A Critique of Deep Ecology

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Part I

Deep ecology appears to be some elaboration of the position that natural things other than humans have value in themselves, value sometimes perhaps exceeding that of or had by humans. But which elaboration is quite another matter. Indeed deep ecology has not just been rapidly converted (in part through overuse) into a conceptual bog, but is well on the way to becoming all things to all interested parties. This is undoubtedly a drawback; it makes communication, and theoretical and persuasive use of the notion, that much more difficult, though it does not condemn an afflicted notion, such as deep ecology undoubtedly is, out of hand. For several important and fruitful notions, which have survived, have encountered very much of this sort of problem - force, mind, energy, differential, infinitesimal, to take some older examples; paradigm and culture to take relevant recent examples <1>. On the other hand, many notions no more afflicted than deep ecology, such as societism, timocracy and ungrund, have been assigned to the historical scrap-heap. These include the sort of neo-Hegelian panpsychism which deep ecology will turn out to resemble.

What is the evidence of conceptual murkiness and degeneration? The trouble begins with the introduction of the terminology. Arne Naess - rightly applauded as founder of the movement, though, as he implies, only setting down in one codification what was already in the air <2> - wrote only of the 'Deep Ecology movement' and set down what he has subsequently described as a 'Deep Ecology platform'. The suggested notion of Deep Ecology, the underlying notion that informed the loosely-knit and open-ended movement and platform, was not extracted; that extraction task fell primarily to West Coast intellectuals, and it was done differently by different proponents of Deep Ecology. The trouble was accentuated through rapid evolution of the notion. Thus Naess's account of the movement in 1983 is significantly different from the account he outlined in 1973; seven principles are replaced by six different themes, only two or so of which have much in common with the original principles <3>. And this instability in the notion has been accentuated on the West Coast, where a tangle of metaphysical and psychological themes have been added, and essential linkages with religion discovered or forged.

Although deep ecology was in origin part of value theory, and basically concerned with environmental values <4>, it has been presented as a metaphysics, as a consciousness movement (and as primarily psychological), and even as a sort of (pantheistic) religion. Popular Australian sources will help in indicating some of the spread. The Deep Ecologist, a network newsletter, sees Deep Ecology as metaphysical at base, as part of a natural philosophy of humans' place in nature (though many of its correspondents see it as a matter of deep experiences, often of a religious cast, too often decidedly anthropocentric, obtained in or through Nature). According to its manifesto, carried in each issue on its title page,

> Deep ecology is the search for a sustaining metaphysics of the environment, it represents 'a deep understanding of our unity with other beings and living processes' (Drengson); it is biocentric, not anthropocentric.

Though we shall come to modify or reject this manifesto phrase by phrase (deep ecology is not a search, but a position or platform; 'sustaining' shuld concern the environment, not the metaphysics; depth lies elsewhere than understanding; unity too is a metaphor for integration; 'biocentric' is misleadingly restrictive), the present enterprise,

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Author's note

It was with considerable ambivalence and some serious misgivings that I undertook this critique. In brief, my predicament arises as follows: while I applaud much about the deep ecology movement, and what it stands for, I cannot find my way to accept deep ecology as formulated by any of its main exponents. The reason is not merely that deep ecology is less than a fully coherent body of doctrine, with, furthermore, many problematic subthemes, and that a good deal of it is rubbish. Yet I feel deep ecology is a worthwhile enterprise (carried on by dedicated and good people), and that something along the lines of a replacement for deep ecology, green theory, is very much on the right track. Or put in terms of a different image, I agree with much of the general drift of much of deep ecology as (I think) it is intended, and with virtually all the qualified applications of deep ecology.

My attempted resolution is along the lines of critical rationalism. Deep ecology is subject to severe criticism, with a view to obtaining thereby an improved, more acceptable formulation, which at the same time meets other desirable criteria. Among these is a desideratum often lost sight of, the need for environmental pluralism. However to resort to such critical methods is already to type oneself, and to risk alienating part of the deep movement. So, in the end, when it comes to applications, to lifestyles and policies, the rational ladder is set slightly to one side: it offers only one distinctive way among many.

Though the applications of deep ecology to real-world problems are very important, we shall only reach them and not try to develop them. The final parts of the background paper on population (Routley 1984) provide one application in detail, an application expanding on some remarks of Naess (1983). And several other examples which Naess has outlined there can be similarly elaborated. Gare has attempted a major elaboration applying to science.

illustrating the degenerative spread of deep ecology, is different. Let us hasten on to the strikingly different explanation John Seed prefers in introducing and advertising his anthology Deep Ecology <5>, a person- and consciousness-oriented soufflé (drawn from Bill Devall):

