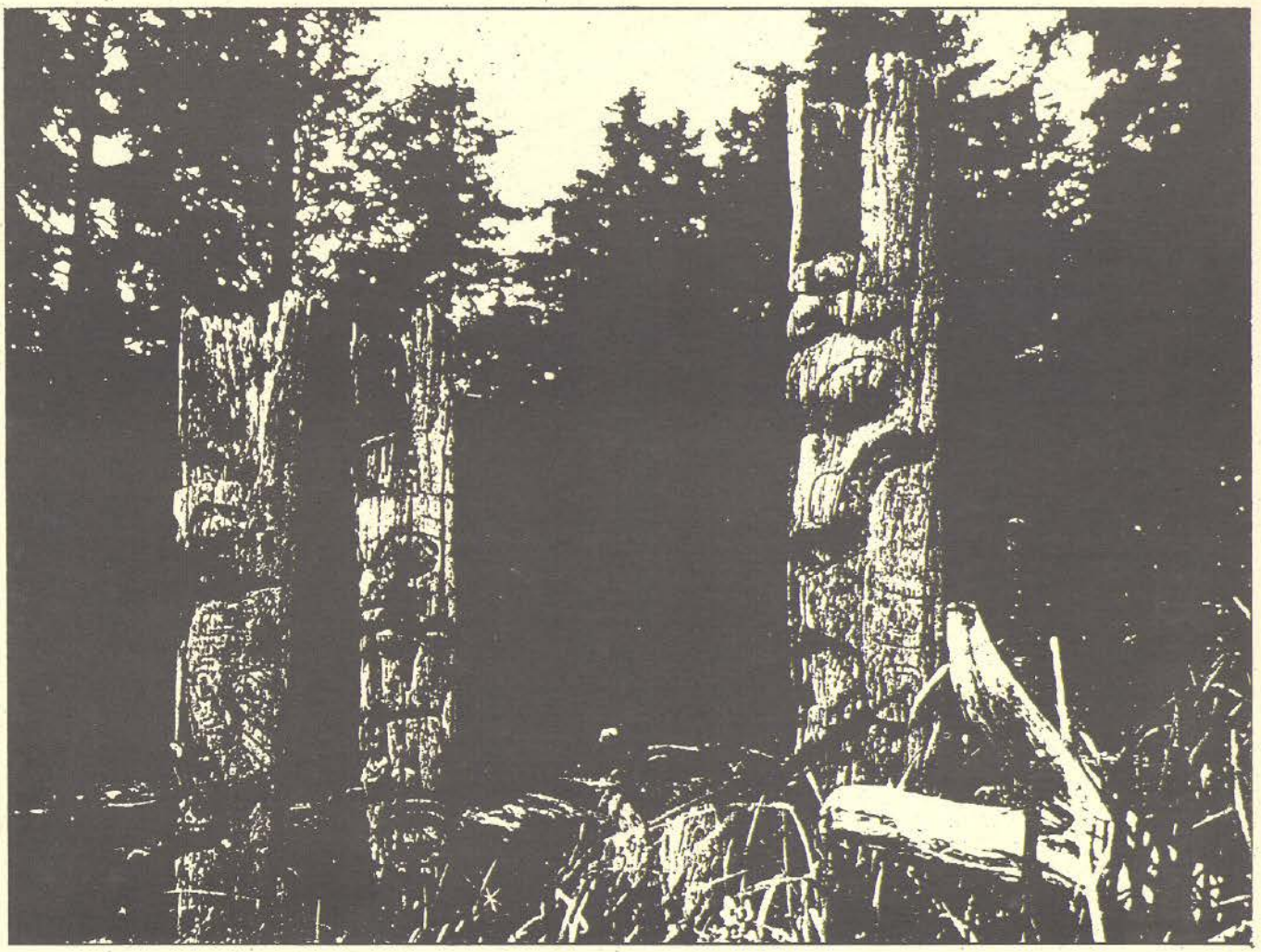
UNDERCURRENTS

A JOURNAL OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES



situated knowledge

volume 4, spring 1992

UNDERCURRENTS BACKGROUND

UNDERCURRENTS is an independent non-profit journal dedicated to the publication of views and ideas which challenge western ideas of nature. It was founded in 1988 by a group of graduate students who saw a need to create a forum for new and original papers concerning human relationships with nature.

UNDERCURRENTS publishes critical (and self-critical) discussions that examine our relationships with nature and that seek to breakdown the barriers of traditional interpretations of nature.

In keeping with the relationships that we wish to promote, *UNDERCURRENTS* is created annually using principles of non-hierarchical consensus in the editing and publishing process.

Call For Submissions

Graduate Students in Canada are encouraged to submit:

ACADEMIC PAPERS, PROSE, POETRY, ARTWORK (black and white)

Submissions should challenge traditional conceptions of nature, culture and self and the relationships among these. The following are some of the subject areas that fit our mandate:

*environmental thought and philosophy
*ecofeminism or nature and women's issues
*environmental and critical education
*literature, art, or music and nature
*the environmental movement
*ecologically sustainable communities
*attitudes and values towards nature
*native people's cosmologies
*politics and nature
*the media and nature

Please write to us for submission guidelines.

Editorial Policy

Submissions are encouraged from any field, provided that links are made to the natural world. Creativity, originality and a concern for social change are desirable in works submitted.

It is the wish of *UNDERCURRENTS* to present a vision of humans as part of nature, rather than apart from or "over" it. We are therefore seeking works that do not discuss nature or aspects of it solely as a resource, whether economic or aesthetic. We feel that other existing journals publish conventional approaches to planning, development, resource conservation, etc.

We request that articles be written in accessible language (meaning clear rather than cryptic or jargon-filled), and we may be forced to reject articles on the basis of writing style. Writers should avoid sexist or racist terminology.

UNDERCURRENTS

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Volume 4, 1992

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Artwork:
Front cover and photographs on pages 17 and 31: Debbie Freeman. Back cover: anonymous. Photographs on pages 11 and 44: David Berger. Photograph on page 15: anonymous. All other original artwork by Louise Fabiani and Karen Birkemeyer. The woodcut on page 48 is from **Curious Woodcuts of Fanciful and Real Beasts** (New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1971). Woodcuts on pages 18 and 25 are from Blanches Cirker et al., eds., **1800 Woodcuts by Thomas Bewick and His School** (New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1962). Debbie Freeman and David Berger are Masters candidates in the Faculty of Environmental Studies, York University. Karen Birkemeyer and Louise Fabiani recently completed their Master in Environmental Studies at York University.

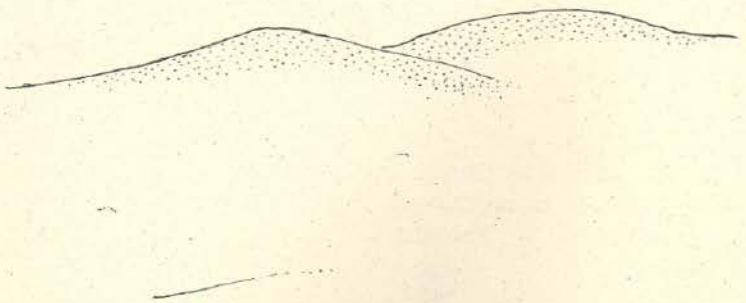
Situated Knowledge

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

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

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

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



Toward a Theory of the Body in Critical Social Change

Conceptions of Embodied Knowing and Being in Reform Environmentalism, Ecofeminism and Environmental Thought

by Karen Birkemeyer

Why the Body?

Understanding the significance of the human body as a locus in which to access and analyze environmental approaches requires first an understanding of the role of the body in post-modern culture and life. It is notable that the human body should, at this point in history, come to play a major role in some of the most important social issues of our time. After all, the development of Western civilization was premised on the cultivation of the human capacity towards calculative and analytic thought, ways of knowing reached via the suppression and denial of the animated body through its disassociation from, and therefore reification by, the human mind.

It is because of the Occidental fear[1] of the physical body that historical constructions of it continue to influence the growth and development of twentieth century life; views of human embodiment cannot be held separate from Western conceptions of nature, culture, sex (women and men), class[2] and society. These social categories are, in large part, premised on the perceived need to control and regulate the body as the basis for a 'civilized mode of being.'[3] In this paper, I am primarily concerned with conceptions of the body, and of embodied knowing and being as they pertain to relations of power and domination between women, men and nature in Western culture; I am also concerned with future directions for social and environmental change and how alternative conceptions of embodiment apply to these relations.

The word 'body' has held, and continues to hold, a range of meanings. In the Oxford English Dictionary, definitions of the word 'body' occupy over three pages; it is, as the editors say, one of the most powerful and important words in the Western lexicon.[4] The body is, however, most commonly thought of as: "The physical structure or material substance of man [*sic*] or any animal."[5] Literally, the idea of the human body exists to us as a frame or container; some thing we must look after and maintain.[6] As sociologist Bryan Turner notes: "Our everyday life is dominated by the details of our corporeal existence, involving us in a constant labour of eating, washing, grooming and dressing."[7] It is most often within this particular context of involvement that we think about our bodies otherwise; our 'mode of being embodied' is ignored until it inconveniences us, for example when we feel tired when we do not want to, or when we get sick.

But our human experience of 'having or being a body' is not limited to such simple and standard observations. For the last three hundred years, humans have been oriented within the time and space dimensions of a mathematical, scientific and mechanical worldview; a world profoundly different from anything we had previously experienced. For the most part, we take this world and this way of knowing and existing for granted, because according to the dominant Western worldview, or paradigm, it is the only legitimate way 'to be.' But this current mode of embodied existence continues to have tremendous implications for both our selves and the world in which we live. I believe that central to the destruction of human and nonhuman nature lie specific views of the human body, and with these, a specific mode of embodied being.

It is generally felt that, up until the scientific revolution, human interactions with nature and the world were characterized by a sense of belonging and enchantment. In previous eras, it has been supposed that we thought less of 'having and owning a body' and acted more as if 'our selves' and 'our bodies' were one. For example, in his discussion of the 'hidden history' of the human body in our past, Morris Berman characterizes the Palaeolithic lifestyle of hunting and gathering as a mode of existence in which people lived through their bodies in order to engage themselves in the lifeworlds of the plants and animals upon which their lives depended. Notes Berman: "...men and women took their cues from bodily feelings and the movements of the animals. This was a life governed by shifting moods rather than the demands of the ego."[8]

The embodied existence of some 'primitive cultures'[9] can therefore be characterized by what Berman refers to as a participating consciousness, a way of being in which one is intimately connected to the world through both one's body and mind. With this way of being, the mind does not exist as a distinct subject, peering out from the

body unto a separate and alien space; rather, the mind lives through the body and as part of its life-world and space.[10]

The idea that the participating consciousness was conceivably part of our past opens up a path for us to experience it in the present. In personal conversation,[11] people do speak of moments in their lives in which they have felt a celebratory sense of continuity with nature and the entire cosmos. I have felt this many times while hiking, being with my dog, and even playing pick-up basketball with my friends. As a student in physical education, during moments of unconstrained play (in other words, in an atmosphere of non-competition), my peers and I would often adopt a mode of being in which we would all be in tune with each other without having to verbally communicate. Such moments were rare, and impossible to will, but once in them, we would act as though we were one, running and passing in a fluid mode of interrelatedness. Although we could never explain this phenomenon, each of us described it as a 'relaxed,' 'free' and 'secure' state of existence, in which our minds seemed to be working with our bodies, rather than outside of, or against them. In his work, John Livingston describes these experiences of self-as-nature as states of 'free flow.' For Livingston, such moments have been characterized by a 'pure and inexpressible joy and happiness'; emotions that, based on my own experience, I can readily identify with.[12]

Although each of us is capable of states of 'free flow,' in Western culture these moments are generally cast aside because they hinder the processes of societal development, which depend upon a more detached mode of being. The primary goal of Descartes, science, mathematics and the technological revolution was to remove the human mind from the perceived 'constraints' and 'limitations' of the human body in order to establish a more predictable, controlled and objective mode of knowing, and hence, being.[13] As David Michael Levin notes:

> ...the homogenous world-space of Newtonian physics necessitates a freezing of being, a solidifying of boundaries, a condensing of energies. This world-space favors an ontology of objectification, permanence, constant positions, egocentricity.[14]

With the scientific revolution came the basis for a new kind of being, and a new experience of our life-space. In science, the world is already assumed in terms of a set of mathematically predictable relations in which objects act in accordance with the laws of gravity and space. Hence, as Merleau-Ponty notes, "..scientific thought moves within and presupposes the world, rather than taking it for its theme."[15] Instead of focusing on the relations between the embodied self and the world as the basis for knowing and being, the scientific worldview renders the living body obsolete. Scientific images are meant to stand for, and hence make permanent, things or events for which we may or may not have any experiential equivalents in our daily reality.[16] Thus, images are often confined to the mind's eye, and are therefore premised upon a very narrow mode of vision, as well as a specific and narrow mode of knowing and being. In response to his concern for the dominance of scientific vision in Western culture, Joseph Grange writes:

> We must consider this emphasis on the eye, for it represents a prejudice that will continue to manifest itself. What happens to the sensory field of our body if such stress is laid upon the eye? The realm of the heart loses its distinct feature, for harmonic contrasts evade distinct audition. Smells that escape detection haunt us as unreal. The tongue that savours the multidimensional must become discriminating. The body with its panorama of touch must be trained to detect only distinct qualities like hardness and density. The entire environment and its polyphonic call to our being is shrunk and desiccated.[17]

A scientific worldview, therefore, quells the human body's proclivity towards sensing and exploring the world in which it is situated. Rather than relate to the natural world as it is (to hear and listen, to see, to smell, and to touch the world in which we dwell) we deal with static images and atomistic representations of what we have grown to expect nature and the world to be, through the scientific and, more recently, capitalistic worldview.

In his will toward absolute knowledge and truth, Descartes severed the links between the mind and the realm of the sensual, and hence between the mind, body and nature. In the processes of the scientific and technological revolution, nature and the body were transformed from subjects in an enchanted and interconnected realm to objects of human cultural domination. During the past two centuries, we have indeed developed the means to spend more and more of our daily routine detached from our bodies and our surroundings in an existential defiance of our original sense of unity. For the most part, it is the image of the human body as object and machine which has afforded us this position.

In many ways, society restricts and otherwise reifies the living body because for us it has become a mere resource, an object of some utility. As with any resource, the tendency is to deny its being in favour of one's own needs. For example, we constantly deny our own bodily felt rhythms by consuming caffeine and other drugs, and by imposing inappropriate time structures onto our need to eat and sleep. As well, we tend to spend much of our time riding in vehicles (instead of walking), sitting behind desks, working in factories and watching television. We do these things primarily to fuel the needs of a

technological society organized around the economic incentives of capitalism. Together, however, these practices contribute to a diminished sense of our existence as truly 'embodied' beings.[18]

Perhaps the primary manifestation of how the body serves the impulses of Western consumer society is as a visual resource: over the past fifty years, entire industries have arisen in response to the sexual and aesthetic whims of our culture. According to John O'Neill, body images have become a dominant means for establishing social membership, a primary bond between the individual and society:

> We must think of the detail of such practises as body painting, scarification, adornment, hair-cutting and dressing, washing, perfuming, deodorizing, covering and concealing various bodily parts, as a resource for the incessant eye-work whereby we make the way people appear constituent features of social reality.[19]

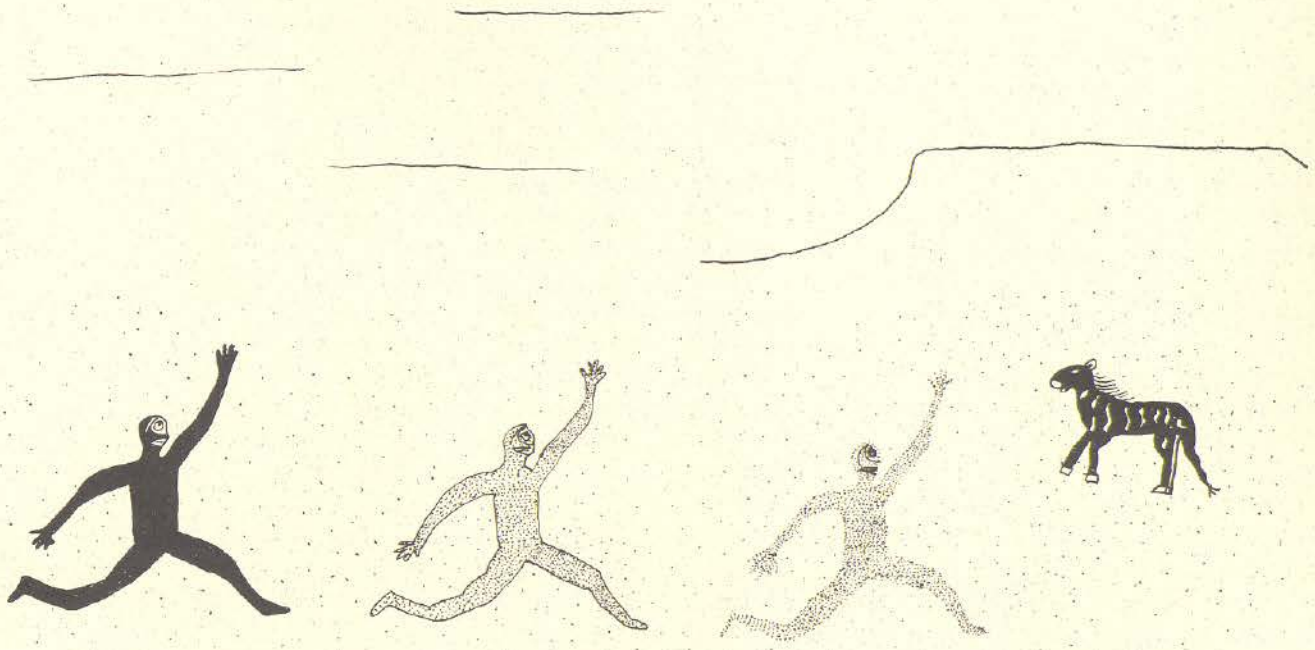
As O'Neill hints, the body is constantly being manipulated in order to fit with the accepted images of a given time: those whose looks fit with society's standards are rewarded and viewed favourably; these individuals *belong*, or *fit* into *some thing*. With an ironic twist, in our society individuals have therefore become preoccupied with their *body image* as a way of replacing a different, and perhaps more *embodied mode of knowing and being*.[20]

The problem with this mode of belonging, however, is that it comes at quite a 'cost.' When we see ourselves and others in accordance with the dominant imagery of a given time, we fail, as Levin notes, to live 'authentically':

> Although it affects different people in different ways, the dominance of the image in our culture produces a wide-spread pathology, for it means, in effect, being cut off from the truth of 'inner' - and that means 'one's own' - experience. We are being chained to the image and alienated from ourselves. If we become totally identified with the image, we are dispossessed: we belong only to others. The image obscures our capacity for authentic existence, true subjectivity, being true to ourselves.[21]

In other words, when we reduce ourselves and nature to this kind of social interaction, based on the reification of the human body (and mind), we do not deal with people as they are, but rather with how they rank in accordance with the images in our society. In this way, we deny ourselves any authentic experience of 'the other,' and, in doing so, we in turn deny them any opportunity for experiencing us as we truly are as living, dynamic and embodied beings.

Modern and post-modern life has culminated into a mode of existence in which the self is defined by the isolated mind constantly grappling to fit with the imagery produced by the dominant members of our scientific, economic and consumer society. In conjunction with the



rigid and distinct boundaries of our scientifically defined world-space, imagery of the human body as a commodity has therefore helped to transform the historically evolving disembodied mind into an anxious ego, which, because it sees itself as being separate from the world, and in constant competition with the changing imagery of our time, is, more often than not, fearful of 'its place' in the world and in society.

The dilemma of our existence is therefore that it is distinguished by an underlying sense of meaninglessness and despair. Existential philosophers refer to these experiences of dread, arising from the displacement of the mind from the body, in terms of 'angst.' Manifested on a cultural level, angst results in nihilism, the loss of all meaning and value that accompanies the death of the human spirit.[22] In our time, nihilism is both a perpetual cause, and extreme outcome, of our Western uses of imagery.

As I have already suggested, it is with and through our bodies that we experience a sense of belonging in the world, or 'place.' A denial of our embodiment, therefore, can lead to a sense of anxiety and disenchantment regarding our life-place. I believe that in Western society, the dominant way in which we have adapted to control our angst is by dominating and controlling ourselves and nature, and that the processes of development (including both the domestication of wild nature and the Western practices of neo-colonialism[23]) are the primary means through which this need or desire for control has been exercised.

If the processes of 'human development' exist in the cultivation of specific mental abilities, including especially the capacity towards abstract rationalization, then the development of the natural world lies in its transformation into something which has been 'tamed,' 'ordered' and hence 'rationalized' by humans. Understood in this light, pollution and other manifestations of environmental degradation, including species extinction and loss of habitat, can be seen not as 'by-products' of an improper or poorly managed developmental process, but rather as circumstances arising out of the historical will to control and dominate. In this way, the social and environmental crisis becomes not a crisis of political and economic conditions, but of our disembodied relations with each other and the world in which we exist.

Approaches to the Crisis: Reform Environmentalism and Imagery of the Earth as Living Body

Interestingly, our awareness of global environmental issues began with a concern for our bodily health. In the sixties, at the start of the 'environmental movement,' concerns regarding the human body resulted in an increased interest in a 'cleaner' living space. In order to help control our fear of toxic poisoning and death, and yet still maintain our current way of life, strategies for further management of nature and the environment were implemented. It was in response to these kinds of issues, then, that reform environmentalism (manifested in the practices of resource conservation) formally originated.

Currently, a primary model for approaching global resource conservation exists in the Gaia Hypothesis. According to its authors, James Lovelock and Lynn Margulis, the earth is a self-regulating (cybernetic) organism whose systems work in concert, striving to achieve a sense of global balance, or homeostasis. As Lovelock notes, however, human technological intervention has begun to interrupt the earth's innate ability to self-regulate. Humans, therefore, are becoming what he sometimes refers to as "the brains and nervous system of the planet."[24]

Lovelock's way of seeing the planet is construed as revolutionary. Through his work, he has transformed our vision of the earth as a series of 'dead' and isolated geologic and biochemical phenomena, into a model which grants it the status of a living entity. According to Lovelock, the earth has a kind of self-will that manifests itself in the ability to adjust and adapt, and, hence, to survive.

In spite of this new vision, the Gaia Hypothesis continues to embody the traditional discursive structures of the dominant Western paradigm. Lovelock's understanding of humans and nature is premised on the idea of the earth as an animate (albeit non-sentient) organism/body, whose destiny lies in the control mechanisms generated by the human mind, and implemented by the processes of technology. Thus, the idea of Gaia is still premised on the narrow and disembodied vision of the scientific mode of knowing and being: Lovelock might have altered the image we have of the earth, but he did not alter the way in which we uphold or interact with it. Lovelock simply borrowed the Greek notion of an earth goddess and fused it with the discourses of cybernetics and general systems theory.

Thus, as the Gaia hypothesis goes, just as the human body has essential organs, so does the earth have its own essential major regional ecosystems which cannot be removed or destroyed without inviting the collapse of the entire biosphere. Our task, as the controlling hand, is to accumulate enough scientific data to help determine and direct which portions of nature are necessary for the continuous flow of life (energy).

The approaches and goals outlined by James Lovelock in his book **Gaia: A New Look at Life on Earth** are therefore analogous to those conditions which exist between patient and doctor in our Western system of medical health care. The earth has been diagnosed as being ill; therefore, it must be treated. However, just as Western style doctors in particular, and Western medical practices in general, do not, or cannot address the root causes of the patient's problems, neither does resource conserva-

tion address the structural constraints which create the conditions of disease, or in this case, environmental exploitation.

Rather than attend to the individual circumstances of the patient's life-world, the Western doctor examines his or her client outside of any context of their mode of being: for the doctor, the patient exists as an abstraction; a system of classifications and categories incorporating a medical taxonomy. Understood in this manner, the conditions of disease are often acceptable, or at least irrelevant, and the doctor's task becomes one of masking symptoms via the application of drugs, or perhaps even surgery. In any case, the roots of the condition are rarely met with in a manner which would allow for a sense of quality of that life, or, often, a sense of long term, or even preventive health care.

The relationship between reform environmentalism and the 'natural world' is similarly marred by the practices of patient-doctor disassociation, except that rather than 'treat' nature (although this is increasingly the case in what is now known as restoration ecology) reform environmentalists speak of 'conserving nature.' Thus, rather than address the line of thinking that assumes that humans may quantify, objectify and manipulate living beings for human profit, economic or otherwise, reform environmentalists focus on, and point to, the problem of which species and how much habitat should be conserved, in order that we may continue to live in the manner to which we have grown accustomed.

Just as the hegemony of Western medical practice prevents the doctor from opening him or herself to the problematic conditions of their patient's existence, so too does the resource conservationist demonstrate a general kind of existential disregard for the circumstances underlying nature's so-called disease. Within reform environmentalism, changes to the conditions of social and environmental exploitation are therefore not immanent. As seen in the Gaia Hypothesis, reform environmentalism fails to address the assumptions which sustain the idea that the 'body of the earth' and that the 'bodies of humankind' exist as objects, separate from the mind, and hence culture, of humankind. Lovelock's idea for environmental reform does not confront the problems inherent in the Western will to control and dominate. On the contrary, his means towards resolving environmental problems lies first with recognizing the ecological limits to economic growth, and then making development sustainable through better environmental management. Hence, the future vision of reform environmentalism is premised on a relationship in which humans and nature are technologically interconnected. Lovelock's work conjures up the image of an enormous cyborg: an engineered entity whose ultimate purpose in life is to achieve an intraplanetary mode of geo-physiological stasis.

Towards a Critical Theory of Social Change: Environmental Thought, The Body and the Ideology of Anthropocentrism

Not everyone shares the vision of the body, nature and life outlined by the dominant scientific and economic paradigm. In environmental thought,[25] for example, the human body is believed to be an important element in understanding and experiencing the natural world; indeed, the body is considered neither a source of evil nor uncertain truth or knowledge, but rather as our living link with nature.

In environmental thought, individuals do not conceive of themselves as being separate from or above nature, but rather continuous with it. In response to the global environmental crisis, they are therefore motivated by the diminishment of their experience, which results from the destruction of both the beings with whom they live and the places within which they dwell. These beings and places create the smells, sounds, and feelings of their everyday life-world. Understood together, these sensual experiences constitute the basis for knowing and understanding one's place in relation to other humans and nature. Thus, environmental thought is not preoccupied with a concern for development (as is the case in reform environmentalism), but for our lost 'sense of place' that arises from the processes of 'developing.'

In order to recapture our place in and as nature, environmental thought sees as its task challenging the cultural assumptions underlying our anthropocentric worldview. In this project, environmental thought tends to centre around the idea of the development of Western civilization, in terms of its representing the domestication of both humans and wild nature. Thus, critical periods in Western history, often upheld as key stages in human advancement (for example, the origins of Greek philosophy and the scientific revolution) are viewed, within environmental thought, in a normative context in which they represent the progressive alienation (domestication) of the human mind from both nature and the body.

In the processes of domestication, the mind becomes increasingly detached from the body, and the body's way of knowing, because it has begun to rely on other means (culturally generated) for knowing and being. According to John Livingston, the distinction between humans and wild nature lies in the *role* of culture in our lives. Basically his argument is that whereas wild animals, too, have culture, for them it does not function as a kind of prosthesis; that is, it has not supplanted their 'biological mode of being.'[26]

Although we can perhaps never know why it emerged, Livingston speculates that the prosthesis had its origins in the development of both technology (such as the use of fire) and non-biologically based modes of social organization, which emerged in response to increases in

human population. According to Livingston, our use of these complex techniques of social control (for example, language) grew until we became dependent upon them, and so they formed a kind of bubble or conceptual overlay between humans and wild nature. The prosthesis, therefore, is what both distinguishes humans from wild nature, and prevents us from participating in that world. It is also an original source of the need to control (as compensation for a different and lost way of being), and the means through which we are then able to exercise this need.

According to environmental thought, to abandon the prosthesis is to recapture a more embodied and hence 'whole' way of being. In contrast to the imagery of the dominant paradigm, the human body and nature, in environmental thought, are not construed as wild or unruly; rather, in concert with the mind, they are considered experiential sources of a more compliant,[27] and therefore, non-hierarchal mode of being. The task, in their view, is to deconstruct the cultural rift that currently exists between the mind and nature, and the mind and body. As Livingston puts forth, we need to embrace a view of 'culturing,' that will oblige "..not only man [*sic*] the prosthetic domesticate but also man the whole sensate being."[28]

Women, Bodies and Nature: Ecofeminism and the Crisis of Androcentrism

Ecofeminism is an umbrella term covering a wide range of approaches and concerns pertaining to the androcentric domination of women and nature by men. In accordance with an androcentric worldview, differences between the mind and body and culture and nature are not only distinguished as being morally, politically and ethically appropriate, but are said to manifest themselves in the differences between women and men. Thus, in the case of androcentrism, men represent the mind, and women (because they give birth and menstruate) the body and nature. Since Western culture is biased against the realm of the physical, men are therefore seen as the subjects, and women and nature as the objects of their domination.[29]

The major difference between an anthropocentric and an androcentric worldview is that social and ecological problems stemming from within the context of androcentrism, cannot be understood outside of an analysis of the historical roots of misogyny. Thus, in their attempt to understand and move away from our anthropocentric tendencies, discussions within environmental thought have centred around the historical drive to disassociate the mind from the body. In environmental thought, these embodied goals and circumstances have been unaffected by gender, and are therefore evenly expressed throughout our entire society. Ecofeminists, however, disagree. They believe that for the most part, it is the *male*[30] mind which separated itself from nature, and the realm of the physical, and that it is the male way of being in the world that is responsible for both the idea and practice of a gap between the mind and the body.

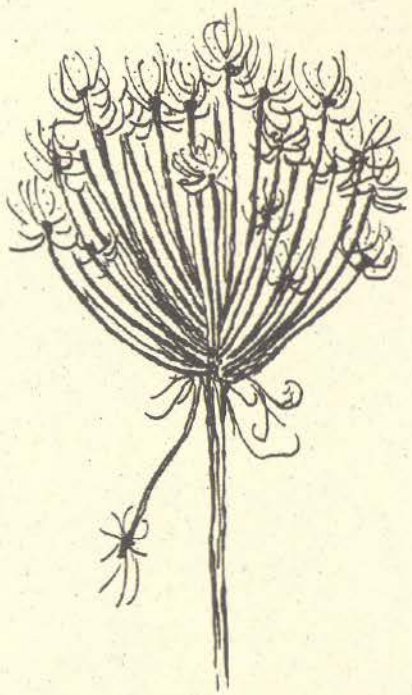
Whereas environmental thought and ecofeminism share a concern over mind-body dualism, and dualistic thinking in general, they do not agree as to how these dualisms are rooted and manifested. Along with feminists, ecofeminists share the view that, historically, women have been treated as sexual objects: pieces of meat with either no minds or poorly developed ones. Thus, like nature, women have been essentialized and trivialized in accordance with the wants and needs of our patriarchal society. This position is meant neither to deny the participation of women in the history of social and ecological decay, nor is it meant to subsume the views of environmental thought. Ecofeminists are concerned that just as patriarchy weaves its way throughout our culture, so does it endure in the streams of environmental philosophy; rather than continue to let men speak for them, ecofeminists seek to give voice to their own historical reality.

The circumstances surrounding the social conditions of women have differed from those of men in much of our Western history. For ecofeminists, these differences require divergent responses to the crisis in accordance with how it has been experienced, and therefore, how it is to be defined. Although this has recently been changing, during the past few centuries, women have been kept away from positions of power and closer to the 'domestic sphere,' in roles associated with more of an 'embodied' existence, such as having and caring for children. In light of the historical situation of women, many ecofeminists do not --because they cannot-- share with environmental thought the view that it is everyone's task to dismantle his or her ego, and to re-acquaint his or her mind with their body, so that society may deconstruct anthropocentrism, and hopefully, as well, the prosthesis. As Marti Kheel delineates: "Whereas the anthropocentric worldview perceives humans as the centre or apex of the natural world, the androcentric analysis suggests that this worldview is unique to men....women's identities, unlike men's, have not been established through their elevation over the natural world."[31] In other words, ecofeminists are less preoccupied with notions of deconstructing relations of domination amongst themselves, and between themselves and nature, because they believe that these forces played less of a role in the historical formation of women's identities.

If most ecofeminists agree with this analysis of the differences between anthropocentrism and androcentrism, they do not necessarily converge on how they should proceed: within the discourses of ecofeminism, there exist two major streams which can be distinguished by the view each holds of the role of the human body in

achieving an alternative foundation for a less oppressive society.

Certainly, the most 'popular' form of ecofeminism is that which has its roots in radical cultural feminism, and which, therefore, has ties with both the women's spirituality movement and neo-paganism. Radical cultural ecofeminists believe that because women are capable of giving birth, that they are therefore privy to a special way of knowing; one that is intimately tied to the rhythms of nature. According to radical cultural feminists, these 'body parables'[32] are appropriate images for a society that wishes to recapture a sense of harmony with nature. Ecofeminist Starhawk writes: "When birth becomes our underlying metaphor...the world shifts. The cosmos becomes a living body in which we all participate, continually merging and emerging in rhythmic cycles."[33] Radical cultural ecofeminists are therefore interested in re-affirming their connection to their bodies, and nature, in a social community that will not enforce upon them any stereotypical notion of mind (men) over body (women).



The second major stream within ecofeminism has its roots in socialist feminism. For socialist ecofeminists, the devaluation of women has been closely linked with the devaluation of the human body; issues pertaining to embodiment must therefore be dealt with cautiously. In response to the global social and ecological crisis, socialist ecofeminists are more concerned with deconstructing the historical forces surrounding the domination of women and other oppressed peoples, than they are with re-establishing a more 'spiritual' or 'embodied' mode of being.[34] They therefore uphold a view of society that is free of relations of domination, and yet somehow is still premised on the idea of a sustainable materialism.[35]

With respect to their understanding of the problems of our human embodiment, each of the two major streams is lacking. In exploring ways of bodily knowing and being, radical cultural feminists limit themselves to the realm of 'mothering'; there are many other ways in which women can feel connected to nature outside of the processes of reproduction and child-rearing. Secondly, whereas the strength of socialist ecofeminism lies in the emphasis it places on understanding how social and cultural circumstances lead to conditions of exploitation in Western culture, the work of socialist ecofeminists continues to frame nature and the body solely in terms of their value as providers of the 'material' base of society. Socialist ecofeminism therefore further perpetuates a reified and detached mode of embodied being.

Conclusions

Although not always specified, the human body clearly plays an important role in the thoughts and assumptions underlying much of our post-modern ideology. In this paper I have attempted to introduce the idea that there are different modes of embodied being, and that these different modes have implications for how we organize ourselves in relation to nature, and within society.

Currently, our system of social relations is premised on the need to control and dominate the human body. Out of this desire to govern our bodies, emerges, however, a cultural mode of being that repudiates our human need to 'belong' in the world, and to participate in nature. Efforts within critical social change which include a concern for the body can therefore be understood in terms of representing a movement towards a new cultural base; one in which humans do not use culture as a tool to manipulate the world, but to live through it. This view of culture is simultaneously inherently emancipatory, while nonetheless premised on a kind of belonging or 'social membership' in our inter-species community.

In this project, the continued exploration of our primary modes of 'knowing' and 'being' becomes necessary. The social conditions of our embodied existence, are, however, as complex as they are profound: we must each, therefore, begin this exploration from our point of reference; from our own particular position in Western society. In this way, the unfolding of the Western conditions of cultural constraint will be aided not just through a theoretical examination of the dominant assumptions we hold regarding our bodies; rather, we will, at the same

time, begin to open ourselves to experiencing the ecology of our bodily being.

When we start to feel both the harm we may be *inflicting* on each other, as well as any harm we may be *receiving*, it then becomes possible to at least acknowledge the nihilism in our society. In the effort towards an alternatively embodied vision of life, it seems that we must perhaps first disclose our existential pain before we can move away from both the prosthesis and the crisis of despair, and toward a more celebratory mode of being.

Notes

1. Although we tend to think of ourselves as living in a secular society, the early Christian idea of the body as the source of sin, evil and human weakness is still with us, and serves as part of our 'fear' or apprehension regarding matters pertaining to the physical body.

2. Issues of class are historically related to conceptions of the human body. For example, in **The Republic**, Plato maintained that rulers of a 'just society' (philosopher kings, in his terminology) would undergo ten years of study in mathematics and abstract thinking in order to prepare them to distinguish the world of appearances (the realm of imagination and sensual experience) from the intelligible world (the unchanging realm of form, essence and knowledge). It was the ability to distinguish 'true knowledge' from mere and simple 'belief' which Plato felt qualified certain individuals to rule. Though it is not our practice to have members of parliament hold degrees in mathematics (they do, however, most often hold degrees in law or commerce) there is nonetheless the expectation that individuals in positions of power in our society be capable of abstract and rational (and therefore, disembodied) modes of thinking, and that somehow it is this quality that helps them to distinguish 'right' from 'wrong.' In **The Republic**, those incapable of such tasks were assigned to the lower ranks of society, for example, 'guardian.' Francis Comford, **The Republic of Plato** (New York: Oxford University Press, 1941), p. 186.

3. Peter S. Freund, **The Civilized Body** (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1982), p. 127.

4. **Oxford English Dictionary**, 2nd Edition, Vol II (1989), pp. 353-357.

5. **The Living Webster** (Chicago: The English Language Institute of America, 1971), p. 109.

6. An etymology of the word body reveals that it once had links with the German verb 'to live.' In its modern usage, however, 'body' is still thought of as a material object, contradistinctive in essence to the more active and animated qualities characteristic of the 'mind,' the 'soul' and the 'spirit.'

7. Bryan S. Turner, **The Body and Society** (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Publisher, Ltd, 1984), p. 1.

8. Morris Berman, **Coming To Our Senses** (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1989), p. 69.

9. There has been a tendency amongst some 'green' thinkers to romanticize hunting and gathering societies. It is difficult, either way, to make a statement regarding this since we really have no idea what our embodied modes of being were like at this point in our history. I am willing to offer, however, for the sake of argument and comparison, that life then must have been different, and that one of the primary factors for this difference has something to do with our modern preoccupation with images of the body, as opposed to our experience of it.

10. The idea of the participating consciousness originated with Owen Barfield. See his book, **Saving the Appearances**, 2nd Edition (Middleton: Wesleyan University Press, 1988). For further discussion of the concept of participation as a way of being relevant to our current crisis of culturally induced modes of estrangement, see Morris Berman's book **The Reenchantment of the World** (Ithica: Cornell University Press, 1981).

11. I distinguish personal conversation from the realm of public discourse, because I have found our society to be extremely biased against any 'mystical' or 'non-utilitarian' discussions of the non-human. To go public with one's love for nature is to risk being ridiculed, or even labelled misanthropic; talking about such issues is, therefore, usually conducted in private spaces and places only.

12. John Livingston, **The Fallacy of Wildlife Conservation** (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1981), p. 101.

13. Descartes, in particular, is famous for surmising that the human self should be defined by the mind and its ability to think, as opposed to the physical body, which is not only incapable of 'thought,' but is also prone to errors of 'misinterpretation.'

14. David Michael Levin, **The Body's Recollection of Being** (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul plc, 1985), p. 340.

15. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, **The Visible and the Invisible** (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1968), p. 27.

16. For an interesting discussion of both the power of imagery, and the problems associated with the ways of seeing in our culture, see John Berger's **Ways of Seeing** (London: British Broadcasting Corporation, 1972).

17. Joseph Grange, "On the Way Towards a Foundational Ecology" **Soundings** 40:2 (1977), p. 25.

18. A class analysis is beyond the scope of this paper. However, it would appear to be a useful and necessary study. There are, obviously, different modes of embodied being in this society; for example, it has been argued that labourers and craftspeople maintain more of a primal relationship with their bodies, than would say a professor of mathematics. For the purposes of this paper, I would argue that the embodiment of both these occupations is, to more or less degrees, still problematic.

19. John O'Neill, **Five Bodies** (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985), p. 24.

20. The condition of mind-body disassociation, coupled with a preoccupation with one's body image, is exemplified in anorexia nervosa. With this disease, the individual becomes preoccupied with his or her body image as a way of seeking control over not just their bodies, but over their lives. But, the preoccupation with one's body imagery can be seen as a response to a lost sense of security, which is itself a condition of a specific mode of bodily being. The experience of anorexia therefore becomes a vicious tautology--in attempting to exercise more control over one's body **in particular**, the more one fuels the need to control **in general**; a most difficult position from which to escape...

21. David Michael Levin, **The Opening of Vision** (Routledge: Chapman and Hall Inc., 1988), p. 129.

22. Anyone new to this stream of philosophy, known as existentialism and existential phenomenology, should refer to David Michael Levin's book **The Body's Recollection of Being** (referenced earlier in this paper). In this work, Levin synthesizes both traditional and critical perspectives on the field of existential thought in a manner which is both relevant and accessible.

23. It was often the belief amongst colonizers that those peoples they were helping to 'civilize' lived a more embodied, and hence 'primitive' existence. Thus there are links between conceptions of the human body and the rationale for historical (as well as current) instances of colonialism.

24. J.E. Lovelock, **Gaia: A New Look at Life on Earth** (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 147.

25. Environmental thought is a male-dominated mode of inquiry whose primary concern is to challenge the notion of anthropocentrism in Western culture. It is an umbrella term that encompasses several streams within the field of critical environmental studies, including both deep ecology and ecosophy. In terms of my own typology, environmental thought refers specifically to the efforts of Morris Berman, Neil Evernden, Paul Shepard and John Livingston.

26. John Livingston, "Ethics as Prosthesis" in Philip P. Hanson, ed., **Environmental Ethics: Philosophical and Policy Perspectives** (Burnaby: SFU Publications, 1986), p. 67.

27. As far as I know, the notion of nature being inherently compliant originated with John Livingston.

28. Livingston, p. 75.

29. Karen J. Warren, "The Power and Promise of Ecological Feminism" **Environmental Ethics**, 12:2 (Summer 1990), p. 125.

30. By 'male' I mean those qualities that we have come to associate with being a man, as opposed to any pre-determined or biologically fixed 'male way' of being. In this sense, it becomes obvious that just as women have been reduced to cultural stereotypes in this society, so too, have men.

31. Marti Kheel, "Ecofeminism and Deep Ecology" in Diamond and Orenstein, eds., **Reweaving the World: The Emergence of Ecofeminism** (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1990), p. 129.

32. For a discussion of the 'body parable' see Charlene Spretnak's article "Toward an Ecofeminist Spirituality" in Judith Plant, ed., **Healing the Wounds: The Promise of Ecofeminism** (Toronto: Between the Lines, 1989), pp. 127-132.

33. Starhawk, "Feminist, Earth-based Spirituality and Ecofeminism" in **Healing the Wounds**, p. 175.

34. For a discussion which links conceptions of the body with the historical oppression of women and nature, see Carolyn Merchant's book **The Death of Nature** (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1980).

35. Carolyn Merchant, "Ecofeminism and Feminist Theory" in **Reweaving the World**, p. 103.

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Law As If Nature Mattered

by Tzeporah Berman

Woe to him who creeps through the serpent windings of utilitarianism.

Kant[1]

This quotation, taken out of context, seems to reveal an understanding or recognition of the worth of objects (animate or inanimate) apart from human use. Ironically, Kant goes on to promote an essentially anthropocentric ideal of moral worth. This paradox, characterised by the recognition of the inherent worth of nature and wildlife, and yet an inability to allow these values to be manifest in human communities, continues today and is apparent throughout various disciplines: law, philosophy, literary criticism, cultural geography and others. In legal theory and environmental ethics this controversy has centred around the question of 'rights,' essentially illustrated by two questions: 1) Does the 'environment' have inherent worth or intrinsic value and, if so, 2) Could it be a legal rights holder?

Ultimately, these questions address criticisms of 'deep ecology,' a philosophy which promotes an ecocentric or holistic viewpoint, but which many people feel cannot be translated from metaphysics into 'action.' This paper attempts to address these questions through a discussion of rights, environmental ethics and deep ecology, and an effort to reveal how and why these values could, and should be manifest in Canadian law. The proposed Environmental Bill of Rights for Ontario will be used as a concrete example of how law can be used as a mechanism for proactive social change.

Deep Ecology

One of the major critiques of contemporary environmentalism and environmental law has been their 'piecemeal' and reactive approach to pollution and environmental degradation. In contrast, the deep ecology approach promotes a recognition of the interdependence of humans and the biotic system, and through this recognition and increased ecological consciousness, a preventative approach to environmental issues.[2] As such, deep ecologists ask 'deeper' questions than conventional environmentalists or environmental policy-makers and through this questioning attempt to foster an ecological consciousness which rejects the prominent assumption of human self-importance.

The term 'deep ecology' was coined in 1972 by Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess who has developed several fundamental principles of the philosophy.[3] Essentially, Naess believes that deep ecology reflects a "democracy of the biosphere," a metaphysical account of the world which places humans in the greater scheme of things and recognizes the inherent value of nature independent of its usefulness to humans.[4] This contrasts directly with the polemic, even adversarial world view which regards humans as "isolated from the rest of Nature, as superior to, and in charge of, the rest of creation."[5] The underlying assumption then, is that the non-human world, wildlife, wilderness, ecosystems and the continuing healthy functioning of the environment are all intrinsically significant. This point has been the focus of many debates because it is essentially a spiritual and internal understanding making it difficult to relate through conventional discourse due to its intangible and unquantifiable nature. Consequently, many deep ecologists have unintentionally fallen back on a utilitarian argument by asserting that without a functioning ecosystem there will be no life and therefore no people. For our purposes we will assume that nature possesses a value apart from that conferred by humans and what is being argued is whether or not the acknowledgment of these values means that nature can be given moral standing equivalent to that of humans.

Bill Devall and George Sessions, in their book **Deep Ecology: Living as if Nature Mattered**, posit that "deep ecology goes beyond a limited piecemeal shallow approach to environmental problems and attempts to articulate a comprehensive religious and philosophical world view."[6] They also note that although the philosophy should be internal and spiritual, "it should focus on ways of cultivating ecological consciousness and on principles for public environmental policy."[7] And further that, "certain outlooks on politics and public policy flow naturally from this consciousness."[8] This may be so, but the question arises as to how we are to foster this type of dialogue in politics and policy decisions. And, in addition, do we not need some type of vehicle to promote this deeper questioning of our world view, and a medium to express the results? Furthermore, if law can be used as a

medium, what are the legal implications of ecocentric values?

The prescription for change and the inclusion of ecological rights proposed within this paper are not representative of deep ecological viewpoints. Deep ecologists do not support the 'sacred' individualism prevalent in Western society, to which rights-based theories are linked. Instead, they put forward the notions of interdependence and interconnectedness. They propose that if we identify with nature, indeed with all life, to the extent that we cannot separate it from the notion of self, then we would not need to assign rights. Rather, such internalization of ecology would motivate us to defend the earth as our very selves. "I am that part of the rainforest protecting myself."[9] Thus deep ecologists do not necessarily agree with the widespread idea that by attending to individual rights (whether they be human, animal or natural rights) we can build a sane ecological society.

Deep ecology has been introduced in an effort to reveal the need for a 'deeper' questioning than can be seen in conventional environmentalism or current environmental policy. Ultimately, the dialogue created through this questioning and the introduction of an ecocentric value system akin to that presented by deep ecologists, represents the initial shift away from conventional value systems. It is possible that our systems of law can be used as a transitional medium towards the true recognition of the inherent worth of nature and wildlife in human communities.

Law As a Medium

Contemporary environmental legislation reflects a utilitarian viewpoint--the protection of nature not for its own sake but for the sake of human use.[10] This structure evolves from the anthropocentric nature of law: "law exists for the ordering of human societies" and is fundamentally composed of social contracts between human beings.[11] The paradoxical question that surfaces, is again quite clear: if law is inherently anthropocentric, is it possible to incorporate non-anthropocentric values into this system? Some argue that it is not only possible but it is indeed necessary.

> Law is the product of an evolving process...[and as such]...reflects issues important to society and a selection among alternatives with ideology the screening mechanism. As belief systems change political goals change, and therewith laws are recast to conform to new realities. Environment is such a one.[12]

If law is the product of an evolving process, and it is recognized that environmental degradation is an issue that is important to contemporary society,[13] it would follow then that the new realities to which law must be cast are a recognition of ecocentric values. However, the question as to whether this is possible in an anthropocentric system still remains.

Philip Elder argues that, "since all of law is human construct, it follows that we can identify any matter of concern and legislate about it, if we want to."[14] However, Elder also argues that legislation through conventional law and ethics can achieve sufficient environmental protection, and furthermore, that law will always reflect a utilitarian and anthropocentric bias. Conversely Goldstein and Giagnocavot argue that while previous environmental legislation has seemed progressive, "in practice it has become nothing more than costly legitimation projects."[15] They go on to note that in policy development and in the courts, environmental concerns are not considered equally with economic or development considerations. In addition, Paul Emond points out that, "The [current] legislation is utilitarian...it lacks vision...pollution is rationalized and,...legalized."[16] Does it not follow then that what is needed is *proactive* legislation which attempts to move away from the narrow anthropocentric bias inherent in our legal system rather than *reactive* short-term and costly negligible remedies? By couching environmental protection in utilitarian terms, are we legitimizing a system of discourse which in turn structures human thought, and may impede protective efforts and personal realization of deep ecological values?

Goldstein and Giagnocavot propose that what is actually needed is a rethinking of our value systems and not legal remedies. They go on to note that the only way deep ecology can be integrated into our society is through an internal, metaphysical process which leads to spiritual enlightenment and local actions.[17] However, if we inject ecocentric values into the law, is it not a catalyst for a re-evaluation of our values, and decision-making processes? A recognition of other values may lead the way to a more progressive common law even if it is inevitable that these values be assessed through an anthropocentric veil.

In a sense, law could play a transitional role, cultivating a relationship between traditionally polemic interests, until a greater understanding and ecological consciousness surfaces. The extension of 'rights' to nature and the

assigning of intrinsic value to all elements of the biosphere will create a dialogue which will quite literally make policy makers and the courts ask 'deeper' questions. This questioning represents the first step towards a recognition of ecological ethics in decision-making.

Christopher Tribe concurs with this view when he notes that,

> As those conceptions, experiences and ends evolve through the processes made possible by a legal and constitutional framework for choice, the framework itself...may be expected to change as well.

And further that,

> ...to make commitments without destroying freedom is to live by principles that are capable of evolution as we change in the process of pursuing them.[18]

Tribe goes on to note that an attempt to integrate ecological values into law would lead to a better decision-making process. He notes that in the contemporary legal system we have very little 'freedom of choice' as the decision-making process is restricted by the values it includes. In order to have a full choice and a balancing of interests we need to balance ecological rights with human rights, wants and needs. In short, what is being argued is that the ends are shaped by the questions that are asked, and that the inclusion of ecological values into the law will affect the people involved in the process through a development of new attitudes which may lead to personal enlightenment. This concept differs greatly from deep ecology, as deep ecological theorists would not argue for rights based prescriptions for change within contemporary society or the present legal system.

One of the most prominent arguments against the inclusion of ecological values into the legal system is that our decision-making mechanisms are not set up to incorporate these 'soft' concerns.

> [V]ariously described as fragile, intangible or unquantifiable, these values have been widely thought to possess peculiar features making them intrinsically resistant to inclusion along with such allegedly "hard" concerns as technical feasibility and economic efficiency.[19]

Although it is true that (what Tribe refers to as) "soft" data (ecological values) are harder for decision-makers to justify in strict and 'objective' legal terms, it can be seen that it is not the nature of the data that is at fault but the structure of the decision-making system itself. For example, in legal, political and economic decision-making, ecological concerns are generally considered under the term "externalities"--something that is outside of and separate from the 'core' or tangible concerns. Further, the arduous and somewhat daunting task that the inclusion of these values represents does not reflect an inability of non-monetarized values to be applied to an analytical methodology but the, "universal difficulty of choosing among incommensurables, a difficulty that can be obscured but never wholly eliminated by any method of decision-making."[20] Without an incorporation of these values into the law, economic concerns may continue to play a very large role as the conflicts continue to be illustrated by human to human grievances. Generally, the environment itself is lost sight of in "a quantitative compromise between two conflicting interests."[21] In order for the environment to be considered equally with other values, it must given the status and respect that other interest generate. What is needed, is a vehicle in which these values are to be manifest and which will spurn progressive dialogue and respect. Many authors (though not deep ecologists) have argued that extending legal "rights" to nature will serve this purpose.

Rights for Nature

A comprehensive discussion of the 'rights' continuum, from moral and practical rights through to legal rights, is beyond the scope of this paper. For this reason the following discussion will be limited to a deliberation on the meaning and use of *legal* rights.

Humans confer legal rights by virtue of a decision made by the courts or those who have the authority to make laws.[22] Generally, rights have some connection to a moral or ethical code and command respect for the rights holder. Ronald Dworkin notes that

> Rights are important moral principles which lead to decisions which enhance the dignity and independence of the right-holder even when these decisions may be contrary to political or economic expediency.[23]

Furthermore, rights may also create a balance between competing interests as well as initiate dialogue and discussion.[24] Many 'neo-rights' advocates see 'rights' as a process which allows debate, conversation and a re-evaluation of our value system. In addition, feminist authors have noted from the experience of the women's rights movement that rights discourse and rights claims can help develop a political consciousness and play a powerful role in social reform.[25] Essentially, advocates of legal rights for social reform see rights as a means to articulate new values and political visions.

Christopher Stone, an early proponent of the 'rights to nature' argument, notes that the context governs how values and ideas will be understood; law has respect and rights incur responsibility, therefore it is necessary to place ecocentric values in the law to encourage new ways of thinking and evaluating.[26] Douglas Fisher concurs with this view when he argues that, "[I]t is the conception

of the environment itself that governs the nature of an environmental legal system."[27]

Subsequently, it is argued that if the environment had a 'right,' which necessitated human responsibility and recognition of the intrinsic value of ecosystems, this would provide an incontrovertible basis for protecting it.[28] Stone has argued that this extension of rights to the environment is a natural step in the evolution of morality and law. He cites Darwin's **Descent of Man** in which the observation is made that "man's [sic] moral development has been a progressive extension of the objects of his social instincts and sympathies."[29] He argues that the extension of rights to all races, women, children and those thought to be 'disabled' depicts the evolution of law in our society. At one point, all of these groups were thought of as "objects" for man's[30] use. Slowly society has come to confer rights to these groups, and from these rights a new respect has evolved which was previously "unthinkable."[31] Until the rightless thing receives its rights, we cannot see it as anything but a thing for use by "us"--those who are holding the rights at the time. Consequently there is resistance to the idea of extending rights to nature as it is "unthinkable" to the mainstream. This resistance will remain until the environment can be valued for itself. This again raises the question as to why we should recognize the intrinsic value of nature. The Canadian Environmental Law Research Foundation has argued that, "without an environment capable of supporting the human race, all other rights are useless."[32] Notwithstanding the anthropocentric nature of this argument, it is nevertheless compelling.

Presently, systems of law confirm rights on beings who are not capable of understanding themselves to be bearers of rights--small children, the severely retarded and insane.[33] There are also currently many inanimate rights-holders: corporations, municipalities, joint ventures and trusts.[34] These right holders are not capable of making claims against others or demanding to be granted what they are entitled to: guardians or agents do this for them. Stone has argued that this concept can be equally applied to the environment and that there already exist numerous agencies in a position to act as 'guardians,' for example: Friends of the Earth, Pollution Probe, Sierra Club, and the Canadian Environmental Law Association.[35] The guardian would be able to raise the environment's rights in its name (i.e. to have legal standing) without having to prove that their members (or personal) rights were violated. Stone also notes that,

> The guardian concept too would provide the endangered natural object with what the trustee in bankruptcy provides the endangered corporation: a continuous supervision over a period of time, with a consequent deeper understanding of a broad range

of the ward's problems, not just the problems present in one particular piece of litigation.[36]

Essentially Stone is suggesting that by allowing the natural environment to have rights, the realization of these rights through guardians could effectuate class actions. Class actions are, "brought on by an individual on behalf of a substantial number of others with similar claims -- settled in a single court proceeding."[37]

Stone notes that there are many interests represented in environmental problems. For example, in the case of a contaminated lake there could be cottagers, anglers, tourists, natives and those dependent on drinking water. In the contemporary legal structure these riparian interests would be weighed with the cost to the polluter. However, if we allow the natural object, the lake, to prove damages,

> ...we in effect make the natural object, through its guardian, a jural entity competent to gather up these fragmented and otherwise unrepresented damage claims, and press them before the court even where, for legal or practical reasons, they are not going to be pressed by traditional class action plaintiffs.[38]

It is possible that the extension of rights to the environment may reflect many of the perceived benefits of class actions--alleviating funding problems, allowing communities to organize and alleviating the "floodgates" problem.[39] Simon Chester notes that it is important to have substantive rights before initiating a class action. In addition, it has been noted that class action reform in the United States has resulted in a modest record of success for environmentalists.[40] It appears as though the utility of class actions is limited if the underlying values inherent in the decision-making process remain the same. By changing the decision criteria, the introduction of environmental rights into the legal system will enable class actions to be successful.

One of the fundamental criticisms of Stone and indeed of deep ecology lies in the application of the guardian concept. Who decides what is right for the environment? How can a guardian judge the needs of an ecosystem? Stone posits that natural objects can visibly communicate their needs--if a plant turns brown and withers it needs to be watered.[41] However, others have noted that the definition of what is good for the environment still comes from the body largely responsible for its degradation.[42] It is therefore obvious that we cannot fully remove ourselves from our own anthropocentric bias, it is essentially anthropocentric for deep ecologists to believe that they know what is best for the environment, even if it is cloaked in ecocentric terms. Given present societal conditions, recognizing the rights of nature will not free us from our own anthropocentric entrapment nor will it guarantee the protection of the environment. However, does this mean we should not attempt to recognize other values and incorporate them into a more progressive body of environmental legislation? If rights do indeed create dialogue, environmental rights will force us to consider giving nature moral worth and to regard the earth as something with value which is separate from our utilization of it. Through this dialogue, it is possible to attain a better spiritual understanding of ourselves in nature.

Further criticisms of the application of this concept stem from the ambiguity of the exact nature of environmental interests which are to be protected. If we are taking ecocentric values into account does this mean that nothing can be done to alter the environment in any way? In an extreme example, does this mean a community could not drain swamp land for agriculture because it would be affecting mosquito habitat? The crux of the problem is readily apparent: *the line must be drawn somewhere.* Humans are going to have an effect on their environment and the guardian concept does essentially involve a projection of human values onto the ecosystem. Stone proposes that "to say the environment should have rights is not to say that it should have every right we can imagine...."[43] Tribe also notes that recognizing rights does not mean that they have absolute priority over conflicting human claims.[44] Clearly, it would be necessary to have a ranking of values and interests on a case by case basis. However, it is conceivable that a heavier weighting of environmental criteria would ensue from a recognition of ecocentric values and a balance of interests may be found.

Current Approaches

Aldo Leopold has argued for the extension of a land ethic which realizes the inherent value of nature and humanity's place in it; it is an ecological necessity and in turn reflects individual responsibility for the health of the land.[45] This theory depicts a guardian concept similar to that fostered by Stone. Many authors have made reference to the proposed Environmental Bill of Rights for Ontario (hereinafter called the bill) on similar grounds. The current draft bill gives "the people of Ontario the right to a healthy and sustainable environment...."[46] Swaigen and Woods have noted that it is possible that what is needed is not "rights," but a duty to avoid harming the environment.[47] If the environment were to have rights which necessitate human responsibilities, all costs would be considered equally. Ecological rights and human responsibilities put the issue of environmental quality on the table to be considered equally with other values now crowding the agenda: economic prosperity, civil liberties and property rights.

In the proposed bill, rights are given to *humans* for environmental quality, therefore treating the environment as an object. The question arises as to whether the bill will --as the Environment Minister, the Honourable Ruth Grier proposes, "grant every individual in the

province specific environmental rights and provide a framework within which individuals can act in a responsible manner to protect their environment."[48] Will it instead essentially legitimize environmental exploitation? Given that the bill will enable the public to participate much more easily through legal "standing" in the courts, it seems as though this will increase environmental protection. However, if the underlying value system remains the same, will the decisions that are made be different? And in addition, does the right to enter the legal forum mean that the public will affect the decisions that are made?

Swaigen and Woods have concluded from the United States experience that the "judicial utilization of environmental rights legislation has not, to date, met the expectations of its proponents."[49] This is in part due to the fact that the right to environmental quality has not been taken as a substantive right, which necessitates equal consideration with other rights or ensures a balanced decision-making process. Having the right to sue does not necessarily mean that one has the right to an advantageous decision. However, a heavier weighting of environmental criteria cannot necessarily be given within our existing value system. In addition, even if a favourable decision is reached, who is regarded as a beneficiary? Under legislation which only allows for human to human grievances, the environment will not necessarily be made the beneficiary of legal awards.[50] Under the proposed bill the human plaintiff may be paid damages but the full cost of legal damage to the natural object may not be considered. If the bill were to include ecological values this might ensure a more balanced decision-making and a preferable measure of damages applied to a purpose related to the suit. For example, a developer who is found guilty of destroying a wetland could by required to ensure the preservation of another wetland elsewhere.

Under the bill a human could have "standing" (without having to prove personal injury) and show an invasion of their right to "environmental quality."[51] However, if a human could gain standing to argue that the activity was injurious to the environment and not their "environmental quality," a more thorough and preventative approach to environmental quality might be achieved.

In short, the proposed Environmental Bill of Rights for Ontario has been used here as an example of how the concept of intrinsic value and environmental rights could be applied within the Canadian legal system and of the benefits that would ensue.

Due to the ambiguous nature of the **Constitution Act, 1982**, and its predecessor the **British North America Act, 1867**, the division of powers between the provincial and federal governments is unclear. As such, similar provisions could also be enacted by the federal legislatures.[52] In some situations, where environmental infraction crosses provincial boundaries, it is necessary to

have a Federal Bill. Indeed, in New Zealand, similar legislation has already been enacted which recognizes the intrinsic values of ecosystems under the **Environment Act, 1986** and the **Conservation Act, 1987**.[53] On evaluating the success of the New Zealand legislation, Caldwell notes that although the meaning of 'intrinsic value' is unclear and contentious, the emergence of this term in the mainstream represents a fundamental paradigm shift and has enabled specific reference to be made to explicitly ecological ideas.[54]

The New Zealand application of ecological values may be seen as a more preferable avenue than an Environmental Bill of Rights as it overcomes the limitations and difficulties of anthropocentric "rights" discourse while instigating dialogue and a recognition of environmental worth. In a similar vein, non-governmental working groups loosely affiliated with the United Nations Association, are currently working on a global "Earth Charter" to be discussed at the Earth Summit in Brazil in June 1992. The Charter is to be a document similar to the Canadian **Charter of Rights and Freedoms** although its ratification process and utility remain to be seen. Similarly, it is currently unknown whether this document will contain an anthropocentric or ecocentric bias.[55] What is interesting however, is the idea of an 'Earth Charter' similar to the Canadian **Charter of Rights and Freedoms**. It is possible that this concept could be enacted on a federal level as an amendment to the Canadian Constitution.

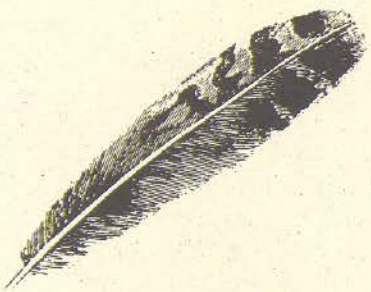
The enactment of a binding charter on the federal level which explicitly stated the character of our relationship with the environment and the responsibility which that relationship entails, would have far reaching ramifications for environmental quality. Succinctly put, an Environmental Charter within the Canadian Constitution would affect every Canadian statute and impact all federal and provincial Governmental action.[56] Constitutional provisions give permanency to an idea, as well as "bear a mantle of authority and legitimacy uncommon to ordinary legislation." In addition, environmental provisions in the Constitution "transcend prevailing social conditions to govern the decisions of generations to come."[57] However, the extremely complex procedure for amendment makes this initiative seem unlikely in the near future. An amendment must not only be passed by the House of Commons and the Senate, but must also be agreed upon in the Legislatures of two-thirds of the provinces.[58] In light of the Meech Lake fiasco and the current Constitutional negotiations, this process is anything but alluring.

Law As If Nature Mattered

Our society has moved from local garbage and contamination problems to global warming, acid rain, and ozone depletion. For problems of this magnitude does it not make more sense to evaluate our ethics, values and our legal system in an ecocentric way and to realize that we are only one component of the biosphere? Can 'piecemeal' anthropocentric environmental "solutions" ameliorate global problems?

Many have criticized this piecemeal "environmentalist" approach to contemporary problems while praising environmental ethics for addressing the systemic roots of our current environmental situation. However, won't these two areas--ecological theory and proactive social change, remain polemic without an attempt to integrate them?

In summary, this paper has attempted to illustrate the inherent conflict between environmental philosophy and traditional legal structures. Alternately, an effort has been made to reflect on the possibility of, and indeed the need for, the integration of these concepts. Currently the environment itself is a legal non-entity, and policy is developed in an arena devoid of independently represented environmental interests. In addition, legislation for protection of the environment is drafted through a utilitarian and inherently anthropocentric veil. The type of legislative change proposed in this paper will instil a more accurate view of reality into our social contracts--a recognition of the interdependence of humans and the natural world.



Notes

1. Immanuel Kant, **The Metaphysical Principles of Virtue**, quoted in Christopher Tribe, "Ways Not to Think About Plastic Trees: New Foundations for Environmental Law," **The Yale Law Journal** 83:7 (1974) p.1342.

2. Bill Devall and George Sessions, **Deep Ecology: Living as if Nature Mattered** (Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith Books, 1985).

3. Ibid., p.70.

4. Arne Naess, "Intuition, Intrinsic Value and Deep Ecology," **The Ecologist** 14:5-6 (1984), pp.210-203; and Devall and Sessions, pp.75-80.

5. Devall and Sessions, pp.65.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid., pp.61.

8. Ibid., pp.65.

9. John Seed, quoted in Warwick Fox, p.239.

10. Tribe, p. 1315. For example, neither the Canadian Environmental Protection Act nor the proposed Environmental Bill of Rights for Ontario attempt to address the intrinsic value of nature or address the need for human responsibilities. Both pieces of legislation give *humans* the rights to environmental quality and protect the environment for human use.

11. Tribe, p.1329.

12. J. Stan Rowe, "Crimes Against the Ecosphere," in **Environmental Ethics: Philosophical and Policy Perspectives**, Vol.2, Raymond Bradley and Stephen Duguid, eds. (Burnaby, B.C.: Simon Fraser University, 1986), p. 89.

13. Recent polls show that Canadians care more about the environment than any other issue. Martin Mittelstaedt, "All Worry Over Ecology Fails to Stem Consumption," **The Globe and Mail**, June 4, 1991.

14. Philip Elder, "Legal Rights for Nature: The Wrong Answer to the Right(s) Question," in Bradley and Duguid, p.105.

15. Cynthia Giagnocavot and Howard Goldstein, "Law Reform or World Reform?" **McGill Law Journal** 32:2 (March 1990), p.350.

16. Paul Emond, "Co-operation in Nature: A New Foundation for Environmental Law," in **Osgoode Hall Law Journal**, Vol. 22, No.2 1984 p.340.

17. Giagnocavot and Goldstein, p. 380.

18. Tribe, p. 1338.

19. Ibid., p. 1318.

20. Ibid., p. 1320.

21. Christopher Stone, "Should Trees Have Standing?--Toward Legal Rights For Natural Objects," in **Southern California Law Review** 45:450, p.461.

22. Paul Taylor, **Respect For Nature** (New Jersey: Princeton, 1986), p.219.

23. Ronald Dworkin, **Taking Rights Seriously** (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1978), cited in John Swaigen and Richard Woods, "A Substantive Right to Environmental Quality," in **Environmental Rights in Canada**, John Swaigen, ed. (Toronto: Butterworths, 1981), p. 200.

24. Swaigen, p. 199.

25. For further discussion on the utility of rights in social movements see, Elizabeth M. Schneider, "The Dialectic of Rights and Politics: Perspectives from the Women's Movement," 61 **New York University Law Review** 589 (1986), pp. 610-23.

26. Stone, p. 488.

27. Douglas Fisher, quoted in Jennifer Caldwell, **An Ecological Approach to Environmental Law** (New Zealand: Legal Research Foundation Inc., 1988), p. 4.

28. Rowe, p. 90.

29. Stone, p. 451.

30. The use of the gender specific term 'man' in this context is done deliberately and is not meant to represent 'humanity.'

31. Stone, p. 451.

32. Quoted in Rowe, p. 92.

33. Taylor, p. 221.

34. Stone, p. 452.

35. Ibid., p. 464.

36. Ibid., p.471.

37. Simon Chester, "Class Actions to Protect the Environment: A Real Weapon or Another Lawyer's Word Game?" in **Environmental Rights in Canada**, John Swaigen, ed. (Toronto: Butterworths, 1981), p. 60.

38. Stone, p. 475.

39. The "floodgates" problem refers to the theory presented by those who argue against environmental rights who propose that the extension of rights will create a massive flooding of the courts with nuisance cases.

40. Chester, p. 64-78.

41. Stone, p. 471.

42. Emond, p. 328.

43. Stone, p. 437.

44. Tribe, p. 1342.

45. Quoted in Caldwell, p. 17.

46. Ministry of the Attorney General, **Bill 23** (1989).

47. Swaigen, p. 199.

48. Ruth Grier, "Guest Column," **Hazardous Materials Management** (April 1991), p.70.

49. Swaigen, p. 232.

50. Stone, p. 462-476.

51. Swaigen, p. 203.

52. For a complete listing of jurisdictional powers which are applied to environmental law see David Estrin and John Swaigen, **Environment on Trial** (Toronto: Canadian Environmental Law Research Foundation, 1978), pp. 11-16.

53. Caldwell, p. 1.

54. Ibid., p. 2 and p. 123.

55. Personal communication with, Peter Timmerman, The International Federation of Institutes For Advanced Study, Co-Convenor for the Earth Charter. November 25, 1991.

56. Paul Muldoon, "The Fight for an Environmental Bill of Rights," in **Alternatives** 15:2 (1988), p. 37.

57. Oliver Pollard, "A Promise Unfulfilled: Environmental Provisions in State Constitutions and the Self-Execution Question," **Virginia Journal of Resources Law** 5:323 (1986), p. 351.

58. Frank Rotering, **Empowering the Public: An Environmental Bill of Rights** (Vancouver: Society for the Promotion of Environmental Conservation (SPEC), 1989), p. 3.

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Musical Voices: Women's Music in Canada as "Situated Knowledges"

by Joanne Nonnekes

Music allows us to grieve together, to laugh together, to cry together, to grow together.

Heather Bishop

Music is one important cultural medium in which issues relevant to a particular time are explored. It is a popular medium which allows for exploration in a very personal and contextual way. This paper explores the music of five Canadian singer-songwriters from a socialist feminist perspective, as defined by Donna Haraway and Sandra Harding. I spent the summer of 1990 attending several folk festivals in Southern Ontario and one in Michigan, listening to the music of, and interviewing, five Canadian women singer-songwriters: Heather Bishop, Faith Nolan, Marie-Lynn Hammond, Connie Kaldor, and Susan Belyea.[1] My objectives included looking at the ways in which their music acted as a means for social change and looking at how the issues they dealt with reflected, described and created new kinds of knowledge based on their particular historical experiences. I use the theory of Sandra Harding and Donna Haraway to interpret these expressions of the lives of women because I think it sheds light on how women's music, as a cultural form, is different from traditional folk music, and creates an everyday knowledge of the experiences of women in Canadian society. Underlying this research is an exploration of the ways in which social change around relationships of domination are prevalent in a patriarchal society.

While I find ecofeminist literature very fascinating, and very important in critiques of Western relationships with the natural environment, I find some inherent flaws in the assumptions of the "natural" connection between women and nature. However, rather than delve into my critiques of ecofeminism, I wish to present the theories or critiques of ecofeminism that came more from the area of socialist feminist literature and critiques of science. Feminist critiques by Sandra Harding and Donna Haraway hold a creative and transforming vision of knowledge creation which involves localizing knowledge, speaking from an experiential rather than a scientific perspective, and embodying objectivity, where there is a relationship between knowing and being. This paper explores pieces of their work which elucidate the ways in which social change might be possible in the relationship between human and non-human nature and other relationships of social domination. I use the concepts of "fractured identities" and "partial perspectives" as presented by these authors, to look at the ways in which women's music in Canada is a vehicle for social change around some of these issues. I attempt to show the ways in which I feel Canadian women singer-songwriters are reinventing the world. They speak out of their own experience and within a particular historical context, and challenge the assumptions in our society about gender, race, class, sexuality, and nature. Each woman addresses different issues depending on her particular experience of the world, speaking or 'seeing' from a particular perspective. In this way they expose and challenge assumptions, bring people together to share experiences, and create possibility for new realities.

Feminist postmodernism is one feminist epistemology that Sandra Harding elucidates in **The Science Question in Feminism.**[2] Along with "such intellectual movements as semiotics, deconstruction, psychoanalysis, structuralism, archaeology/genealogy, and nihilism"[3] she says feminists are critical of universalizing claims "about the existence, nature, and powers of reason, progress, science, language and the subject/self."[4] For Harding this approach involves rejecting appeals for a return to some kind of organic wholeness that ecofeminists may seek; instead she looks toward the many "fractured identities"[5] of modern society (for example, black feminists, women of colour, socialist feminists). Her concern about this type of empiricism lies in whether or not we can

> afford to give up the necessity of trying to provide "one, true, feminist story of reality" in the face of deep alliances between science and sexist, racist, classist and imperialist social projects.[6]

Harding is not seeking a solution to the dilemmas and tensions that are created by deconstructing science while at the same time attempting to create a successor science, or by the fractured identities that form the voice of feminism. Rather, she advocates using the tensions as a fruitful area for research. While this willingness to explore the tensions throws scientific objectivity out the

window, it allows for the possibility of creating a new definition for objectivity where

> it is participatory values--antiracism, anticlassism, antisexism--that decrease the distortions and mystifications in our culture's explanations and understandings.[7]

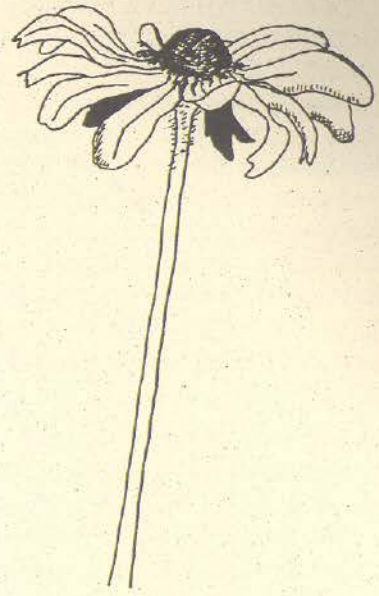
Similarly, in "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective,"[8] Donna Haraway talks about the struggles that feminists like herself have experienced in attempting to deconstruct the very powerful, androcentric, patriarchal science of our culture and advocates the need for a better account of the world. She agrees with Harding that the project involves more than just trying to show the bias in science and separating the bad science from the good, and it involves more than producing a feminist version of objectivity. We need:

> simultaneously an account of radical historical contingency for all knowledge claims and knowing subjects, a critical practice for recognizing our own 'semiotic technologies' for making meanings, *and* a no-nonsense commitment to faithful accounts of a 'real' world, one that can be partially shared and friendly to earth-wide projects of finite freedom, adequate material abundance, modest meaning in suffering, and limited happiness.[9]

For both Harding and Haraway there is no one knowledge of how the world works; there is a multiplicity of knowledges which we should not attempt to reduce, while at the same time, there is a real world out there that is knowable. It is within these contradictions that feminists can find new metaphors to imagine the world; one medium for such imaging is taking place in the realm of women's music, explored later in this paper.

Haraway describes a feminist objectivity she calls 'situated knowledges.' For example, vision is a sensory system that is located within a body, or has a material and historical reality. Modern technology has produced a vast array of telescopes and microscopes and cameras where "all perspective gives way to infinitely mobile vision, which no longer seems just mythically about the god-trick of seeing everything from nowhere, but to have put the myth into ordinary practice."[10] Insisting on the "embodiment" of all vision would allow the construction of a usable objectivity. This embodiment would involve locating our vision within mental and physical space and thus naming where we are.[11] Haraway calls this a 'partial perspective' which can lead to objective vision.

> So, with many other feminists, I want to argue for a doctrine and practice of objectivity that privileges contestation, deconstruction, passionate construction, webbed connections, and hope for transformation of systems of knowledge and ways of seeing.[12]



What I find most exciting about Haraway's writing is that it provides the basis for knowledge creation which does not exclude or appropriate and which always involves a knower. In this sense it provides the possibility for a relationship between human and non-human nature which is not resource-based, nor necessarily based on a primal connection, but which can be explored and negotiated.

Both Harding and Haraway caution against looking for a unitary feminist politics. The scientific world view has attempted to universalize language and truth, preaching an objectivity and knowledge creation that is alienating and oppressive.

> Yet there is another world hidden from the consciousness of science -- the world of emotions, feelings, political values; of the individual and collective unconscious; of social and historical particularity explored by novels, drama, poetry, music and art -- within which we all live most of our working and dreaming hours under constant threat of its increasing infusion by scientific rationality.[13]

In the next section I attempt to I explore one such world, the world of women's music in Canada. It is a world where the "emotions, feelings and political values" of each individual artist, within her own historical and material reality, are shared with the participating audience. I use the voices of the women, unaltered and for the most part unedited, in order to embody their perspective and give the reader a sense of who they are.

I interviewed Heather Bishop at the Home County Folk Festival in London, Ontario. Heather has been perform-

ing as a solo artist since 1976, singing folk and blues for adult audiences as well as telling stories and singing for children. She has produced five albums for adults and three for children. When I interviewed Heather Bishop, I was quite surprised at what a soft-spoken, gentle woman she was. On stage she is witty, exuberant, and can really belt out the blues with a strong voice. I was incredibly impressed with the care she took to answer all of my questions, and the thoughtful responses she gave. She obviously takes her work very seriously and yet also appears to have a lot of fun doing it.

Heather is a feminist who believes that music plays an important role in bringing women's issues into the public forum and in uplifting and supporting women working in the movement.

> I'm a feminist because I'm a woman. It's from living my life that I became a feminist. It's from never having received equal pay for work of equal value. It's from seeing men get breaks that women didn't get...It's from watching friends get beaten by their husbands. It's from seeing men and women who have children not having daycare for them.[14]

Music for Heather is a way to talk about issues in public that otherwise might not get talked about. It's a way to challenge biases and assumptions and to energize people for the struggle of gaining equality for women:

I really think my music is an instrument for social change. I think what has been called women's music is very much an instrument for social change. Women's music is called women's music; it is the view of the world from women's eyes. When men sing about how they view the world through their eyes, it's not called men's music. And that's a political statement about what happens to us as women, our view of the world and how we think things should be done. I think that music is first of all very healing, secondly it's a way for us to address issues that are perhaps hard to talk about and hard to deal with, in a way that people can hear. Music allows us to grieve together, to laugh together, to cry together, to grow together. I know lots of people who have said to me how they take the music home and they play it over and over again when they're going through a hard time or they're trying to work through something. That says a lot to me about what that music can do for social change. Now if we could get the music on the radio, that would make a bigger difference.

Thus Heather's music gets used as a vehicle to identify and give expression to her audience's emotions and feelings.

Heather feels that as a feminist she must confront all issues of domination and oppression:

Well, I call myself a feminist. To me that means I confront racism, I confront sexism, I confront homophobia, I confront environmental issues, I confront issues of class. It's a complete view of the world being a place based on equality among people. All people.

By confronting the issues in the "safe" environment of a concert, and doing so from a space of personal experience, Heather is helping to define new boundaries for what counts as knowledge. The audience can participate in the music by singing along, swaying to the melody, or identifying with a story of oppression, and through this participation, gain insight from an embodied perspective.

One of the issues Heather deals with is homophobia. She doesn't get on stage and preach at her audience, nor does she sing many songs about the prejudice in society against homosexuals. Rather, she sings songs which celebrate women's love for women. She can speak from this place because she is a lesbian and knows what it means. In her songs she attempts to help other people, people unfamiliar or uncomfortable with homosexuality, to see her love as being just as beautiful as that of heterosexuals. She also gives other lesbians the experience of celebrating their love, something they rarely have the opportunity to do. In an interview in **Hotwire** she points out a couple of ways in which she helps people face their prejudice. As she plays for very diverse audiences now, not just women's groups, she recognizes that not everyone attending the concert will be aware of her sexual preference. Rather than turning them off her music at the start because of their prejudice, she will wait until three quarters of the way through the show, when they have been completely charmed by her smooth blues and her wonderful entertainment style. Then she will sing a song like "I Found a Girl."

> I decided that if by that time I had won their hearts and *then* did a song about being a lesbian and they all freaked out, then at least the problem would be theirs. They'd have to go home wondering how it could be that they really liked this person who was standing up there saying she was one of those horrible critters.[15]

Heather also feels that her children's music, which she loves to perform even to adult audiences, will eventually help heal the prejudice of homophobia. Children who listened to her music on the "Fred Penner Show" or who were treated to one of her children's concerts, and eventually find out she is a lesbian, may be more accepting, or at least question the prejudice against a woman they grew up listening to.[16] She gives an embodied account of what it means to be a lesbian, taking responsibility for that knowledge and attacking the bias so prevalent in society against homosexuals.

One of the questions I asked Heather, and the other singer-songwriters, was whether they felt there was a difference between the music that was being written and performed by women in Canada, and the music that was

being written and sung by the larger folk community comprised mostly of men. I had perceived a difference myself and I wanted to see if Heather and the others also felt that they were representing a different voice.

The difference is that women's music represents the struggles of half of the population. And we're singing it to people who are a part of the other half, the half of the privileged, and it makes them uncomfortable. And they're also the half that are in power, and so they don't particularly want to want. For us to ask the male-run music industry from radio stations to record companies and down the line, to play music that challenges the privilege of the white male, they're going to laugh in our face. Unless it makes good dollar sense to them, that's the only time they change their mind. So it does put us in that position. But also, women's music is different because it comes from women. Women come from a lot more emotional, grounded, earth-centred, self-empowered place. And I think that's a place that I would hope that men could come from too. And I think that that's what men can learn from women's music: men have been so divorced from their emotional, self-empowered, grounded self that they need women's music just as much as we do. Because, you know, I have brothers that I love dearly, and I've watched what happened to them in their life, and I've seen them become divorced from the people that they are by a world that tries to make them into "men," which is a foreign concept that does not fit the human soul in my opinion. I think the healing that women represent and talk about is a universal healing.

I also appreciated Heather's recognition that the environmental crisis needs to be addressed quickly and more effectively than it is currently being addressed. Her recognition that it is the localized action of individuals that makes the most difference in the long run is consistent with the kind of politics Harding and Haraway explore. Although governments and multinationals need to change their policies towards, and abuses of, the natural environment, it is local political organizing around issues that affect people's daily lives that will create a willingness to acknowledge the natural environment as more than a resource for the appropriation of humans; the willingness to use the "vision" Haraway describes as "embodied" and to take responsibility for the relationship with the "other" that nature has become in Western culture in an attempt to change the relationship.

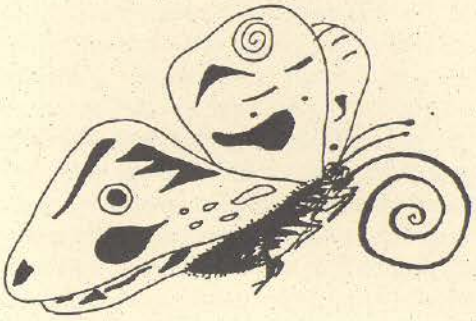
We've gotta move fast, we've gotta move far! I'm really happy to see it, you know, we've been talking about it for decades and now it's finally happening. The government of course, is dragging it's feet at a time when we can't afford to be dragging our feet at all. One of the things that makes me optimistic is that it's being put in the hands of children. I would like to take kids in the country and say "See this hole in the ground? This is a well. You drink that water. See this hole in the ground over here? That's where they pour all the waste and shit, and that comes out of the same ground that your drinking your water." Kids are not dumb. Give them the information that this earth feeds you. "See this seed, this is going to grow into corn and you're going to eat it." Give children the information and they're going to say "Hey wait a minute, I don't like the way this is being done." So that makes me feel optimistic that information is being turned over to the kids. I'm also optimistic that the environmental movement is growing in the way that it is. I'm also scared to death because I believe what people say, that there's only ten years to turn it around and that scares me to death.

Heather also lives her commitment to finding ways to live more relationally to the natural environment by building her own solar house complete with composting toilets. She and some women friends have built a small community near Woodmore, Manitoba.

I live with it by personally thinking about it in my life, what can I do? I think every single person makes a difference. So if I stop using styrofoam, if I recycle all my stuff. I live in a solar home that I built twelve years ago, I use a mulbank toilet in that home rather than a flush toilet, we have a compost bin, we recycle everything, we've done this for years. With the new environmental movement, I've learned some new things that I wasn't aware of that I could change. So every person has to do their part. People think, well what difference can I make? You make all the difference in the world. Each single person. And, as a person who has the privilege I do of speaking to many people. I have the ability then to reach a lot of people, year after year I just keep talking about Mother Earth; Mother Earth, she's our mother and she's dying. And if your biological mother was dying, you would go home to her, you would do everything you could to keep her alive. Well, our mother is dying, go home to her, and do everything you can to keep her alive.

Although Heather does have the tendency to essentialize, treat as natural or biological, the connection between women and nature by referring to the earth as "our mother," the imagery is nevertheless powerful and her politics on stage and her lifestyle, reflect the degree to which the human relationship to nature is socially influenced and constructed, and not only a natural connection. On stage she connects issues of domination from her life, and relates them to the bigger picture of social domination in a way which helps her audience to learn from her "partial perspective."

I also interviewed Faith Nolan at the Home County Folk Festival in London, Ontario. Faith hails from Nova Scotia and sings a variety of jazz, blues, folk and reggae



while playing slide guitar, harmonica and tambourine. She has produced three albums. Faith places an emphasis on history in her music, both in the sense that music has historically been an integral part of social movements in most cultures and in the telling of histories of those not always recognized by the dominant culture in order to keep the history alive and to encourage change.

I see myself as a cultural worker first. That's what I find most rewarding about music; the way it's able to influence culture to move forward. Growing up in the sixties the during civil rights movement, all those songs like "Old Freedom" and "We Shall Overcome" and "We Shall Not Be Moved", really influenced me in their meaning and to show that music had the power to be part of social change. In every culture, whether it's early English music, or whatever, it was always used as an instrument for social change. Only what's known as commercial music throughout the world now, which has become big business, isn't used for social change, its used for maintaining the status quo. But I think any lasting form that comes out of the people, the workers, is always music for social change.

Faith sees herself as a social activist who is willing to take on any issue where she sees oppression taking place. As a woman of colour, her focus is more international than some of the other artists and she has worked with many different groups, seeking an end to racism, sexism and homophobia.

I've worked with every left wing cause you could name: Bangladesh, the PLO, South Africa, El Salvador, Chile, Uruguay, JLP Jamaican Labour Party; with Cuban solidarity groups; with progressive Chinese organizations; with the Canadian Congress of Chinese Women; Native Women's Resource Centre; I've played on different reserves. I do a lot of work around the black issue: Martin Luther King Day; I raised money for Sophia Cook when she was shot by a policeman; I campaigned for Carolyn Wright who was the first black mayor to run in Toronto. I also deal with peace and environmental issues, and lesbian and gay issues. So I've been a social activist for a long time. But I see all the issues as being connected, towards making things better, to make society more humane and humanitarian.

Faith deals with a number of issues in her music, most of them centred around being black in a predominantly white society. One of the issues she addresses under this theme is the issue of the little known history of black people in Canada. She devotes an entire album, Africville to telling various parts of the histories of black people, especially women, in Canada. "Africville" is about the destruction of a black neighbourhood outside of Halifax in the '60s, and other songs deal with the underground railroad for black slaves from the South, the freedom of slaves in Canada, the double oppression of a black woman, and the celebration of black women who fought for justice. The possibility for social change exists here in the telling of stories to enable us to imagine what it would be like to see through the eyes of another; telling stories that create the possibility of building affinities between the experiences of different groups rather than creating a hierarchy of oppressions.

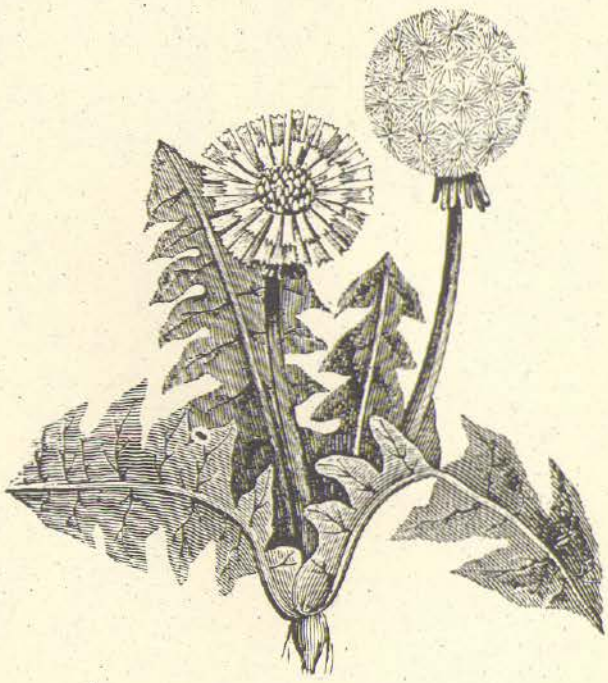
When I think of black women's music; I know Black music 'cause that's the culture that I grew up in and it's certainly had a big impact on my life and the way I view music. I mean the songs still make me want to cry, I feel so much comes from those.

At a workshop stage at the Mariposa Folk Festival, Faith confronted the issue of language head on. Another artist, Bobby Watts, sang a political song making fun of the Tories in which he referred to them as "silly cunts". Rather than let him get away with his use of language, Faith, who was performing on the workshop stage with him, talked about the importance of language by relating the pain and hurtful experiences of women both in her introduction and in song. She used music to try and show him the effect his language could have on people, and to encourage the people in the crowd to be brave and speak out against this kind of sexism. This was an incredibly gutsy thing to do as most of the people in the audience had laughed at Watt's cute song about the Tories. But she was successful in the sense that she energized much of the audience to speak out, and made us embarrassed that we had laughed rather than confronted the issue. She politicized us around the issue of sexist language in songs.

Faith, like Heather, is a lesbian and the experience of being an "out" lesbian is one of the themes of her music. One of her songs, "I Want the Freedom to Love" is especially powerful because it calls to mind experiences between lovers most people can relate to such as holding

hands while going for a walk or saying goodbye at the airport (or any other public place), and reminds us that it has not been acceptable for homosexuals to hold hands or kiss or in any way demonstrate affection, in public. Her cry for the freedom to love is a rallying cry for fellow homosexuals as well as a plea to be understood and accepted.

The early folk like "Leaping Lesbians" by Meg Christianson, that music had a great impact because I think that they challenged the family which is sacred ground. They challenged the role of women as birthers and nurturers and this as being passive. A lot of women in non-traditional fields, well not so much now but it used to be that the non-traditional fields were generally lesbian camps. That is a huge threat to maintaining the status quo or the inequality. So women's music has had that impact as a threat to society or the social structure of the family--it's been the biggest threat.



Faith also addressed a touchy issue in modern feminism: the problem the "women's movement" (which, until recently, had been defined in Canada by white, middle class women) has had in addressing the issue of race. Learning how to have the "affinity" Haraway talks about, between groups that have been oppressed and marginalized by Western society, rather than disagreeing about what aught to be the primary issues of concern for feminists, has been an ongoing struggle for feminism. Faith talks about how the dominant understanding of "women's music" is music produced and sung by white women. She challenges this assumption and encourages us to look at all cultural music as having an equal voice.[17]

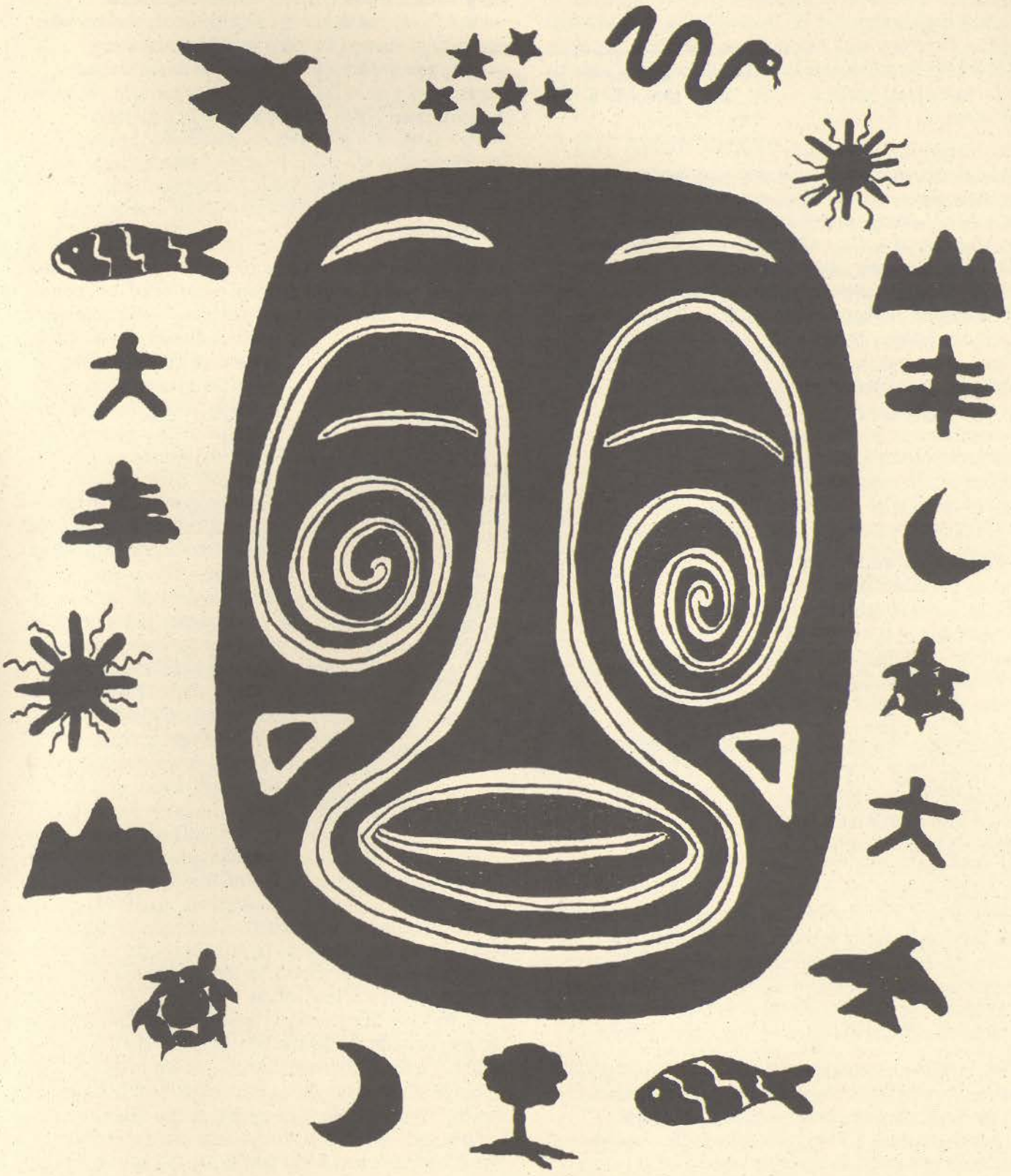
I was reading once in **Hotwire** *magazine, a lot of the earlier women's musicians like Meg Christianson, Holly Near, they all came from very good backgrounds you know. They were all middle class, they had a lot of money, their parents had a lot of money, friends of theirs had a lot of money to put into their making records on their own and being able to travel across the country and get their music out. Alix Dobkin--left her husband and had, I don't know, a couple hundred thousand dollars and so she put all of this--these women come from having money so it was really middle class, actually upper middle class white women. Very much like the suffragette movement who had a lot of money. So even working class white women, you are hard pressed to find in the United States when you're looking at women's music. Women who just came from: father worked in a factory, mother worked in a factory, or whatever. Again, are the issues of working class women being brought out [illegible] specifications of race and class.*

Faith's attention to issues of gender, race, class and sexuality, make her an excellent example of the "partial perspectives" that Haraway talks about. Being female, from a lower class background, black and lesbian has given her an experience of oppression and a lived knowledge of what it means. Her songs and stories are grounded in her own personal experience as well as the historical and material reality of those who have influenced her work. The power of this kind of situated knowledge for social change is evident at all of her performances in the responses of the audience.

Marie-Lynn Hammond has written two plays and hosts a CBC radio program as well as being a singer-songwriter. She performs and writes songs in both English and French and has produced two solo albums. She is one of the founding members of a Canadian musical group called Stringband, with whom she produced many albums. I interviewed Marie-Lynn at her home in Toronto in September, 1990, soon after the Wye Marsh Wildlife Festival where she performed.

Marie-Lynn Hammond is quite different from either Heather or Faith, not so much in the issues she deals with, as in her music. She uses humorous wit to expose our assumptions about anything from birth control to nuclear power. Whereas Heather excels at the blues, Marie-Lynn's style is more a mix of folk and cabaret styles. When I interviewed her, I found her full of energy and enthusiasm and very supportive of what I was trying to do.

Marie-Lynn sees her music as an art form which, through wit as well as musical form, conveys some kind



of social change message whether explicitly or more subtly:

When I'm feeling optimistic I see my music as an instrument of social change. It's not **just** *that. I see it as some kind of expression of my creativity and, it sounds pretentious I know, but I also see it as art. Some songs are more instruments of social change than others. Some are written almost expressly for that purpose and I try to write them with wit and art as well, and others are more personal, and social change may be more subtle in them.*

The most political of Marie-Lynn's songs are the ones dealing with feminist issues. Several of the audience members whom I interviewed, who had never heard her perform before, were quite pleasantly surprised by her music and recognized aspects of women's oppression they had never noticed, or rather never dealt with, before. She sings about the frustration of finding good birth control while very little research is being done in the area, about mothers teaching their sons to do housework, and about love and broken hearts. Sharing in the music not only causes us to laugh, to name issues of oppression, to be political, but also creates a possibility for change.

Marie-Lynn feels that the most common theme in her work is that of women's issues. Her writing about women is witty and very political in some songs and more of a story in others.

I'd say most of my songs that are vaguely political deal with women's issues. That's the most common thread, but they will also touch on issues of environment and peace, or the French/English issue along the way. When I say women's issues, that can cover everything from the kinds of power struggles that involve women to just women's daily lives and what they go through. When I'm writing about my grandmothers for example, sometimes the song is simply recounting their story, but there's always some sort of subtle messages built in. Like in the Elsie song it says that "maybe if you'd lived today all that drive and passion might have found a way;" recognizing that things are changing and have been worse.

Several of Marie-Lynn's songs are about the everyday lives of women, most notably the songs "Elsie" and "La chanson de Corinne," about her grandmothers. By telling the stories of these women she is not only describing their joys and hardships but also telling a history of women's experiences and exploring the differences between her French Canadian grandmother and her Anglo grandmother. We live the life of her grandmothers with them, feel their emotions. By helping us to "see" with the vision of these other women, she is creating a way for us to know differently.

When asked about the difference between "women's music" and traditional folk, Marie-Lynn talks about the need for personal feeling or emotion in writing songs. She is critical of patriarchy in her music, but rather than making an overt statement, she tells a story and uses the kind of embodied objectivity that Sandra Harding talks about as a way for others to connect the music to their own lives.

Dominant culture--you mean male and white male culture, white anglo saxon culture? Oh yes, and I think that there's always, sometimes very overt criticisms in my songs. One song contains some sweeping generalizations which some men have been offended by, a song called "Eve gave Adam the apple" which basically is a critique of patriarchal religion. Especially as a woman whose mother is a French-Canadian, I've had an inside look at minority culture. It's different for me than for other minorities, being white. No one knows I'm half French so I pass as a WASP. I don't deal directly with issues of racism and say vis a vis people of colour because I don't believe that I have the right to write about that, not being a person of colour. If I was going to write a song it would have to be from the point of view of me as a white person. I tend to write on issues that spark me very directly. But I am critical especially of, I would say, the white male ethic.

The music that men have been writing in the folk resurgence, maybe since Woodie Guthrie, well there's a lot of political music in there and some of it is sensitive to women. I don't think until the women songwriters came down the line have we seen as much of an awareness of women's issues. I know Tom Paxton has written a very good song about battered women. A very sensitive song , I think that's good. I think I also want to hear songs by women writing about these issues. It might be a different perspective. I can't just write about an issue. I have to write out of an emotion, feeling as well. I think some women are writing simply because there is an issue that must be dealt with. And I think you're getting a lot of songs that are good politics but bad art. And that worries me, not worries me but I see that in the women's movement. A lot of songs are sloganeering, basically. And maybe its good that they are out there but I have a more lofty view of the whole thing I suppose; I don't want to write a song that doesn't have some element of art. If I'm going to write about patriarchy, I want to do it with some level of wit and not just say "Oh its terrible, the male gods stomped all over us", it makes me cringe. But maybe it's important just that the issues be dealt with because I do see people listening to those songs and there's a level of appreciation that the issues are even being aired. I don't think people are as critical as I am about the level of art. That's my own personal thing. But I think more issues are being dealt

with in more detail by women than men could. Because they don't know, they haven't been there.

Marie-Lynn's songs about environmental issues, like "Radiation", are a call for political action as much as they are a naming of an issue. As a feminist and an activist she recognizes the need for organizing and demonstrating. And it is through such political action that people come together to create a different reality, such as nuclear-free power or pesticide-free vegetables or safe drinking water, or whatever the local issue may be.

I think that there are two levels going on in the environmental movement. I see a lot of good environmental work being done and then I see also, this corporate bandwagon, people like Loblaws. Coffee...no cholesterol, no phosphates. I think something like sustainable development is actually a contradiction in terms, but I don't know enough about the issues and the alternatives. How do you take a society that's developed in certain ways and just stop it in its tracks and say "We're not going to be consumer-based and wasting stuff, we're going to build things that last forever, and you'll only get a new coat every ten years?" How do you tell people that shop for their hobbies, whose passion in life is shopping, that it's all going to get turned around. You can't go back. Maybe all we can do is contain the damage at this point. So for me it's all kind of new in terms of really dealing with the politics of it and it's so tied in with power and money and who has the money and power and wants to hang on to it. Then you get into socialist issues and sharing and cooperation in place of competitiveness. As the eastern block countries are all going capitalist, you think well, that kind of socialism didn't work. So it gets really big. But I would think the lessons that environmentalism can learn from feminism are the lessons in general the world can learn from feminism, which has to do with cooperation and non-aggression. The whole issue of oppression and power is complicated. What do you do about fishermen. I think drift nets are bad but in general does this mean that we don't kill any animals or fish at all? I'm a vegetarian but I do eat fish once in a while. What do you do here? People's livelihood depends on fishing, hunting, slaughtering. So what does feminism propose to do about that? What are the solutions there? Is it all pie in the sky or do we actually have concrete alternatives for those people? People who live up north, do we relocate them all? No, we don't want them all down here, there's too many here already. I don't know that there ever is an easy solution. There will always be lots of compromises. Though we do know that if we took some of the money that's being used for military, and suddenly turned that into ecological-type jobs, there'd be more work there for people. So how do you turn that around? The kind of capital which we have now which basically sees the environment as a commodity is the result of more male thinking. And I think Gloria Steinem said something very good recently: that feminism should no longer be about women becoming like men but about men becoming more like women. You know for the first while we were trying to achieve equality with them; let's be fighter pilots and v. p.'s of corporations, fine. But maybe it should have been the other way around: men should be trying to be more nurturing, more caring, less aggressive, less competitive.

I interviewed Connie Kaldor at the Michigan Women's Folk Festival in August of 1990. Connie is from the prairies, as many of her songs indicate, but now lives in Montreal. She has produced three albums. Connie is somewhat of a contradiction, in terms of what she says about her music and the response her music elicits. Connie's music and performance is indeed highly political. She has an incredible talent for songwriting. Her songs about women touch the experiences most women can relate to: "Wanderlust" is about the feeling of wanting to just pack your bags and go somewhere, have an adventure; "Bird on a Wing" is about a small town girl dreaming of getting out of the small town on the next bus; "Love Letters" is about the joy of a new relationship. She weaves stories about women's lives rather than preaching about social justice. Through her songs we feel the longing, the joy, the pain of the women she writes about. Whether she intends to be political or not, she brings forward personal experiences of the every-day lives of women that are indeed very political and help women share and organize around issues of oppression.

Connie stresses the entertainment value of music. She feels that it is important for all of us to be able to "get away" for a while and she provides this escape with a show full of jokes and one-liners, sentimental love songs and snappy bar tunes. You don't just go to a performance to hear Connie sing, you go to be entertained.

The ideal of course is to get the world to change. But as an entertainer, sometimes I think -- ah, if I could just take people out of their life for five minutes and make them laugh, or energize them or do whatever that is. I don't need to have everybody falling over and ranting and raving. In this society, to get a group of people feeling emotional in a room is a really important thing. If I could just do that, regardless of where I am, where I can feel that the audience is one. Because they feel it too; I feel it when I'm a part of an audience. If I come out of a great show, I'm happy, and everybody's laughing.

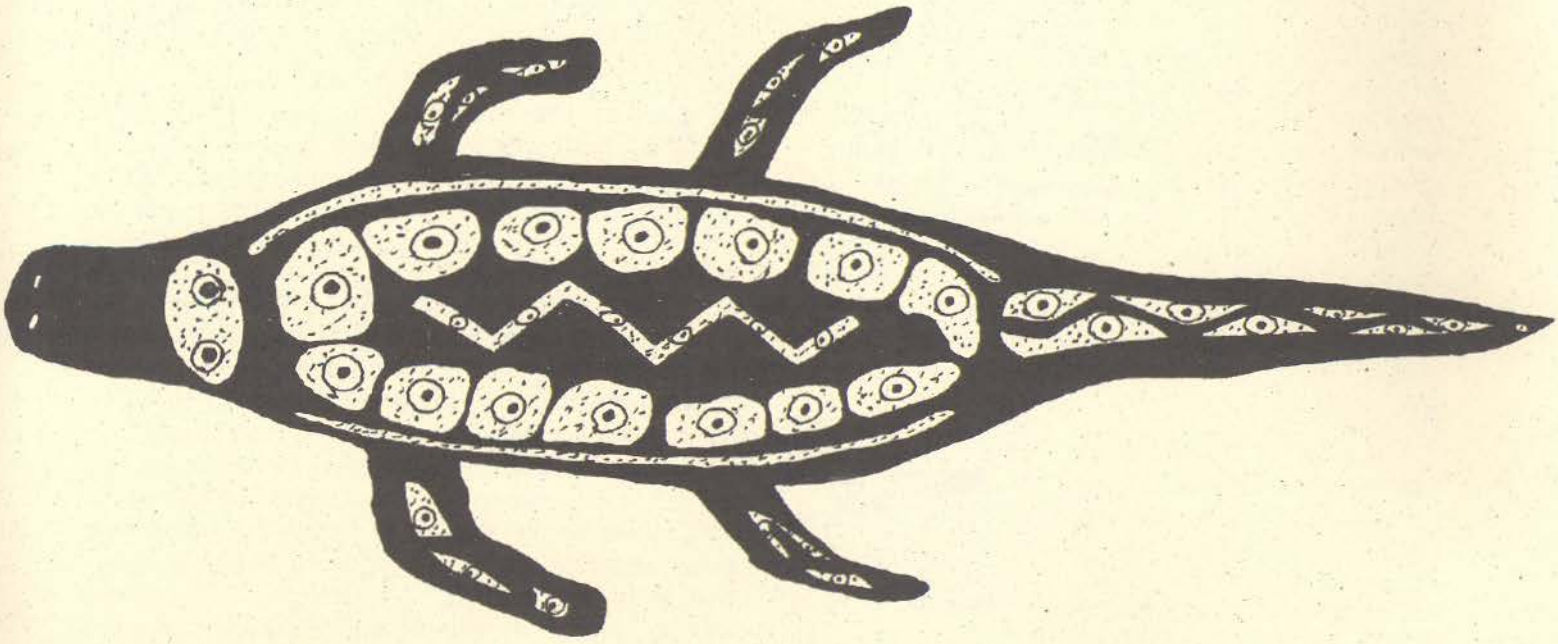
Besides her songs about women's lives, Connie also sings about the history of her home province, Saskatchewan, and the prairie provinces in general. In true folk style she recounts the experiences of people, towns and rivers in the prairies. In this way the history becomes

part of people's lives rather than something taught in school or read in a book, and she creates the history of small towns from the perspective of the people that live there, not from the perspective of an all-seeing analytical eye. Her song "The River Song" compares the damming, and therefore controlling, of a river to the confinement and control of native people, linking the life of the river to the life of a people. Without preaching about environmental issues or about native issues, she implies a relationship between the domination of both and suggests that neither can be contained forever but that something has been lost.

Connie's music comes out of her own experiences and the experiences of those close to her. She feels that if she can bring an issue across by telling a story that gets the listener emotionally involved in a song, she might inspire people to act. Connie does not really see herself as a social activist the way the other singer-songwriters do, but she has an incredible talent for writing and performing songs that touch the hearts of her listeners and in this way is much more political than she thinks.

I'm never really moved to do anything until I'm emotionally involved in it. That's just the way it is with me. The issue of AIDS is not as personal until a friend of yours has it. I don't think people do anything unless they are emotionally interested in something. You can talk about it until you are blue in the face, but the minute that somebody feels that tug of an issue, they'll look at it differently. I think you speak best from things that you feel inside of yourself and I guess that's why I work that way. Because I'm not up there to teach people, I'm not there to tell them what to do. But you can give your perspective. You always give your perspective when you write and when you sing; people know where you stand on certain things. But I think that first of all you have to make people think, and then feel, and after that they will act because most people see what's right and what isn't, in a situation. Nobody, if they're looking from the point of view of a woman that's being hit, thinks it's a good idea. But it's also to respect that these things are difficult to deal with. I don't consciously write a tune for an issue. I try to do that and most of the time it's terrible. The tunes always come out sounding really stupid. After the first line the rest of the song just sort of sounds the same. Why not just say it in the intro and get on with something else. The music however, is working on many, many levels.

Connie is a very gifted performer who trained to be an actress and a musician and chose music over acting. Each show she puts on includes many of her talents in acting. She can be extremely funny, throwing out one-liners while playing the introductory chords to a song, helping people laugh at themselves and exposing assumptions that would be hard to bring out in any other form. Revealing the assumptions we have about who we are and how the world works, is a necessary part of social change. By helping us to expose the ways in which oppression occurs and the ways in which we contribute to it, Connie is creating an "embodied" shared knowledge about the issues she is close to. She deals with the issues she feels inside and gives her perspective. She is not trying to create one shared knowledge for all women, but rather a "partial perspective" of the issues she "knows" through experience.



Susan Belyea is a Toronto musician who, at the time of my research, played in a band called the Fly By Night Dyke Band, and who wrote a major paper theorizing women's music as part of her Masters in Environmental Studies. She is not currently a member of an organized band of musicians, but is instead concentrating on her art: glass-blowing. Susan has a real commitment to social change and was very helpful in the organization of my research and in formulating the relevant questions to ask of each of the other artists.

Susan talks about the importance of music as a vehicle for social change and political action. Although she and her band do perform some of the music that Marie-Lynn would criticize as being somewhat "sloganeering," Susan justifies this type of music as being a way of getting the issues "out there"; naming the problems so they can be dealt with in collective, community action. The Fly By Night Dyke Band is no longer together as a band, so the comments made by Susan and myself about the band, should be recognized as referring to a time prior to 1990. The band was organized around political action and played almost exclusively for various social functions related to social change such as International Women's Day, the YWCA women's shelter, women's crisis centres, etc. In this sense the band and its music serve the women's movement and its political action.

Susan sees music as a way to challenge existing social norms. She sees the music of their band as having been a way to challenge norms around sexual preference, regardless of whether the song is specifically talking about homosexuality or not.

The music that I write myself and the music that we write as a band, and other people's music that we take or appropriate for ourselves, and the whole reason we exist as a band, is to do social change music. A lot of our music doesn't have specific reference. Being the Fly By Night Dyke Band puts us in a particular position; it means that anytime we sing a love song, regardless of whether or not there are pronouns that indicate gender, having four self-identified lesbians, who are publicly lesbians, sing a love song, makes any love song a political song. We do songs that were written by men, they don't challenge anything, but because we sing it to a specific audience and we sing it as lesbians to an audience which is usually fifty percent lesbian anyways, it makes a love song into a political thing because it is a challenge to the existing system of oppression.

Susan and her band dealt with issues relevant to the political work they were doing at the time. Much of it focused on labour issues for women and on the issue of gay and lesbian rights.

We do songs about any issue that touches us. Right now we're learning a lot of labour music, most of it is historical stuff that comes out of various strikes and struggles. We just wrote a song about the plant closing at Inglis, a lot of people lost their jobs, mostly women, and we wrote a song about it. We have some songs that are kind of all-purpose protest songs and we will sit down right before we go on stage and write the verse for the occasion. So if there's just been a plant closure, or the Tories have just introduced some horrible bill -- it happened a lot around free trade -- we sit down literally five minutes before we go on stage and write a verse to a song that we do. We have a few songs that we can stick verses in like that. So there is no musical integrity to the songs, they don't exist as unchanging songs. It's the tradition in folk music, right? We don't deal with things like copyright partly because we don't record so we don't have to worry about being tied up with any record company or anything that would insist on that. But also because we like to think that people will take our songs and sing them when and where appropriate. The lyrics and music are available to anyone who wants to ask for them.

Thus Susan's music is more overtly political as she and her band create a shared experience and a set of shared beliefs around particular issues. By politicizing their audience around issues of class, sexuality, gender, etc. they name the issues and create a living body of knowledge that can be used for action.

Susan, in her 1989 major paper submitted to the Faculty of Environmental Studies, York University, notes the following themes from talking to women about women's music:

> (1) the importance of feminist music in claiming and making our history; (2) music as entertainment; (3) music as celebration; (4) music as a means of community building; (5) music as a symbolic "voice"; and (6) the sensual and emotional pleasure of participating in women's music.[18]

I would add that women's music, and other cultural art forms not dealt with in this paper, provide a potential "vision" or way of seeing the world that is not totalizing or appropriating. It does not seek unity, it seeks to explore relationships and thus create new possibilities for relationships. Thus art, in this case women's music, is a vehicle for social change and a possible means for creating a new reality for both women and nature that is not necessarily dependent on a biological connection between the two, but rather a different set of social relations for the "others" created by Western thought.

I believe the most significant aspect of this study, one which I was not expecting when I began it, is the way in which these women validate and express different ways of knowing from traditional Western, scientific, patriarchal, knowledge creation. I believe that each of these women is presenting/expressing/knowing a situated knowledge. Haraway speaks of situated knowledges as

being embodied; knowledge that comes from experience, from inside. Thus when Faith Nolan, a black Canadian woman, sings and speaks about the history of black Canadians, especially black Canadian women, she is creating a different way of knowing black Canadian culture. This is not a traditionally accepted knowledge creation in Western cultures. This is a woman socially constructing the life of a black people in Canada through her music. Similarly, Heather Bishop is creating acceptance and knowledge about lesbians and the love of women by singing as a lesbian. She is creating a situated knowledge by singing and writing from her experience as a lesbian. And when she sings and talks about the spiritual connection she feels between herself and mother earth, it is again a situated knowledge.

The fractured identities of this postmodern world are confusing and eclectic. These singer-songwriters provide avenues for social change and acceptance of different identities by creating embodied knowledges of individual or group identities. They are not seeking some kind of unified knowledge for all women, or all lesbians, or all black women, they are speaking from a space within. As both Sandra Harding and Donna Haraway point out, it is through this different (postmodern) way of knowing that we can perhaps envision a society where domination is not the only relationship that counts and nature is not simply a resource to be exploited.

Notes

1. Notes from these interviews are used frequently throughout the text of the paper and appear in italics with no indentation.

2. Sandra Harding, **The Science Question in Feminism** (Ithica, New York: Cornell University Press, 1986).

3. Ibid., p. 27.

4. Ibid., p. 28.

5. Ibid., p. 28.

6. Ibid., p. 28.

7. Ibid., p. 249.

8. Donna J. Haraway, "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective", in **Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature** (New York: Routledge, 1991).

9. Ibid., p. 187.

10. Ibid., p. 189.

11. Ibid., p. 190.

12. Ibid., p. 191-192.

13. Harding, **The Science Question in Feminism**, p. 245.

14. Ellen Schwartz, **Born A Woman: Seven Canadian Women Singer-Songwriters**, (Winlaw, B.C.: Polestar, 1988), p. 126.

15. Toni Armstrong Jr., "A Taste of the Canadian Prairies: Heather Bishop," an interview in **Hotwire: The Journal of Women's Music and Culture**, 6:2 (1990), p. 3.

16. Ibid., p. 49.

17. See Chapter One of Susan Belyea's "Theorizing Women's Music" (MES research paper, Faculty of Environmental Studies, York University, 1989), for a more complete discussion of defining women's music.

18. Ibid., p. 5.

Joanne is a recent graduate of the Masters programme in Environmental Studies. Her current research interests include critically exploring the common ground between environmental thought and feminist theory while her more playful interests remain natural history and music.

One Foot

Walking down the dusty road, far in the distance,
hidden by clouds,
by dust,
by the desire to look at what is going on by
my feet

I see mountains.
mixed with dreams,
mixed with hope.
mixed with visions,

And I put
One foot
in front of
One foot
in front of
One mountain.

David Berger

deep ecology

this wilderness
is strange

now,

only
in that

i notice for
the first

time,

recognizing
confusion

in my own
familiarity.

(if you can
imagine

a tree in
timbuktu

calling you
by name)

biggar

hopscotch

the flowers and trees play hopscotch
over many years
the rocks that are hills and mountains are tossed
around rivers and streams
all life jumps and plays and tumbles
over sandy beaches
under cloudless skies
of endless blue
water
falls
like raindrops
landing softly
on a forest floor
of fragrant pine
needles and leaves
me waiting, wondering and watching
for the returning birds
eye view of the world waking
to spring
and jump and play
hopscotch with the flowers and trees

randee holmes

watercolour

these are the clouds;
gathered, a fist.
these are the winds;
the east & the west.
this is the sun,
the green & the blue.
& this;
this is the darkness
that carries the moon.

Drawing light here
in rough sketches & buckets
an artist has been at work
reconstructing the moon
from mountain rib.

Teaching light
to the mountainside
Sun's madness
& the rise
& fall of oceans

this is an old trick
man from dust.

biggar

The Dreaming

for Ken Towle

I saw, I heard, I felt
a forest, a maze of flowers
an ocean -
waves fragrant with colour, stirred by breezes,
and then tossed about by the gale
of my own perception.

Animals gradually emerged
from closeby, afraid
- my fear upon them -
yet willing to shrug off
100 millennia of practiced caution
and approach:
winging aside the cascading petals,
pawing the crushed nectaries,
slithering through a sea
of bright grains
to reach me.

One by one, eager beaks,
noses,
snouts
investigated my ignorant skin.
One by one, patient beings drew me in
as one of their own kind:

I leapt
and my arms suddenly feathered
into three-foot wings, and my clawed feet
securely rounded a branch; I spoke, and
a cry of triumph pierced the foliage;

I crouched
and my hands and feet
grew fur, became thickened and strong;
my voice discovered a low rumble; my maw
hungered for flesh; I blinked
into another Hairy One, and found myself hoofed,
and long-of-stomach, my lip eager
for fresh shoots and berries;

I lay down
and the length of me
thinned into a sleek streak of pale green;
my tongue bifurcated and I tasted
the heady scent of warmth all around me.

*

The rains came and we scurried
or huddled or openly drank
of liquid life; like the flowers,
we became our dependence: on the soil,
the rain, the sun, each other.
Like the flowers, we did not last.

Louise Fabiani

When The Eye Cannot See: Rethinking Night

by Andrew Satterthwaite

We are all poets or babies in the middle of the night, struggling with being.

Martin Amis, from **Time's Arrow**

Night is contested: from a hundred directions claimants come to appropriate. From the quasi-religious claims of those who would call on the powers of darkness, the night-rallies of the National Socialists and the Klan, to the urbanite dream of a well-lit world, the commercial interests of neon, and the feminist march to Take Back the Night, darkness is a battleground. Many scholars now write about the hidden dangers of technology, and the loss of contact with nature, writ large or writ small. They talk of nuclear reactors and genetic engineering. I start small--I wonder about the lightbulb. This is a personal exploration of darkness, about the other side of time we call night. It is personal, and I do it for fun. But I am embedded within Western society, so my exploration follows through Western traditions of mythology, history and literature, before turning to a contemporary sociological consideration of the world after dark. From these, the exploration gains a serious aspect. In the end, this exploration becomes one more appropriation of night: that of the naturalist, who finds something worth saving in the division between night and day.

> Before there was land there was water, before there was light there was darkness. When the earth was first created there was darkness upon the face of the deep. This was the primordial condition. Only after there was earth did light come into being. Already there was heaven, and it existed in darkness.[1] As life before death, night before day is the natural condition. Sometimes the moon sits in the evening sky and brightens, sometimes stars in the firmament break an absence. But sometimes there is a healthy primordial darkness, rich as compost, that sits on the land.

But at some time in the history of humankind, darkness was constructed as another world, and populated with ghosts. There are the mythologies of shadowy beings who inhabit the night, stalking innocents, both in ancient and modern literatures.[2] These are the mythologies of fear. Nothing is celebrated. This is the unknown, the unpredictable. Most of all, it is the unseen, shrouded in a cloak. Night is a time we would sooner end.[3]

For all the religious observation however, prehistoric experience of night was not wholly positive. Death comes at night. Out beyond the fire where eyes do not reach, and more crisply after the fire has gone out, the narrow squeals of a caught animal reaches the ear. This is the sound of death visiting. Biologically we are not prepared for night. Our eyes gave up acuity in dim light for the sake of colour, and our hearing is poor.[4] But perhaps without eyes, imagination leaps to the fore. Prehistoric cave art relied on the inner eye to depict daytime scenes where no light came, an art that perhaps had the power to sear into memory unconfused images that helped structure society.[5] But the early imagination depicted scenes from daytime, and actions that would be of consequence. They did not depict the illusions of night, the mythic beasts that would haunt us later.

Archaeologists deduce from the remains of early civilizations that a great deal of their knowledge focused on the night: stars and planets were key to their vocabularies and libraries; the accuracy of their celestial observation still evokes comment. As far back as the Celts and the Sumerians, buildings and monuments sought their orientation in the heavens. In the waters of Lake Titicaca, glittering silver and gold, are the islands of the Sun and the Moon, whereon the ritual passing of night to day is still played out to tourists. But with the emergence of religious structures, and recognizable altars, darkness acquired other characteristics. Certainly by the time of the Iliad and the Odyssey, an underworld characterized by poor lighting had emerged. By the time Lucifer fell, and took on the mantle of the Prince of Darkness, this other world inimical to human interest had been fully constructed, an allegorical means of social restriction, and a tool of moral suasion.[6] Conducted tours were given by Dante's Beatrice.[7]

But notice that the art of darkness had changed: the positive social images of the cave hunt had largely been replaced by the negative power of a feared future consequence.

Night was not wholly given over to the evil spirit of imps and goblins from the netherworld however. Carlo Ginzburg tells us of the night battles of sixteenth and seventeenth century Friuli, now part of Northern Italy.[8] The spirits of the *Benandanti* (good witches) left their bodies during the nights of the Ember days to defend the fertility of the crop. Armed with fennel, these *benandanti* fought against warlocks and witches (*malandanti*) armed with sorghum stalks who worshipped the devil. This dream activity, which went beyond individual non-historic immediacy, embodied the traditions, hopes and

needs of the agrarian community. Some *benandanti* also claimed to be able to see the processions of the dead. That this community existed within the broader sphere of catholic church influence, a church with an established demonology, indicates that while nighttime had been constructed as another world, it had not, at that time, in that place, yet been rendered wholly evil: in the night battles between *benandanti* and witches the possibility for moral action still existed. The defenders of social order met and battled the agents of chaos outside of daily life.[9] Ginzburg's researches show, however, that over the course of Friulian Inquisitions between 1575 and 1650, the distinction between the *benandanti* and witches collapsed: all night activities of the spirit were rendered diabolic.

The Friulian *benandanti* were by no means the only nocturnal activists in pre-modern Europe. The processions of the dead were lead by various divinities, usually representing the goddess of vegetation, and thus fertility, and therefore embodying the contradictory attributes of life and death. In **Dreamtime** Hans Duerr outlines the 'mixed-pickles method', the nocturnal rites of diverse cults and societies.[10] Duerr discusses witches and their ointments, concerned initially with the supposed realities of witches' broomflights. But he soon turns to the imaginative significance of the night travellers - those women who answered Diana's call to the Venus Mountain, and rode on the backs of animals through the wilderness - and numerous other peasant practices and beliefs, as a response to the Christian suppression of earlier mythological structures. These frequently violent and often sexually-expressed rituals reversed social roles, and participants entered another reality, unbound by law. Duerr argues that all these practices are united in being 'outside of time':

> 'Between the times' indicated a crisis in the ordinary course of things. Normality was rescinded, or rather, order and chaos ceased to be opposites. In such times of crisis, when nature regenerated itself by dying first, humans died also, and as ghostly beings ranged over the land in order to contribute their share to the rebirth of nature. The aspect of the *struggle* against the forces of darkness expressed itself with greater or lesser intensity in all of this.
>
> In the course of time, knowledge became lost that 'outside of time' the boundaries dissolved between the living and the dead, between those in the mountain and those walking in the sun, between wilderness and civilization. With knowledge gone, the experience itself also faded. The last of the night travellers might still have been aware of the fact that they flew away with 'fraw Holt' or went to the mountain with 'Domina Venus,' but why it was that they were doing this, they became less and less aware. Increasingly, rather than being actors, it *happened to them.* Eventually people simply *ran the risk* that some ghostly throng carried them along 'from the fields and the streets at the time of night, transporting them with great speed to regions far away.'[11]

And as this transformation took place, those who were outside society no longer knew why they were. The tradition of children leaving society in order to 'die' in the wilderness, that they might be 'reborn' into the social order as adults, left the legacy of marauding groups of youths. This practice of going outside the boundary of social order was already well-established with the Spartans, and is still found in one form or another in some contemporary African cultures.[12] But with the rise of Christianity and the enforced requirement of remaining within the fold, the actions of these groups were perceived as increasingly intolerable, and during the middle ages the 'youths of the night' resorted to extortion and robbery to support themselves.[13] If the archaic understanding that it was first necessary to be outside in order to know what inside meant, was replaced by the articles of Christian faith, the physical and social remnants of the archaic system lasted longer. The outlaws outlast the system that produced them. The outlaw becomes criminal, retaining the 'between time' of night not as the arena of struggle between order and chaos, but as a zone wholly of social predation.

Against the incipient chaos presented by the threat of the highway robber and the quiet footsteps that threaten from behind, the candle in the window beckons. Gaston Bachelard thought this to be a phenomenological image of the poetic imagination, a felt security.[14] Within a forest or along the lone road, the single pane of a one-room hut lit from within offers sanctuary, relief, a beacon to steer by and towards, a condition as singular to our consciousness as a shell or a nest, and as timeless as legendary past:

> This image would have to be placed under one of the greatest of all theorems of the imagination of the world of light: Tout ce qui brille voit (All that glows sees)... The lamp keeps vigil, therefore it is vigilant. And the narrower the ray of light, the more penetrating its vigilance. The lamp in the window is the house's eye and, in the kingdom of the imagination, it can never be lighted out-of-doors, but is enclosed light, which can only filter to the outside. A poem entitled Emmur begins as follows:
>
> > Un lampe allumee derriere la fenetre
> > Veille au coeur secret de la nuit.[15]

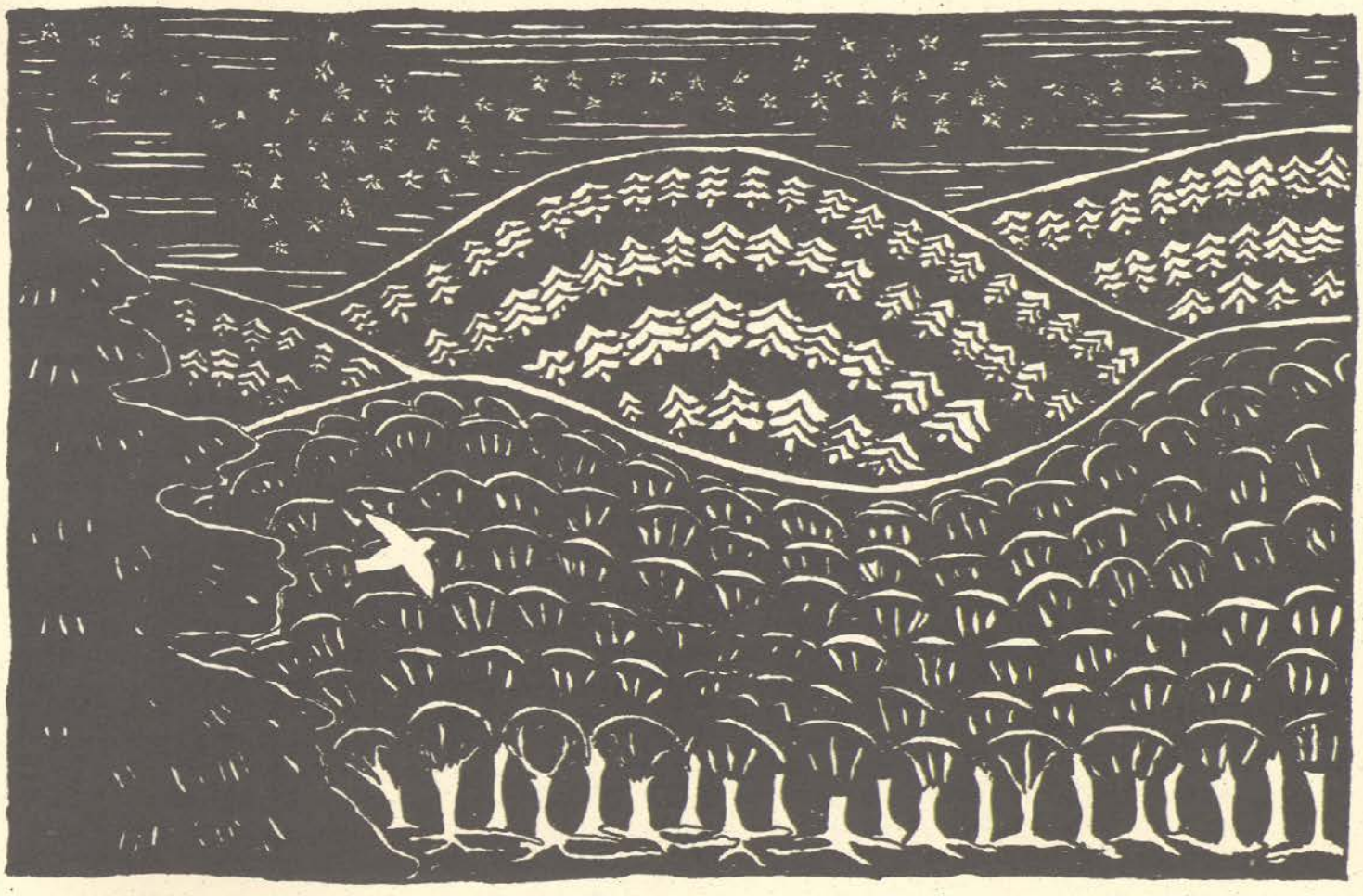
The elevation of the rational faculties during the Enlightenment, an eighteenth century philosophical movement, undoubtedly had a great effect on the way night was perceived. The imaginative status of witches was greatly diminished, and nighttime found esteem only in

the Romantic reaction to Enlightenment, which placed higher value on feeling and imagination.[16] But if nighttime caught the imaginative impulse, reality itself had no being at night --that could only be seen in the raw light of day. Literature demonstrates a strange ambivalence toward the idea of night, and the place of humans in it. One popular Victorian novel captured the prevalent mood, the yearning toward the lighted window:

> We are creatures of the sun, we men and women. We love light and life. That is why we crowd into the towns and cities and the country grows more and more deserted every year. In the sunlight--in the daytime, when Nature is alive and busy all around us, we like the open hillsides and the deep woods well enough: but in the night, when our Mother Earth has gone to sleep, and left us waking, oh! the world seems so lonesome, and we get frightened, like children in a silent house. Then we sit and sob, and long for the gas-lit streets, and the sound of human voices, and the answering throb of human life. We feel so helpless and so little in the great stillness, when the dark trees rustle in the night wind. There are so many ghosts about, and their silent sighs make us feel so sad. Let us gather together in the great cities, and light huge bonfires of a million gas-jets, and shout and sing together and feel brave.[17]

The party is 'after hours,' not 'after dark.' Darkness is feared here: the nocturnal world is experienced as emotive and irrational, unpredictable and uncontrollable, and these are the qualities projected back onto the fabric of night.[18] This is the darkness that conceals the half-hidden horror, the darkness the director uses suggestively, where merely the darkened stage brings the adrenalin on. But if the panicked desire for light and crowds was being indulged to excess in the Victorian city as technological advances made street lighting possible, the same author was still sufficiently aware of the soothing possibilities of night to later reflect on the experience of night far from the madding crowd:

> It was a glorious night. The moon had sunk and left the quiet earth alone with the stars. It seemed as if, in the silence and the hush, while we here children slept, they were talking with her, their sister - conversing of mighty mysteries in voices too vast and deep for childish human ears to catch the sound.
>
> They awe us, these strange stars, so cold, so clear. We are as children whose small feet have strayed into some dim-lit temple of the god they have been



taught to worship but know not; and standing where the echoing dome spans the long vista of shadowy light, glance up, half hoping, half afraid to see some awful vision hovering there.

And yet it seems so full of comfort and of strength, the night.[19]

Perhaps the writer's small company of travellers shared these musings as they contemplated the heavens from the seclusion of a rowboat in the English countryside. Perhaps again, though, the intimacy of night speaks only to the individual, or else to lovers who find in the quiet time space for communion. Now the city lights are brighter, but the night is still available, and remarked upon, by those who venture into the lakes and woods. When I go canoeing or hiking on a cloudless night, and escape the tyranny of the streetlamp and city light, how different is the sky as the light fades. Stars first appear in the eastern sky, till the whole sky is full of them, full of pinpoints and nebulosities, the vast sheet the ancients saw. I saw it best high in the Bolivian Andes, far from lights, where the sky was painted, and the Milky Way was a swatch done with a paint brush--*that* was magical. That was a night sky I still hold before me in my thoughts. In the woods too, the wildlife sounds, and the passing of the wind, force to my ears another knowledge of night--and here I sleep better for the darkness. When we look at the night sky, the eye does not operate as it does during the day: it is looking into infinity. The gaze that during the day fixes the extension of an object, at night cannot weigh the stars. And so other senses are transformed, are brought forth. Scents swell, time stretches and dilates, feelings grow more acute...

Warm perfumes like a breath from vine and tree
Drift down the darkness. Plangent, hidden from eyes,
Somewhere a *eukaleli* thrills and cries
And stabs with pain the night's brown savagery.
And dark scents whisper; and dim waves creep to me,
Gleam like a woman's hair, stretch out, and rise;
Over the murmurous soft Hawaiian sea.
--And I recall, lose, grasp, forget again,
And still remember, a tale I have heard, or known
An empty tale, of idleness and pain,
Of two that loved--or did not love--and one
Whose perplexed heart did evil, foolishly,
A long while since, and by some other sea.[20]

Rupert Brooke thus filled night with emotional content, peaceful and reflective. But Brooke was writing in the advent of the Great War, and expressed a consciousness of the power of darkness that was losing ground in the popular imagination to a widely felt wish for security in the face of social tension. And so with war, the lightbulb. The Romantics saw it coming, anticipated the cold bright glare of reason gone astray. Yet even on the advent of the industrial revolution, Wordsworth had been able to recall an easier time, a restful night:

When soothing darkness spreads
O'er hill and vale, and the punctual stars,
While all things else are gathering in their homes,
Advance, and in the firmament of heaven
Glitter - but undisturbing, undisturbed;
As if their silent company were charged
With peaceful admonitions for the heart...[21]

That night could be so restful. A time of peace, for dreaming. Another way of thinking about darkness, free from conflict, and irrational fear.[22]

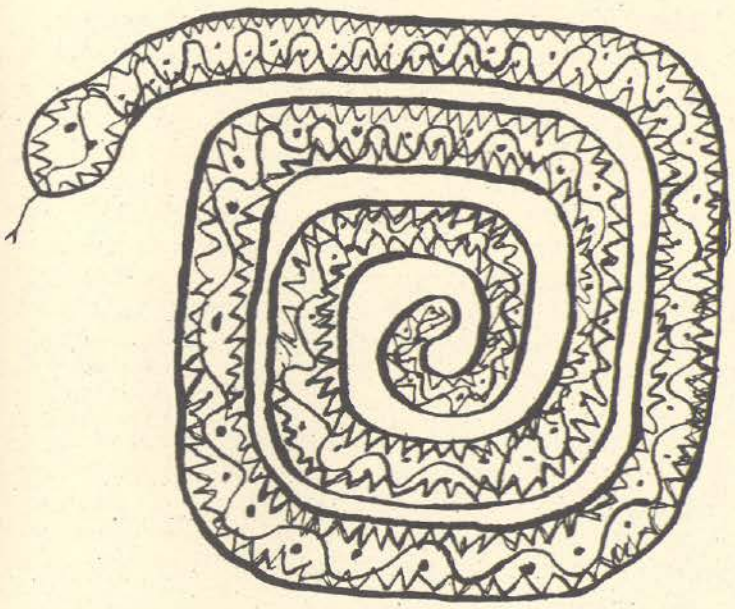
All that is gone. In our urban pride we have as a society quite literally pierced the night with a thousand points of light. And in doing so we have obliterated a million points of light so much older. A city or town in the industrial world can now be defined as an absence of darkness: as the mayor of Toronto flicked the switch to 100,000 lightbulbs in a civic square for an urban celebration, defying night and winter, he remarked that the "Cavalcade of Lights symbolizes the best... of our community: light, hope, excitement, vitality and a spirit of caring".[23] This completes the identification of light with good, darkness with evil. Light is our urban dream.

A night flight reveals below the patterns of human settlement, spiders of light with legs linking across a sheet of darkness where humans do not go. Or at least that is so in the United States: third world towns are marked by only a few small lights, while in Canada large tracts of pure darkness remain. The patterns of light reveal the ideology. The streets of industrial towns and cities are lined with posts, each topped with a sodium bulb that will shine from dusk to dawn. This is for convenience and safety. It is true that it is difficult to move quickly in the dark streets of towns in the third world, though the moon and stars are often helpful. In the industrial world we feel safer with lights, though it is not clear that our bright-lit streets are any safer than the dark streets of other countries. If we turn to our sense of the future, to the neon streets of **Bladerunner**, where light and shadows dance, light is not safe at all.[24] Nor are all crimes those of darkness. At the extremes of the sci-fi world, blinding light anticepticizes, making all things possible: in the brightest light there is no room for moral qualm. Yet light is the urban dream.

And so we have developed a language of light. If many other cultures have many words to describe foliage, or sand, or snow, Western culture has developed a vocabulary and practice around the qualities of light. Much of art is concerned with light quality as much as with form, and the Romantic artworks of Turner and Caspar David Friedrich are ample testimony to this, a tradition that continues into the photographic age with Ansel Adams, and then explodes with the advent of the motion

picture. These are the highest arts, that play with light.[25] We have many words to describe the glow of a lamp, from the warm aura through to lurid cast. Science too has been captivated by the properties of light.

From the initial prismatic separation of light into colours, through to its equation with mass and energy, science has been preoccupied with light, and the ultimate power of undoing the primordial division of light and darkness. And so we have created lights that take away the stars -- remove, from an already stripped world, another aspect of nature. One-eyed reason takes as its symbol the lightbulb, and on it builds an ideology. The first professional scientist, Humphrey Davy, was the first to demonstrate the arc-lamp. Edison's success was not merely that he commercialized the incandescent lightbulb, but that he was a master of patent-law and industrialization.[26] It is no accident that General Electric



and Westinghouse make lightbulbs, bombs, and nuclear submarines.

And we dream of new lights, and better lasers.

If the cinema screen is any measure of our dreams, light is our preoccupation. Intensity and condition, and the more apparently artificial, the more spectacular.[27] The climax to **Close Encounters** was bathed in a golden glow, purer than that we know on earth. **Bladerunner**, like many science-fiction films, depicted manic streets of blazing neon, and the disaster of a depopulated metropolis frequented by androids. Our dream homes and offices are now lit with halogen. The latest status symbol on the desk of the executive pseudo-warrior is the light fixture, sleek in the matte blackness of brushed metal, small but powerfully intense in its attention to the desk, which it renders in a halo. In the dreams of science-fiction books there are worlds with two suns, as if one were not enough: a convenient way to banish night entirely.[28]

We never dream of new forms for darkness.

Instead we have invented factories that need no rest. There are those who would mine from the night the resource of time. Time for more work, more sacrifice, all beneath the glare of lamps.[29] The invention of gas-lighting spurred the first significant move to productively occupy all hours, at Arkwright's Cromford mill on the Derwent around 1790.[30] As Wordsworth continued in his elegy to the pre-industrial night sky,

> ...an unnatural light
> Prepared for never-resting labour's eyes
> Breaks the many-windowed fabric huge;
> And at the appointed hour a bell is heard,
> Of harsher import that the curfew-knoll
> That spake the Norman Conqueror's stern behest -
> A local summons to unceasing toil!
> Disgorged are now the Ministers of day;
> And, as they issue from the illumined pile,
> A fresh band meets them, at the crowded door -
> And in the courts - and where the rumbling stream,
> That turns the multitude of dizzy wheels,
> Glares, like a troubled spirit, in its bed,
> Among the rocks below. Men, maidens, youths,
> Mother and little children, boys and girls,
> Enter, and each the wanted task resumes
> Within his temple, where is offered up
> To gain, the master idol of the realm,
> Perpetual sacrifice.[31]

Yet against this image of oppressed workers toiling the grave shift, we have the image of Wordsworth himself, and other artists and poets, working the midnight oil; indeed, as I write this, it is slightly after midnight. But then there is the difference between production and creativity, the bound activity of the shop machine and the subversive expression of the artist. The poet works in the intimacy of the candle, surrounded by darkness, a small illumination past which darkness sits in the corners of the room.[32] The solitary condition of the insomniac is not the negation of night, it is merely sleep postponed, and indeed many revel in their freedom from the call of daytime errands. It is not the poet we find illumed by arc-lamp, but the mad scientist. For the darkness of night is not a resource; there is nothing we can readily extract from it, except perhaps leisure when freed from the demands of the daily work regime. Indeed, night is the absence of resource, of enabling light, and only becomes resource (in the form of additional time) when light is added.

For all the lights in place, night is still a contested zone, and the ideological force with which its technological and industrial colonization is pursued is testimony to this. This is the rationality of daytime imposing its will, in an

effort to stifle opposition to production, efficiency, and money. But the night battles continue. Night divides between solitary vigil, and communion with the stars, and massed social movements that wish to impose back on the society of day, some order that is fundamentally foreign to the status quo. Night is the ground on which the strictures of daily society are weakest, and therefore most sensitive to revision in ways that cannot be readily addressed through regular and sanctioned social regulatory mechanisms. Thus the jackboot torch parade, seeking to establish totalitarian rule over a social species. Thus too, distressingly, the need for the 'Take Back the Night' marches, seeking to establish equality and security of person, for these issues too are not dealt with in the political forums.[33] How complex this struggle gets is perhaps illustrated by the different forms feminist activism takes on issues of nocturnal habit. There are attempts to retrieve from obscurity the knowledge and social world of witches, benandanti, night-riders, and the goddess cultures that frequently found expression in dark hours, and at solstice. Here night becomes the ground for resistance, in which universal object knowledge might be challenged. There are the 'Take Back the Night' campaigns, and also the more liberal positions taken by those who take current fears as fundamental and demand 'better' lighting.[34] Perhaps some of these forms of feminist activism are at odds, and it seems to me that they are, though the participants may not recognize this. And this is not surprising, for they are not the only other participants in the night battles. There is the arbitrary violence of those who make thoughtless rebellions against systems they do not understand, systems they unconsciously assist in their petty cruelty and acquisitiveness. The voices of authoritarianism and destructive social prejudice are also active. For many, the knock on the door at night, accompanied by the flash of torch inspection, and even the interrogation lamp, is still a possibility. And the torchlight parade, the burning cross, continue to register as the potential flashpoints for fascism and bigotry. Like guns, these lights that break the night signal malevolent intention: light can serve more than one end in the ideological battles for control in the weak social order of the world after dark. The dialogue between the social order of day and the chaotic world of night continues, in new night battles.

Many things to many people, night is an object of literature, mythology, and half of human experience. It is broken by technology and defamed in metaphor, yet it is still half of human experience. Perhaps in time we could come to terms with darkness for its own sake, and not solely by importing daylight. In this, the blind have much to teach the sighted. I have talked extensively of night, but not of sleep, and only of our waking dreams, and not those of slumber, for there is more to darkness than meets the eye, and this is only a beginning.[35] The computer in Jean-Luc Goddard's **Alphaville** interrogates: 'do you know what illuminates the night?' The suspected enemy of technocracy and logic answers: 'la poesie.' Walt Whitman obliges:

When I heard the learn'd astronomer,
When the proofs, the figures, were ranged in columns before me,
When I was shown the charts and diagrams, to add, divide, and measure them,
When I sitting heard the astronomer where he lectured with much applause in the lecture-room,
How soon unaccountable I became tired and sick,
Till rising and gliding out I wander'd off by myself,
In the mystical moist night-air, and from time to time,
Look'd up in perfect silence at the stars.

Notes

1. Judeo-Christian creation mythology, Genesis 1-10.

2. J.R.R.Tolkien's **The Lord of the Rings** (London: Allen & Unwin, 1954) for example, furthers the modern concept of night in his literary proto-mythology by combining elements of the Christian tradition of good and evil with elements from other mythological traditions that are concerned with the powers of darkness.

3. I have used 'we' and 'our' in this essay because rethinking night is something that has to be done as a society. It is not because I think everyone feels exactly the same about darkness.

4. Other species are far better adapted to the dark. The nighttime acuity of nocturnal predatory mammals is in the order of 10x greater than humans. Their sense of smell is far better developed. Owls have 100-1000x greater aural sensitivity. Only with the lantern of curiosity and electric torches was the natural world opened up for humans.

5. See John Pfeiffer, **The Creative Explosion: An Inquiry into the Origins of Art and Religion** (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1982). Pfeiffer argues that darkness could be used to impress, as images were revealed by knowledge-keepers to novices after a disorienting trip through the dark. Perhaps these knowledge keepers became religious-leaders, eventually perverting the experiences to maintain power through terror and the use of masks. In the darkened cinema, the director of horror and suspense uses the same tricks.

6. Timothy Findley, **Not Wanted on the Voyage** (Markam, Ontario: Viking, 1984), gives another look at Lucifer.

7. For more on allegorical thinking and the medieval city of light see Carolly Erickson, **The Medieval Vision: Essays in History and Perception.** (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1976)

8. Carlo Ginzburg, translated by J. & A. Tedeschi, **Night Battles: Witchcraft and Agrarian Cults in the Sixteenth & Seventeenth Centuries** (Baltimore: John Hopkins Univ. Press, 1983)

9. See Ginzburg, p.61, p.118. According to the Inquisition archives Ginzburg based his research on, *benandanti* roughly operated as champions of Christ's faith in opposition to the witches, although they were not always aware of this.

10. See Ginzburg, p.40. Diana-Hecate was the root pagan deity, leading to Holda in northern Germany, Perchta in southern Germany. Also see Hans Peter Duerr (trans. F. Goodman),

Dreamtime: Concerning the Boundary Between Wilderness and Civilization (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1985). Duerr (pp.12-13) traces the complex origins of the deities' powers--the Greek deity Artemis, that later became fused with the Roman Diana, was the goddess of trees and natural, but not agrarian, fertility. Diana was originally the goddess of wild animals, and also a goddess of war, and patron of outsiders.

11. Duerr, pp.35-36.

12. **Ibid.**, p. 38.

13. **Ibid.**, p. 36.

14. Gaston Bachelard (trans. Maria Jolas), **The Poetics of Space** (Beacon Press, Boston, 1964), p. 32.

15. Bachelard, pp. 33-34. Walled-in: A lighted lamp in the window, watches in the secret heart of night.

16. There is a whole literature of the night from this period. See for example Charles Peake, ed., **Poetry of the Landscape and the Night: Two Eighteenth Century Traditions** (London: Edward Arnold, 1967).

17. Jerome K. Jerome, **Three Men in a Boat**, (Bristol: J. W. Arrowsmith, 1889), p. 56.

18. Even the word takes on these powers in modern literature: by their titles alone, Eugene O'Neill's **Long Days Journey into Night**, Celine's **Journey to the End of Night**, and Conrad's **Heart of Darkness** compel; Poitier's **In the Heat of the Night** performance is easily matched by the cinematic title. We project into these words all of our feeling about darkness, and these works thereby gain a claim on our imagination.

19. Jerome, p. 96.

20. Rupert Brooke, "Waikiki of Waikiki sequence," October 1913, in **1914 and Other Poems** (London: Sidgewick & Jackson, 1915).

21. William Wordsworth from book eight of **The Excursion: A Poem** (London: Simpkin Marshall, 1814).

22. Jennifer Sutherland's 'Essay on Night' on **Ideas**, (Toronto: Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, CBC Radio, 20th December, 1991) takes a psychological approach to night, following Rilke and Shakespeare as literary sources and Durrell as the naturalist. She seeks peace at night, and follows Jung's approach of taking a little candle (daytime consciousness) into night to ward off irrational fears. She blurs the lines, without abolishing night. Although there is a lot to be said for her approach, I'm not so sure about importing the rationality of day into night: most of the conflicts of night are imported from daytime existence, and merely seek their resolution outside social surveillance and the sway of authority. I'd rather keep consciousness of day and night separate, that we might learn to deal with the conflicts of daytime society during daylight hours (this would involve a political transformation), and come to enjoy night for its own sake again.

23. 'An urban celebration: Lighting Up the Night,' **Eye Magazine** Nov 28/91, p.44. Art Eggleton quoted on flicking the switch for 100,000 lightbulbs in Nathan Phillips Square, Toronto.

24. As Sutherland points out many of the crimes that we fear most, assault, rape, murder etc, are done by those we know, and it is simply easier to point a finger at the anonymity of night, at the bad guys out there, than at those we know around us. Night functions as a cloak to hide issues we'd rather not address directly.

25. Consider the status of the arts that play with form, eg., sculpture and pottery; and texture, eg., weaving; and their relative place in the museum. These arts rarely make it into the gallery, which is dominated by two-dimensional visual representations.

26. David Noble, **America by Design: Science, Technology and the Rise of Corporate Capitalism** (New York: Knoff, 1977). See pp. 8-10.

27. If I am correct about the centrality of artificial light to industry and science, this would complement Horkheimer and Adorno's analysis of the Hollywood culture industry. Even Ford, the symbol of industry, takes the lightbulb as its icon rather than a car. See Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, **Dialectic of Enlightenment** (New York: Continuum, 1987), p. xvii & p. 258.

28. I recall reading one science fiction novel, perhaps by Isaac Asimov, where a very rare eclipse drove everyone mad: they could not stand darkness.

29. Murray Melbin, **Night as Frontier: Colonizing the World After Dark** (New York: The Free Press, 1987). Melbin describes this temporal invasion. Most library books that deal with night are about how to best manage adaptation of circadian rhythms to the nightshift.

30. W.G. Hoskins (1955) **The Making of the English Landscape** (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1955), p.217.

31. Wordsworth, **The Excursion.**

32. We'll ignore for the moment that I write at a computer, watching orange letters appear on a cathode tube, while above me is a fluorescent office light: this is not where I want to be, and besides the concept/construct of poet/writer/artist *is* significant.

33. This essay is written in sympathy to the 'Take Back The Night' marches, which I think currently is one of the most significant forms of activism. Security of person at night is a matter of respect for persons, not lamplight.

34. The argument that city lighting is a women's issue has frequently come up in my discussions of night. Yet if many women say that they feel safer at night with lights, so too do men feel safer, though they will not admit it, for to be afraid of the dark is not something many men feel comfortable admitting. (One could ask for whose benefit the lights put up for in the first place, given that other putative 'women's concerns' in other areas of planning cities, such as community centres, daycares, nearby schools and stores, were rarely considered.) Yet to *feel* safer is not to *be* safer. From two years old we are told of the robbers and ghosts out there, so it is hardly surprising we feel unsafe in the dark. As I have tried to show, our feelings about night have a complicated history, and it is not always prudent to confuse these feelings about night with actual risks. City lights may give a false sense of security. See **Take Back The Night.**

35. There is a wealth of literature to explore. I have not mentioned Friederich Nietzsche's **Twilight of the Idols**, nor Maurice Merleau Ponty's reflections in the **Phenomenology of Perception.** Walter Benjamin speaks of the experience of night in his essays on Naples and Paris in **Reflections.** For a literary treatment, see **In the Land of the Nyx: Night and it's Inhabitants.** For those able to read Portuguese, Antonio Vieira's **Discurso da Ruptura da Noite: Prolegemenos a uma Teoria da Conhociaemto Fenomenologico** may prove interesting.

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The Nonhuman in Human Psychological Development

by Andy Fisher

This essay is edited from a larger paper entitled "A Critique of Developmental Psychology in Light of the Ecological Crisis." The central thesis of the original paper is that psychologists and environmentalists are both engaged in different aspects of the same over-arching human dilemma. This dilemma has at its core a human subject who feels alien, anxious, and uncertain, and who is thus experiencing a crisis in her relationships with herself, with other people, and with the larger nonhuman sphere--a crisis that reveals itself as epidemic psychopathology, social pathology and ecological destructiveness. Developmental psychology can be criticized for failing to adequately address this dilemma, based on the following: a) it generally accepts and reinforces a standard of normality that more closely resembles collective insanity, b) it relies heavily on empirical methods that restrict its view of human psychology and, in some respects, contribute to the overall dilemma, and c) it ignores the consequences of raising children in domesticated, human-dominated environments, rather than wild or 'natural' ones, as has historically been more the case. The present essay flows from a consideration of the third criticism.

The Psychological Landscape

The ecological crisis invites us to consider our psychological relatedness to the nonhuman. Sigmund Freud had the following to say:

> In the course of his development towards culture man acquired a dominating position over his fellow creatures in the animal kingdom. Not content with this supremacy, however, he began to place a gulf between his nature and theirs. He denied the possession of reason to them, and to himself he attributed an immortal soul, and made claims to a divine descent which permitted him to annihilate the bond of community between him and the animal kingdom. *It is noteworthy that this piece of arrogance is as foreign to the child as it is to the savage or to primitive man.* It is the result of a later, more pretentious stage of development. At the level of totemism primitive man has no repugnance to tracing his descent from an animal anscestor. . . .A child can see no difference between his own nature and that of animals; he is not astonished at animals thinking and talking in fairy tales; he will transfer to a dog or a horse an emotion of fear which refers to his human father, without thereby intending any derogation of his father. Not until he is grown up does he become so far estranged from the animals as to use their names in vilification of others.
>
> . . . Man is not a being different from animals or different from them; he himself originates in the animal race and is related more closely to some of its members and more distantly to others. The accretions he has since developed have not served to efface the evidences, both in his physical structure and in his mental dispositions, of his parity with them (emphasis added).[1]

Freud's commentary portrays (Western) civilization as a process which creates an existential gulf between humans and nonhuman animals. The implications of this "piece of arrogance" were carried through by Freud to his **Civilization and Its Discontents,**[2] in which he posited a fundamental antagonism between what he regarded to be humanity's 'animal nature' and the restrictions of civilization.[3] Freud thought that psychoanalytical theory could help people understand this antagonism and provide guidance for societal reforms which would essentially minimize our neurotic state. Today however the gulf between the human and the nonhuman is as wide as ever and the present state of civilization remains in question.

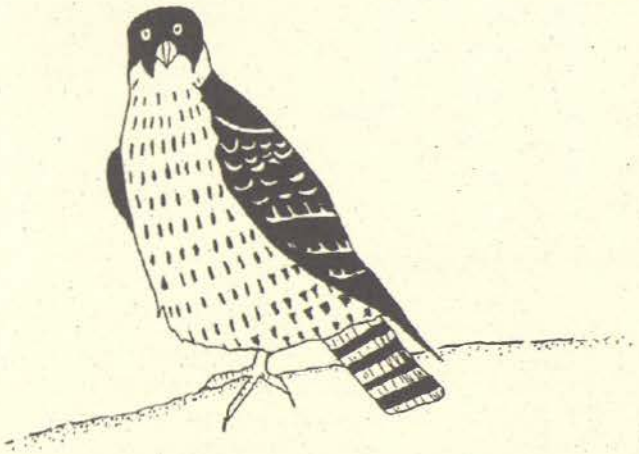
Because, as Freud explained, humans have 'split off' from the larger nonhuman world, the human world itself has shrunk. The resource conservationist Gifford Pinchot's often-quoted line that "[t]here are only people and natural resources"[4] expresses this modern view. The result of such a separation of the world into humans and resources has been to restrict *psychological* investigation to the human environment alone, as resources are not normally considered to have psychological significance.[5] Harold F. Searles was one of the first to challenge such a restricted view, stating in 1960 that

> [d]uring the past approximately sixty years, the focus of psychiatry's attention has gradually become enlarged, from an early preoccupation with intrapsychic processes...to include interpersonal and broad sociological-anthropo-logical factors. It would seem then that a natural next phase would

consist in our broadening our focus still further, to include man's relationship with his nonhuman environment.[6]

It is not in dispute here that modern humans are largely urbanized and have little experience of wild, multispecific, 'natural' environments; developmental psychology's focus on human settings in this respect is understandable. What is of concern are the developmental implications of restricting children to such settings, and the further implications that this situation might have for the environmental crisis. In addition, even though 'contact' with 'nature' may be limited in the modern, urban setting, the significance that these rare moments of contact might have for the child should not be underestimated. Clare Cooper Marcus, for example, comments that although modern children spend very little time "outside", the vast majority of adult recollections of childhood are drawn from these outdoor moments.[7] In a study of eighty adult landscape architect students asked to recall their fondest and most vivid childhood memories Marcus found that the dominant topics included time spent in "patches of woodland, marsh, or meadow that still remained between burgeoning subdivisions," camping trips, and visits to 'the country.'[8] A 1955 M.I.T. study[9] of forty adults (chosen from 'society at large') likewise found that childhood memories were dominated by wide-open spaces, trees, hills and water. In yet another study involving childhood memories, Edith Cobb found that "gifted or creative people" tend to have vivid recollections of a "profound continuity with natural processes" as children, and are able, to a large extent, to retain these feelings.[10] These gifted people, who early in their lives entered into a harmonious "relationship with nature," were able to maintain an open, creative, metaphorical, and poetic existence, as opposed to the more literal and rigid existence that generally characterizes modernity.[11]

Having introduced the topic of the nonhuman in human psychological development, the discussion now turns to an exploration of the existing psychological and ecophilosophical literature which does or could address this topic. For the purposes of this essay three categories of conceptualizing the human with respect to the nonhuman have been distinguished: a) the nonhuman as the "natural environment," b) the nonhuman in relationship with the human, and c) the nonhuman as self. It is important to note however that the boundaries between these categories are not always sharp and that thematic variations will exist within any category. The attempt here is to separately review the work of various researchers in order to show a progression of ideas, rather than to blend their work into a coherent picture of human psychology with respect to the nonhuman.



The Nonhuman as the "Natural Environment"

This category includes any arguments or approaches that promote the nonhuman environment as an important element in human psychological well-being, but which do not necessarily emphasize a mature relatedness to the nonhuman. Warwick Fox, in a major study of the various arguments for the preservation of wilderness, has further categorized some of these approaches as follows: "the gymnasium argument" (i.e. recreational value), "the art gallery argument" (i.e. aesthetic value), "the cathedral argument" (i.e. spiritual value), and the "refuge" argument[12] (i.e. therapeutic value).[13] In all of these the natural setting essentially acts as a human psychological *resource*.

A unique study which fits into this discussion was performed by Rachel and Stephen Kaplan, who set their aim at finding out what it is about nature that has such a powerful "effect" on people, including its ability to restore "hassled individuals to healthy and effective functioning." They ask, finally,

> [a]re some natural patterns better than others? Is there a way to design, to manage, to interpret natural environments so as to enhance these beneficial influences?[14]

In these comments can be found the utilitarian flavour which characterizes this category. The Kaplans were initially interested in discovering and categorizing people's "preferences" among natural settings in order to eventually allow for "prediction of preference." They then moved on to a measurement of "benefits and satisfactions" and an exploration of what constitutes a "restorative environment." In addition to nature's restorative capacities, they noted that

> [o]n the spiritual side is the remarkable sense of feeling 'at one,' a feeling that often - but not exclusively - occurs in natural settings. Although the spiritual does not hold a prominent place in the writings of most psychologists, the concern for

meaning, for tranquility, and for relatedness has not gone unnoticed.[15]

The 'bottom line' in the Kaplans' study is their concern for the preservation and management of natural places for the psychological benefit of humans:

> It is rare to find an opportunity for such diverse and substantial benefits available at so modest a cost. Perhaps this resource for enhancing health, happiness, and wholeness has been neglected long enough.[16]

Despite the pioneering nature of this investigation into the nonhuman realm, it still reflects the resourcist and objectifying attitude expressed earlier by Gifford Pinchot. The natural environment in the Kaplans' scheme is essentially a pleasant backdrop for human activity, or a cost-effective source of therapy. Although the Kaplans note the importance of the experience of being "at one" with nature and the "concern...for relatedness," their conclusions in this respect are limited.

The Nonhuman In Relationship with the Human

In contrast to the previous category, the emphasis here is on the importance of a mature *relationship* with the nonhuman and some sort of recognition of the nonhuman 'in its own right.' Environmental philosophers often speak of a "biocentric" worldview, in which the nonhuman is considered to have "intrinsic value," beyond human resource value. Although not all positions that emphasize relationship with nature are strictly biocentric, the psychological picture must clearly change when 'nature' is moved out of the background and placed on more common ground with humans.

Harold F. Searles, who was introduced earlier, has made a valuable contribution to the discussion of human-nonhuman relationships in his extensively documented manuscript **The Nonhuman Environment: In Normal Development and in Schizophrenia.**[17] To date, Searles' work appears to be the only contribution made by a practising psychologist to the topic of the nonhuman environment in human psychological development. Searles begins his work at the same place as did the Kaplans, with a discussion of "our love of gardening; our love of frequenting familiar haunts of Nature...the appeal of beautiful landscapes," etc. However, Searles' thesis goes well beyond that of the Kaplans':

> The thesis of [my manuscript] is that the nonhuman environment, far from being of little or no account to human personality development, constitutes one of the most basic ingredients of human psycho-logical existence. It is my conviction that there is within the human individual a sense, whether at a conscious or unconscious level, of relatedness to his nonhuman environment, that this relatedness is one of the transcendentally important facts of human living, that--as with other important circumstances in human existence--it is a source of ambivalent feelings to him, and that, finally, if he tries to ignore its importance to himself, he does so at the peril to his own psychological well-being.[18]

Searles suggests that we can relate to the nonhuman environment in two ways: we may see the nonhuman as a carrier of "meanings which basically have to do with people," or alternatively we may relate to a cat "*as being a cat*" or to a tree "*as being a tree.*"[19] This second kind of relatedness is crucial to the theme of Searles' work, which is that

> the human being is engaged, throughout his lifespan, in an unceasing struggle to differentiate himself increasingly fully, not only from his human, but also from his nonhuman environment, while developing, in proportion as he succeeds in these differentiations, an increasingly meaningful relatedness with the latter environment as well as with his fellow human beings.[20]

According to Searles, it is only through this process of differentiation and relation that one can truly feel a "sense of profound kinship" with the nonhuman, as well as "a profound sense of difference from it."[21] Searles is quick to point out however that in normal development a "subjective oneness" with the nonhuman environment persists at the "unconscious" level "long after differentiation on a purely perceptual and conscious level." He suggests that it is this hidden nondifferentiated aspect of ourselves that in fact *allows* us to relate to others. Significantly however, Searles does maintain a human/nature dichotomy, despite his emphasis on human relatedness to nature: "mankind's position in regard to his environment is existentially--innately--a conflictual position. He is grounded in Nature, and yet is unbridgeably apart from it."[22]

Searles summarized his conclusions nicely in a later article:

> I postulate that an ecologically healthy relatedness to our nonhuman environment is essential to the development and maintenance of our sense of being human and that such a sense of relatedness has become so undermined, disrupted, and distorted, concomitant with the ecological deterioration, that it is inordinately difficult for us to integrate [certain] feeling experiences [associated with the ecological crisis], ...inescapable to any full-fledged human living. Over recent decades we have come from dwelling in an outer world in which the living works of nature either predominated or were near at hand, to dwelling in an environment dominated by a technology which is wondrously powerful and yet nonethe-

> less dead, inanimate. I suggest that in the process we have come from being subjectively differentiated from, and in meaningful kinship with, the outer world, to finding this technology-dominated world so alien, so complex, so awesome, and so overwhelming that we have been able to cope with it only by regressing, in our unconscious experience of it, largely to a state of nondifferentiation from it. I suggest, that is, that this "outer" reality is psychologically as much a part of us as its poisonous waste products are part of our physical selves (emphasis added).[23]

It was through his work with schizophrenic patients, whom he considered to be living largely in a state of nondifferentiation from their surroundings, that Searles gained much of his insight. In recognizing that certain mental patients, for example, confuse their own 'bodily workings' with those of machines, he suggests that even healthy people may regard their surroundings as part of themselves. He asserts that the difference between a healthy and a psychotic or neurotic patient, in this regard, is quantitative, not qualitative.[24] The above quotation argues, then, that the pressures of modern living are forcing us further toward the nondifferentiated state of the mental patient; we are, in effect, becoming one with our machines. However, an alternative explanation suggests itself. Because Searles regards 'excessive' subjective oneness with one's environment as a regressive or pathological condition, he cannot see our identifying with our machines as anything but abnormal. But perhaps it is *normal* to feel strong continuity with one's surroundings, whatever they may be. The suggestion here is that relationship, as Searles himself pointed out, depends on strong feelings of continuity with that to which one relates. Thus part of the real danger of living amongst machinery and identifying with it, of becoming pieces of technology ourselves, is that it psychologically estranges us from, and impairs our ability to relate to, the more 'natural,' processes of a *living, breathing* planet. As such, we find nature to be alien, chaotic, irrational, and beneath the dignity of our 'rational,' machine-like, technological being. To the extent that we do not feel this way, we have retained some measure of relatedness.

The discussion at this point is bordering on "the nonhuman as self" category, which will be considered below. It is noted for the moment that what is in dispute here is the traditional Freudian principles that health is characterized by strong ego boundaries, and that a "yearning" for "oneness" with nature is always infantile or regressive.

Although Searles' consideration of the relationship between the human and the nonhuman represents a departure for a psychologist, this topic is the central concern of ecophilosophers. What is at issue in many ecophilosophical investigations is the conception of the human self. For example, Neil Evernden suggests that no "object of attention" can be examined without first attending to the *relational* context in which it exists. He suggests that if we reverse

> the polarity of attention, so to speak, so that the bond of relationship is more significant than the endpoints it joins

then

> an individual is not a thing at all, but a sequence of ways of relating...Concentration on those relationships, and on relationship in general, clearly constitutes a substantial alteration of our way of understanding the individual.[25]

Evernden follows up the implications of such a relational view of the self, noting that "the kind and nature" of relationships that we establish -- which gives us our context and meaning -- develop in our early years: "the nature of the relationship established [in development] will determine the world-view that the person will become."[26] And now,

> [t]he situation in which we find ourselves [the ecological crisis] is a consequence of our own choice of context, for we have adopted one which defines relationships to nature out of existence.[27]

In refusing subjectivity to the nonhuman, Evernden suggests that "we left nothing to relate to, no one else in the world to reciprocate." As such

> what the environmental movement appears to protest - the extermination of other forms of life - is simply the physical manifestation of a global genocide that is long since established in the minds of us all. The subjects are first destroyed [ie. the nonhuman is robbed of subjectivity], and later their bodies crumble.[28]

Evernden provides an elegant view of the environmental crisis, but his analysis goes further. He suggests that *all* relationship, including that between humans, is in jeopardy "and that we should not presume any firm boundary between our behaviour towards the human and towards the nonhuman; all 'others' are similarly threatened."[29] We are thus reminded that the ecological crisis cannot be abstracted and considered separately from the other crises present in human society.

The psychological development of human relationships with the nonhuman has also been explored extensively by the naturalist Paul Shepard. In contrast to Searles, who was a psychologist (and to whom Shepard acknowledges an indebtedness), Shepard's work has more of an 'ecological' bias. As such, his efforts to draw a connection between human psychological development and the ecological crisis are invaluable. Although Shepard generally stays within the language of psychology, he is clearly trying to evoke a sense of human

relatedness to the world that goes beyond the psychological jargon, and that flows from his sensibilities as a naturalist. The work is admittedly speculative, and undoubtedly contains some erroneous ideas, but this is only to be expected at such an exploratory stage. What is more significant is the uniqueness of Shepard's thesis and the contribution that it could make to developmental psychology if it were given a proper airing.

The majority of Shepard's work on this topic are contained in three books. In **The Tender Carnivore and the Sacred Game**[30] he traces the roots of the ecological crisis back to the Agricultural Revolution, which he suggests saw the beginnings of a separation, both physical and psychological, between humans and their wilderness context. In this book Shepard made his first effort at presenting a normative psychological model of humans based on a hunter-gatherer condition, rather than on our modern technological situation. He argued that a return of humans to a wilderness existence would not be a 'going back to the past' because psychologically we have never really left it; in a sense, modern living simply denies us the wilderness which our healthy psychological development still requires. These views will become clearer in considering his next two books, in which his thoughts were developed further.

In **Thinking Animals,**[31] Shepard considers the topic of human relatedness to *animal* 'otherness.' His thesis in this case is that "the conceptual uses[32] of animals are an aspect of human biology, a part of 'human ecology.'"[33] As an "intelligent" social species, he argues, humans are absorbed with relationship and therefore must have a clear conception of self, as distinct from other. In this respect, Shepard closely follows Searles. However, Shepard takes Searles' point further in claiming that a concept of self not only requires a differentiation from otherness, but also a radical seeing of oneself in it. His argument is as follows. The human self is not easily perceived; "it is too fluid and close. Nor can it be easily represented."[34] Animals, essentially, teach us about ourselves. The number of animal metaphors that we use daily to describe our behaviours, as well as the number of animals present in children's literature, attest to this. "By 'identifying' with a number of animals in turn, the child discovers a *common ground* with other beings despite external differences between himself and them" (emphasis added).[35] That is, children learn about themselves by discovering how they are like and unlike other animals. In sum,

> [w]e are members of a human family and society, but the presence of animal others enlarges our per-

ception of the self beyond the city to the limits of the world, and deeply inward to that ground of being where live the lizard and monkey and fish.[36]

A deep sense of human kinship with nonhuman animals - one that can only be realized through an intimate and authentic relationship with them - is the psychological norm that Shepard is suggesting. The innate conflict between humans and their nonhuman environment posited by Searles is emphatically absent in Shepard's work. In a world which has become "too small for animals," Shepard is wondering aloud what effect living in a world of "inadequate otherness" is having on our concept of self.

Shepard's arguments often run counter to the conventional wisdom, and for this reason they are difficult to reproduce in a short space. But the following point is perhaps the most basically intuitive and comprehensible aspect of his project.

> There are a whole series of developmental undertakings in human mental and emotional growth which rely on the availability and abundance of nonhuman life. Until we understand exactly how each of these work, we should follow what might be called "the principle of phylogenic probity," which is simply that the healthy function of an organ is most assured under circumstances similar to those in which it evolved.[37]

The apparent madness of our racing culture - a culture that increasingly takes us away from the circumstances in which we evolved - is the topic of Shepard's culminating book, **Nature and Madness**.[38] In it he explores the prospect of "general, culturally-ratified distortions of childhood" and "massive disablement of ontogeny as the basis of irrational and self-destructive attitudes toward the natural environment."[39]

The backbone of Shepard's book is a proposed normative psycho-genesis which he argues is disrupted by modern culture. His arguments are distinctly 'biological': a "seed of normal ontogeny is present in all of us."[40] This seed "triggers expectations" within the child at the different stages of its development. For example, at birth the infant 'expects' to find a mother--whose continous presence is initially required, and to whom the child will form its first relational bonds. The natural setting proposed in this theory of psychogenesis is critical; it includes a richness of wild animals, fresh air, trees, plants, and so forth. It is within this wilderness context that the child further develops her sense of self (as discussed, in part, in **Thinking Animals**[41]), and in which she forms a bond of relatedness with nature. Shepard posits that, just as the child 'expected' and 'needed' a mother, continued normal development requires a bonding with nature. The way that children naturally thrive when in contact with nonhuman nature evidences their biological 'readiness' for it. (See Clay, note 9, Cobb, note 10, and Marcus, note 7.) Social bonds ("infant-mother, juvenile-family, adolescent-community") in effect provide the ground, the model, for developing further relationships with the otherness of animals, plants, and so on. The child in turn sees these as "metaphorical sign images or messages about the inner world, the binding forces of human society, and the invisible spiritual realm."[42] The final stage of adolescence in this model is a bonding with the cosmos, which has been made possible by an expanding sense of wholes, from the womb, to the mother and body, to the earth, and finally to the "starry sky." The adult who has developed normally, according to this model, has a sense of belonging in both nature and the larger cosmos, and this has been achieved through a growth of ever-more-subtle relationships or bondings. The cosmic loneliness, anxiety, uncertainty, and despair of the modern human dilemma are nowhere to be found.

Shepard summarizes:

> The archetypal role of nature - the mineral, plant, and animal world found most completely in wilderness - is in the development of the individual human personality, for it embodies the poetic expression of ways of being and relating to others. Urban civilization creates the illusion of a shortcut to individual maturity by attempting to omit the eight to ten years of immersion in nonhuman nature. Maturity so achieved is spurious because the individual, though he may be precociously articulate and sensitive to subtle social interplay, is without a grounding in the given structure that is nature....Indeed the real bitterness of modern social relationships has its roots in the vacuum where a beautiful and awesome otherness should have been encountered.[43]

The stages of development proposed by Shepard are characterized by a "highly timed openness in which the attention of the child is predirected by an intrinsic schedule, a hunger to fill archetypal forms with specific meaning."[44] Only when a culture is sensitive to this schedule and aware of its needs, Shepard argues, will these forms be properly filled. Culture, then, is not some recent invention that allows humans to transcend their biology, but rather is a critical component of it. Modern culture, in failing the child, arrests her psychological development. We fail the adolescent, Shepard writes, when we rob him of a "mythopoetic vision of man in nature." As a result

> he will for the rest of his life struggle with existential problems that are normally the work of a few critical years in his second decade of life. I do not mean that the adolescent normally gains instant wisdom, but that the frame-work of nature as metaphorical foundation for cosmic-at-homeness is as native to the human organism in its adolescent years as any nutritive element in the diet.[45]

Shepard concludes his book on a somewhat hopeful note:

> There is a secret person undamaged in every individual...[Yet all of our archetypal impulses] are assimilated in perverted forms in modern society: our profound love of animals twisted into pets, zoos, decorations, and entertainment; our search for poetic wholeness subverted by the model of the machine instead of the body; the moment of pubertal idealism shunted into nationalism or ethereal otherworldly religion instead of ecosophical cosmology.
>
> But this means that we have not lost, and cannot lose, the genuine impulse. It awaits only an authentic expression.[46]

Although every child has the potential to grow toward a mature relatedness to the world, as described by Shepard, the problem arises that "[a]dults,...cut short from their own potential, are not the best of mentors."[47] However, the ecological crisis continues to remind us that there is a grave problem with both our material and psychological relationships with the nonhuman, and Shepard provides an important new thesis for consideration.

The Nonhuman as Self

Both transpersonal psychologists and a growing number of ecophilosophers describe the self as something that exists beyond the individual ego, as something that is continuous with the world, and that extends in some measure beyond the physical boundaries of the skin. Paul Shepard, who emphasized relationship and bonding with nature in the above discussion, is quoted below now presenting a form of "nonhuman as self" argument.

> [w]e are hidden from ourselves by habits of perception...[O]ur language, for example, encourages us to see ourselves--or a plant or animal--as an isolated sack, a thing, a contained self. Ecological thinking, on the other hand requires a kind of vision across boundaries. The epidermis of the skin is ecologically like a pond surface or a forest soil, not a shell so much as a delicate interpenetration. It reveals the self enobled and extended rather than threatened as part of the landscape and the ecosystem, because the beauty and complexity of nature are continuous with ourselves.
>
> Man is in the world and his ecology is the nature of that inness. He is in the world as in a room, and in transience, as in the belly of a tiger or in love. What does he do there in nature? What does nature do there in him?[48]

Is it paradoxical to feel both continuous with and in relationship with one's nonhuman surroundings?[49] Harold Searles noted earlier that relationship is possible only if at some level of awareness one feels nondifferentiated from that to which one relates. An even more helpful discussion of levels of awareness has been presented by the naturalist John Livingston:

> It could...be argued that *individual* self-consciousness may be only the most basic and fundamental of several layers or envelopes of self-consciousness...
>
> There seems little doubt that in at least many animals there is what might be called a "group self-consciousness." Witness the behaviour of clustering invertebrates, schooling fishes, flocking birds, hunting wolves, banding primates....Very probably there is also an *interspecies* 'community self-consciousness,' judging by the reciprocal behaviour of multispecies associations and communities. There may even even be a still wider consciousness of *self as whole*...[an] awareness of planetary biospherical self, a total participating consciousness. At this stage, "other" loses all meaning.[50]

Livingston posits that "Western knowledge systems" keep us from experiencing anything other than an individual, egoic self, although other 'forms' of self and of relationship are possible. Livingston, in a sense, turns Searles' discussion on its head. The egoic, individual self in Livingston's scheme results from a cultural reification at the most basic level of self-consciousnes, whereas a more continuous, larger sense of self represents a more mature way of being in the world and of relating to the rest of the biosphere[51] Searles would no doubt respond that consciously felt continuity with nature is regressive or pathological. But perhaps Shepard's model of normative psychogenesis shows a way in which one might develop a "higher oneness" (Abraham Maslow's term) with nature, as opposed to a more regressive, infantile "lower oneness."

Livingston is not alone in suggesting that an extended sense of self is possible. A central theme of the philosophy of deep ecology is that of identifying with, or seeing oneself in, the nonhuman in as large a sense as possible. Warwick Fox, a deep ecology scholar, argues that such identification is based most widely on the "deep-seated realization...that we and all other entities are aspects of a single unfolding reality."[52] Fox has also recently drawn attention to the similarities between the writings of deep ecologists and of transpersonal psychologists. We are thus able to turn the discussion back to the work of psychologists.

Abraham Maslow, a pioneer of transpersonal psychology, was caught up in the search for the healthy, well-integrated, whole human being, and was very selective in his choice of psychological subjects. In his later work Maslow was describing the exceptionally healthy person as one who was not only self-actualizing, but also self-

transcending, that is, able to let go of or transcend the egoic self. What is significant here is that Maslow, a psychologist, and Livingston and Shepard, both naturalists, have all explored notions of healthy selfhood, and have all converged on the idea of what Maslow calls self-transcendence. Maslow was clearly moving even further toward the naturalists' positions when he said that

> Perhaps...thrilling to nature (perceiving it as true, good, beautiful, etc.) will one day be understood as a kind of self-recognition or self-experience, a way of being oneself and fully functional, a way of being at home, a kind of biological authenticity, of "biological mysticism," etc. . . .the "highest" experience ever described, the joyful fusion with the ultimate that man can conceive, can be seen simultaneously as the deepest experience of our ultimate personal animality and species-hood, as the acceptance of our profound biological nature as isomorphic with nature in general.[53]

Maslow's work represents the beginning of transpersonal (trans-egoic) psychology, and many of his findings have since assisted in the articulation of transpersonal theories of psychological development. The transpersonal self-sense develops in stages "through a process of differentiation, transcendence, and integration at each stage of growth."[54] A "strong, healthy ego" is regarded as a necessary step in the growth towards a transpersonal self, but is not taken in itself as the ultimate measure of health. Strong ego identification in fact leads to a feeling of being alone in a "potentially hostile universe." At this point it is important to develop what Karen Horney calls a "real" or existential self as opposed to a "pseudo-self." Facing the existential realities that confront the ego and living in openness to life's possibilities characterize this stage. The real existential self is able to move on to the next stages of "expanded self-concept": the self goes through further and further levels of differentiation, transcendence and integration, at each step developing a more inclusive representation of self. "Fixation at any stage of development can be regarded as a disturbance in normal patterns of growth."[55]

The above description of transpersonal development has been very brief, however a parallel to Shepard's model of development should be apparent. As well, Livingston's comments about the hegemony of the "individual self" also find a home in transpersonal theory as a "fixation" of the individual at the egoic stage of development. What is absent from most transpersonal theorizing, despite Maslow's encouraging words, is a sense of human belonging in nature. In fact anthropocentism runs through most of transpersonal psychology, and for this reason Warwick Fox suggests that transpersonal psychology needs to be "ecologized"--as 'ecology' likewise needs to be "psychologized."

Frances Vaughan has noted that all mental illness may be regarded fundamentally as a "mistaken perception of self."[56] Shepard, Searles, Evernden, Cobb, Livingston, and Fox have likewise pointed to a 'mistaken' sense of self that ignores the innate embeddedness of humans in nature, and which leads to destructive behaviours toward the nonhuman. Perhaps through the meeting of disciplines that Fox proposes a clearer view of the relationship between self-conception and the ecological crisis will show itself.

Notes

1. Sigmund Freud, "One of the Difficulties of Psycho-analysis," translated by Joan Riviere, in **Collected Papers, Volume 4** (London: Hogarth Press, 1946), pp. 351-352.

2. Sigmund Freud, **Civilization and Its Discontents**, translated and edited by James Strachey, (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1961).

3. Freud did however regard civilization as both inevitable and ulimately desirable.

4. Gifford Pinchot, **Breaking New Ground** (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1947).

5. Although nature is usually assumed to contain only material resources, some arguments have emerged recently which view nature as a *psychological* resource. These will be discussed below.

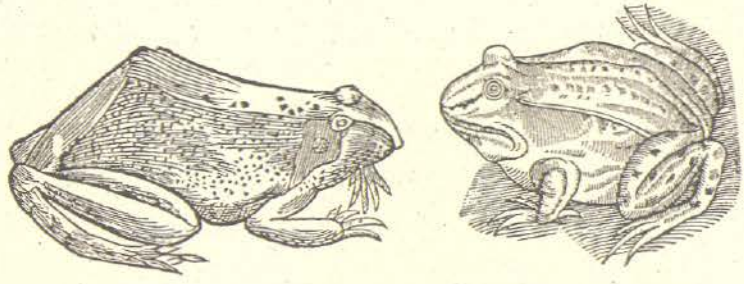
6. Harold F. Searles, **The Nonhuman Environment: In Normal Development and in Schizophrenia** (New York: International Universities Press, 1960), p. 23.

7. Clare Cooper Marcus, "Remembrance of Landscape Past," **Landscape** 22:3 pp. 35-43.

8. Ibid.

9. Grady Clay. "Remembered Landscapes," in **The Subversive Science,** eds. Paul Shepard and Daniel McKinley, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1969), pp. 133-138.

10. Edith Cobb, "The Ecology of Imagination in Childhood." in **The Subversive Science**, eds. Paul Shepard and Daniel McKinley, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1969), pp. 122-132.



11. Ibid.

12. The "refuge argument" is one aspect of what Fox calls the "psychogenetic argument", the other being an argument for the need to "bond" with wild nature. For the purposes of this essay the psychogenetic argument is divided into its "refuge" and "bonding" components, the latter being relevant to the "nonhuman in relationship with the human" category.

13. Warwick Fox, **Toward a Transpersonal Ecology** (Boston: Shambhala, 1990), pp. 155-157.

14. Rachel Kaplan and Stephen Kaplan, **The Experience of Nature; A Psychological Perspective** (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. ix.

15. Ibid., p. 197.

16. Ibid., p. 198.

17. Harold F. Searles, **The Nonhuman Environment: In Normal Development and in Schizophrenia** (New York: International Universities Press, 1960).

18. Ibid., pp. 5-6.

19. Ibid., p. 19.

20. Ibid., p. 30.

21. Ibid., p. 396.

22. Ibid., p. 104.

23. Harold F. Searles, "Unconscious Processes in Relation to the Environmental Crisis," **Psychoanalytical Review** 59, p. 368.

24. Searles,**The Nonhuman Environment: In Normal Development and in Schizophrenia**, p. 77 and p. 55.

25. Neil Evernden, **The Natural Alien: Humankind and Environment** (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), p. 133.

26. Ibid., p. 134.

27. Ibid., p. 135.

28. Ibid., p. 136.

29. Ibid.

30. Paul Shepard, **The Tender Carnivore and the Sacred Game** (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973).

31. Paul Shepard, **Thinking Animals** (New York: Viking, 1978). Material is also drawn here from a later article by Paul Shepard, "The Ark of the Mind," **Parabola** 8:2, which summarizes much of Shepard's 'animal' argument.

32. In the sense that wilderness may be 'used' by humans to foster healthy psychological development, Shepard's case is what Warwick Fox would call a "psychogenetic argument." That is, it treats wilderness as a psychological resource. Even Shepard admits at one point that his "human growth and thought" argument for the preservation of animals is "shamelessly selfish," although "it must embrace nature and charity." See Shepard, **Thinking Animals**, p. 249. In another sense, however, the human psychological 'need' for wilderness is simply part of being human, not some shamelessly selfish impulse. In this sense all species have 'needs.' It would be absurd, for example, to call a bird selfish for needing a tree in which to build a nest. What separates Shepard's arguments from those of the Kaplans' is his emphasis on a mature relatedness or bonding with the nonhuman, rather than on its therapeutic value.

33. Shepard, **Thinking Animals**, p. 249.

34. Ibid., p. 24.

35. "That children are interested in animals seems self-evident...one of those 'givens' which in the past has not aroused the curiosity of psychologists." See Shepard, **Thinking Animals**, p. 59.

36. Paul Shepard, "The Ark of the Mind." p. 59.

37. Shepard, **Thinking Animals**, p. 189.

38. Paul Shepard, **Nature and Madness** (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1982).

39. Ibid., p. ix.

40. Ibid., p. 6.

41. see note #31.

42. Shepard, **Nature and Madness**, p. 112.

43. Ibid., p. 108.

44. Ibid., p. 110.

45. Ibid., p. 71.

46. Ibid,, pp. 129-130.

47. Ibid., p. 129.

48. Paul Shepard, "Ecology and Man--A Viewpoint," in **The Subversive Science**, eds. Paul Shepard and Daniel McKinley (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1969), p. 2 and p. 1.

49. This is a question that has raised some debate in ecophilosophical circles. See, for example, Peter Reed, "Man Apart: An Alternative to the Self-Realization Approach," **Environmental Ethics**, 11, pp. 53-69.

50. John Livingston, "Ethics as Prosthetics," in **Environmental Ethics: Philosophical and Policy Perspectives, Vol. 1**, edited by Philip P. Hanson, (Burnaby, B.C.: Institute for Humanities/SFU Publications, 1986), pp. 73-74.

51. Livingston is not arguing for an abandonment of the concept of the individual or of individual self-consciousness. He is instead arguing that the inability to experience *other* levels of self is problematic in our dealings within the biosphere. See Livingston, "Ethics as Prosthetics," p.74, and John Livingston in David Cayley's "The Age of Ecology," transcript from the radio program **Ideas**, broadcast on CBC Radio (Toronto: Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 1990), p. 13.

52. Fox, p. 252.

53. Abraham Maslow, **The Farther Reaches of Human Nature**, (New York: Viking, 1971), pp. 333-334.

54. Frances Vaughan, "Discovering Transpersonal Identity," **Journal of Humanistic Psychology**, 25:3, p. 14.

55. Ibid., p. 18.

56. Ibid., p. 14.

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Stories and Rituals in the Interstices between Utopias and Apocalypses

by Adrian Ivakhiv

1

We walked along the beach, shrouded in fog, with only the sound of the waves lapping gently against the shore giving us a sense of direction. We walked slowly: I, unable to see any shapes or forms in the dense mist, held your hand tightly; you sensed the way forward, each step a mystery into an abyss, each step an eternity, where all things swirled half-remembered and all memories shimmered with the safety of their concealment.

You spoke of the world whence you came. You spoke in a language I hardly remembered. Your world had been lit from within, it had burned with an inner awareness, so all-cognizant, so complete in its exposure of itself to itself that it longed for something beyond its own embrace. There, where omniscient memory mirrored itself from millions of space and light and time illumined galaxies, there perfection sought to disturb its own fullness. That world began to hunger for dynamism, it began to rage and to quake for an other to embrace and to strive for; choked by its enclosedness, it sent you here.

You described that world to me, that world which you said I'd already forgotten. (You said we'd arrived from it together.)

You told me of the blueprints and plans we'd been shown at the time of our arrival here: the divisions into political units, the borders patrolled by armed men, the blocs and junctures, the military testing zones and fences, the trade routes and airports and superhighways, the cities with inhabitants grouped atop each other in concrete encasings that block sun and sky, the subdivision of cities into residential, industrial, administrative, recreational zones, and beneath it all the hidden intestinal passage-ways, the secret mechanics of civilization.

You recalled what we had learned about the inhabitants here, their beliefs and convictions, and about the other creatures with whom they shared their world's surface, about the increasing loss of habitable spaces, and about the physical conditions, the lengths of days and nights, the cycles of seasons and climatic change. We were warned to expect some surprises, changes and disruptions as their social orders adapted erratically and unwillingly to pressures they themselves had created. You recalled my reactions, my concern that the divided nature of this world might reflect a psychic division within its inhabitants. But we were assured that they had all come from the same place as we had, and had (like you said of me) forgotten this, only rarely, fragmentarily, seeing the shadowy angels of rememberance pass through their dimly-lit, fog-misted alley worlds.

Of all of this, I remembered little. (You explained that this was the usual course of events, this forgetting, this hollowing out of one's soul, consumed by the physical and emotional adhesion, the viscosity of this world onto its new arrivals.)

Walking further, I felt the light embraces of wavelets slipping between my toes and the sand on the shore.

2

Quick: descending
fallingforward:
oxygen surges through lungs
so swiftly--chase breaths descending
fall over atmospheric orbits, through grids and currents
encircling greatcoloured globe below--dizzy whiteness
rushing past
colours flaring outwards--shoot across suns
fall between solar winds: body pulsating dizzily
being born

Quick: impressions rush through consciousness
blurring burning speed--

what is this who is this twisting and twirling
through space through clouds
spiralling downwards through
torrents, discharges--through currents
absorbing emissions immersed in
sheaths patterwovenaround globe:

Now--bathed in light--heaviness breathing--convulsing
breathlessly in heavy air--
beating out--
breathing out--

3

We breathe. Together.

Rhythmically, heaving. We expand and contract.

We breathe as one body. Each breath as one body.

We are stone, whose molecules have begun now to shimmer and vibrate. We are wood, so contained in our movement.

Expand and contract.

Whose molecules have begun now to move, and we know that we move, nothing more. We move as only we can, a solid geometry of mass set in motion.

We begin to feel in our motion. Our members push outwards and slowly become arms and legs. We are breathing in unison. We are beginning to rock. We sway, leaning forward then back. To one side then another. Expanding contracting. We sway, breath together.

We move as we know; we know what we must; we feel what we are with one body, exhaling.

We take air, it fills us: release all in unison, one slow total motion.

4

Human history is the history of domestication, the history of the gradual replacement of the world with its simulation.

In our relationship with the world, its primary elements--earth, air, and water--did not need to be domesticated; their domestication to the biosphere took place well before our arrival. It was fire that we needed to domesticate, to steal from the gods and to swallow into our own domain, so that its transformative power would become ours, our technical genius, harnessed for the transmutation of minerals, their purification, the creation of alloys: ultimately for the creation of our new world.

Fire is the element of transformation. Unlike water, which dissolves all into the semen of living potency, fire melts bodies and delivers up the soulless ash of their substance, liberating their essence to roam ghostlike across the plains of charred landscapes. Fire's potency is contained by the very walls of civilized life, and it is from our very first moment that we begin to consolidate our control over its demons, gently at first, but knowing in our depths that the project is temporary and doomed to fail . . .

5

Still walking, you recalled those first days, days full of patient anticipation. I, as always, didn't remember them. I only remembered the first glance I had of you: I was sure I had seen you somewhere, perhaps in a crowd, and you had illumined a memory of long ago, of someone (I thought).

Days passed, and the uncertainty left me. It did not seem to matter. We passed the time together: days and nights. We walked, I remembered, through a park, the oasis of a city, and noticed squirrels holding their breaths, probing our eyes, as if to measure our intentions... One day, in a planetarium, we surveyed the skies like exiles seeking their distant homeland. Though you said nothing, the expression on your face filled me with an indefinable longing, and with a happiness that we were together then... We sat in the cafes of a large city and observed the ceaseless tides of life spiralling around us... I remember a museum in New York City, the one where the great carcass of a whale floats in the air shrouded in the comforting blue light amidst the curved walls of the hall... Or the ethereal mountains of Vermont on an early spring morning, dew moistening our lips and eyes as we stepped out into the morning newborn...

You reminded me of these times and places we had met, photographs of some past that may have been mine, though I could not know for sure. Your words wove themselves into the crystal swirls of the fog, harmonized with the wash of the waves caressing the shore.

6

For as long as any of us could remember, this branch had always been our home. Everything here had its order: from the morning sun (obscured, sometimes, by clouds or rain) to the voices below, telling us how to do this or that, and alerting us of dangers or of the arrival of gods and kin. Sometimes we would give chase to the little creatures (in earnest), or to each other playfully; and then we would move into our dance, our song. We lived our song, and sang as we knew, according to our sense of what was right at any time. But always we returned to our nests. Our tree was the center of all, and everything here had its place: the earth and grass below, the sun and sky above. The tree surrounded by space, and between the branches, sometimes, us.

It was at first not easy for us to understand, but the elders revealed one day that our tree was changing, it was growing into something different, they said, and there were appearing unexpected new twists and turns in its branches, labyrinths of them, and new insects and tiny animals. Our elders weren't sure how to interpret these changes, but they felt it was of greater importance than we could know.

We weren't aware that one day our tree would meet and intertwine with others. We did not know that to the north there were large mountains, and behind them, expansive, treeless deserts. We knew nothing of the endless oceans, on which sailed ships from distant lands, where civilizations appeared and disappeared. We knew nothing of what the ships would bring, and of what they would take from us. And yet we felt a sense of preparation, and we accepted the changes as they came.

7

Utopia = u-topos*: no-place. A place imagined, not existing. Our minds are forever imagining utopian fictions, sputtering out endless reams of daydream fantasies, artificial communities of contentment. Our daily forgetfulness generates utopias that are self-centered, superficial, trivial. When these, disturbed by groundswells of threatened emotion, break from their accustomed paths, they mutate, becoming fuel for revolutionary movements, fanaticisms. Pursued by the shadows disturbing our utopian fictions, we resort to great cleansings, purifications, smearing our responsibility out into the cosmos.*

The first of these impulses compels us to pursue those glimpses of allowable utopia; the second coerces us into its karmic cycles of bloodletting. Both arise out of a partial recognition of beauty. We, creatures unnaturally sensitive to beauty, find it unbearable to live with the tension of a universe so rich with magnificence, which we, finite creatures, cannot contain within ourselves, cannot consume into the costumes of identity we construct as shields against the ceaseless pressure of life's ambiguity.

Between the polarized pulse of utopia and apocalypse, this current that presses forward history's march, there are eddies of light, little pockets of air, tiny yet immeasurable rises that momentarily illuminate all, then slip out of the embraces of explanations.

8

You stand, surrounded on all sides by sand. Before you stands a circle of mirrors. As you observe, their metal glows as if lit by flame, and each becomes for you a window.

In the first you see a fool. A marionette. The wheels of fortune spin by, and the fool lifts his first foot forward in blessed unawareness of the currents that carry him and the winds that blow him in all directions.

In the second - the moon. Reflecting the sun, he sends light into the darkness below. Beneath it, two lovers dissolve into each other.

In the third - apocalypse. A world existing side by side with ours, always on the threshold of chaos. The tower in the moment of its falling. Thunders of confusion echo through eternity.

In the fourth - a temple. Here you find a place to rest. Here the waves of chance harmonize. Here you look back onto the open wounds of the road behind you. But before you can sink into the numbness of shelter, something compels you forward, and you move on.

In the fifth - the devil. Appearing in many guises. Idols from the past, mirrors of your own inflated selves, the riches you could have had and the empires yours to build. Here you battle with your slavery. Losing, in the end, you see his face - it is you. And all fear vanishes.

In the sixth - a saint. An elderly traveller who for many years traversed his lonely and dangerous path and now gives freely of his grace to all who ask of it. (He reminds you of yourself in your youth.)

In the seventh - wisdom. An old woman sits weaving at a loom. Her loom is the heavens, with their net of constellations and eternal correspondences, dynamic interrelationships, forever twisting and turning like the waves of the sea, ever changing, ever transforming.

You pass through from one station to the next, or maybe through several at once. Each burns at its own rate, each subsumes you within its alchemical fire. They burn through days and nights. They burn through ages.

9

We walked on. The swollen waves now thundered against the shore and washed away all traces of our footsteps and of our thoughts and words and feelings, crashed around us swooshing and sliding from left to right and right to left, this ceaseless immensity, and we listened, and we spoke to each other, wordlessly. I felt the beat of your heart, irregular, and the rhythm of your breath, shorter now, as you panted, and coughed, as had become your custom these past days, though the lightness of your soul and your calm quietude exuded a warmth that told me that it did not matter, that everything was as it must and as it should be, and that it was good. And yet, I wondered, and yet, what if you left me, far away to some vast unknown, or to this land you spoke of, and I listened to you not knowing if these were just stories you told me to calm my agony. Your coughing stuck in my throat and choked me with a helplessness, like a dreamer pursued by assailants, who cannot run, whose body will not obey him.

And I knew that this would pass, as everything passes, as everything has always, somehow, continued. And there was a bittersweet glow extending from our bodies, as if we stood at the end of something and looked back onto its beginning, when we had entered into this world, this newly-chosen home of ours.

10

The roots of our trees have intertwined, they have stumbled into each other's heaviness and woven thick collisions under the ground: like the buildings of a city fused thickly by their networks of electrical cable and sewer and traffic pipeline and alleys reserved for ghosts and refuse. (And beasts.) The city has its web of constructions and technical labyrinths that pound out its lifeblood through criss-crossed corridors. It is a great living body: a devouring Machine into whose embrace we have thrown ourselves by our birth or by some other accident. (Our existence is woven collectively into a karmic cloth made heavy by the debts of countless forebears, and all of us and our bodies and worlds co-responsible, parasitically-dependent corporate mediators of the Great Machine's will: miraculously, we feed on others, as others feed on us.)

There are those who have left the Machine: in another time and place, they await the return of the icebergs. They set aside ample reserves of life's gifts into deep chambers. They encode their wisdom into stories and rituals and teach them to their children. They wait patiently, hoping that the destruction is limited...

11

Life thrusts its slithering body ever forward around itself, coils like the serpent devouring his own tail. At one end birth, at the other - death, the eternal uroboros twists and winds its flesh and blood, redigesting matter and mind and planet surface and civilizations, extinguishing the old, and making room for its successor.

The great man lies, snake-bitten, dying.

In other times and places - it is a wise matriarch; or a girl with the devil in her eyes, burning at the stake. Or maybe it is a king, rattling the golden chains of his fading power. In another instance it is a person unnoticed, or one whose day has long passed, now forgotten by all.

Civilization lies, burning.

The great man has been left alone, adrift on a floe of ice, surrounded by sea. And silence.

(In the same moment, a tiny island emerges out of the water's surface into its first gleaming ray of sunlight; a volcano erupts swallowing the population of an isle; a hundred are born, and wars toll their thousands.)

12

I can see, far off in the sky, the reflection of a great sea. From its surface rise yellow and scarlet vapours. Above it great sails hang from threads in the clouds; they rotate slowly from the wind. I see ships of many colours sailing there, and between them doves circle excitedly. In the middle of it all, like a tornado, a great wooden axis is turning, and the world revolves slowly around it: the farther away from the center, the slower it turns. From a distance I hear the wailing of sirens, from a distance I hear the cackle and moaning of lepers, stationed on some island to watch and keep count of the rotations of the world.

13

The waves have enveloped us, they surge onto us from all sides...

This is not the place where all memory resides, but rather it is the place where memory forgets itself and is swallowed up into eternity. Outside, memory had been a distinct possibility to which we had struggled. Here, the conscious individuality disappears into the endlessness of all memory...

Subsumed and overtaken now by water, immersed in the eternal ocean, which is at once the repository of all knowledge and the murky stream of all forgetting: knowledge, because it existed before the awakening of individuality; forgetting, because each temporarily illuminated silhouette of Being returns always here and loses itself...

This has always been our home. Here, all identity and solidity, all feeling and desire, passion and will, knowledge and understanding, flow into each other and dissolve into their source...

And emerge again... And disappear again...

Expanding and contracting...

Through days and through nights... Through ages...

And the rhythmic sea sways in its eternal immensity... The slow breath of aeons... Awakening and returning to its dream... The rising and the falling... The surging forth and the releasing... The swaying of trees in the wind... The burning desire and the eternal return... The crystal explosions and the long, warm silences...

Adrian Ivakhiv plays and composes music, writes, travels, and periodically interrupts these activities to "do" degrees in Environmental Studies at York University (previously, a Master's; presently, a Ph.D.).

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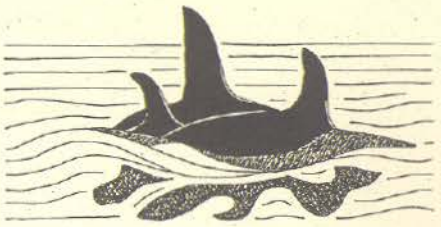

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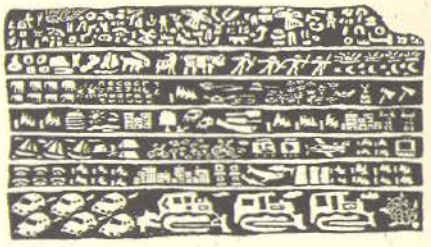

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