> What I call deep ecology ... is premised on a gestalt of person-in-nature (an image Naess had rejected at the very outset of the enterprise <6>). The person is not above or outside of nature. The person is part of creation on-going. The person cares for and about nature, shows reverence towards and respect for nonhuman nature, loves, and lives with nonhuman nature, is a person in the 'earth household' and 'lets beings be', lets nonhuman nature follow separate evolutionary destinies. Deep ecology, unlike reform environmentalism, is not just a pragmatic, short-term social movement with a goal like stopping nuclear power or cleaning up the waterways. Deep ecology first attempts to question and present alternatives to conventional ways of thinking in the modern West.
>
> Deep ecology understands that some of the 'solutions' of reform environmentalism are counterproductive. Deep ecology seeks transformation of values and social organisation.
>
> Deep ecology is liberating ecological consciousness.... Consciousness is knowing. From the perspective of deep ecology, ecological resistance will naturally flow from and with a developing ecological consciousness (Devall, 'The Deep Ecology Movement').

Again, much of this will have to be rejected or rectified (for example, shallow or reform ecology need not be short-term, insofar it may take account of many future generations of humans; it may well not be pragmatic; shallow ecology is better pluralistically combined with deep ecology, as in Naess's original platform, than denigrated; etc.). It is to Devall, more than anyone, that we are indebted for a confusing myriad of formulations of the driving notion, several of them however extending Naess; for instance, deep ecology is first of all deep questioning; deep ecology is ultimately self realisation and biocentrism; in deep ecology the most important ideas are 'the wholeness and integrity of person/planet together with biological egalitarianism'; it is also much else - that again we shall want to modify or reject - including a new psychology and new philosophical anthropology <7>. But Devall has been much encouraged by George Sessions, and it is Sessions especially who has tried to convert Deep Ecology into a new religion, with main texts drawn from pantheism, Spinoza and Buddhism. Thus according to Sessions,

> If the promise of American pantheism and nature mysticism is to be fulfilled, it will occur in the deep ecology social paradigm which is based upon pantheism and the idea of ecological egalitarianism in principle (Ecophilosophy III).

But although Sessions refers immediately to Naess, there is nothing in Naess about American pantheism and nature mysticism. At most Naess would allow that pantheism, along with other comprehensive positions. like Christianity or ecosophy, can be an underlying base for the Deep Ecology platform.

Small wonder that John Passmore (hardly one to be philosophically baffled given his immense experience in comprehending Continental philosophy) goes astray in yet another account, in which he conveniently pushes the shallow/deep contrast into the unsatisfactory conservation/preservation boxes (of his 1974):

> Deep ecophilosophers ... are mainly interested in the preservation of species and wilderness even when preserving them is not immediately advantageous to human interest. In order to provide intellectual support for such preservation they are prepared to break with traditional Western ethical principles and metaphysical beliefs (Passmore 1983).

Again, most of this will have to be rectified, since the presentation is decidedly misleading, not to say biased. As initial explanations of the deep ecological movement straightaway show, and applications reveal, deep ecology has always concerned, and deep ecophilosophers have always been interested in, much else as well, especially in human population levels and human interference, and in quality of life and technological and organisational structures. While this of course requires breaking with some Western traditions - which are in no way sacrosanct - Western tradition is far from uniform, and there are other traditions: deep ecology can remain, and is, rooted in tradition, though much about it is as new and fresh as anything of this sort can be.

There is, in short, a serious problem with deep ecology in finding out exactly what it is, and even the clearer accounts offered differ in significant ways. But the problem may not be devastating. For many subjects face similar difficulties, philosophy for one. With movements, which is what deep ecology is often presented as, the situation is normally much worse. Consider the difficulties in saying, with much precision, what some political movement (such as green politics) represents, what some party stands for and against.

And despite the accelerating diversity of accounts there appears to be substance to the deep ecology notion. Several important interconnected distinctions, which look to be worth disentangling, are marked out, and an important group of ideas is assembled. Rather than being junked (something my conservative inclinations rise against with notions, as with the premature discarding of material 'goods'), the notions involved should be disentangled and renovated or recycled.

More generally, it would be valuable, and is essential in serious intellectual assignments, to indicate what deep ecology is and isn't - for lots of purposes, including explaining it, arguing from it, and applying it. What can be done? One resolution can be obtained along the lines of critical rationalism. The fuller formulations of deep ecology, after reorganisation into more tractable form, are subject to severe criticism, with a view to obtaining thereby an improved, more satisfactory, thinner and fitter formulation, which at the same time meets other desirable criteria. Among these is a desideratum often lost sight of in the ferment of environmental action, the need for environmental pluralism.

To begin with this rather analytic approach involves separating out the different components of the deep ecology messages, and isolating core themes of deep and shallow ecology from wider positions and paradigms which they inform. The core is (as Naess indicated) essentially normative. Fortunately the core themes have already been isolated, in a previous application of deep ecology to population theory <8>, and this work can be taken over largely intact. For the extensive remainder, the following pretty complicated sort of picture starts to emerge (see Figure 1).

Given the picture some major and serious sets of problems with deep ecology begin to appear at once. First, the value core arrived at already substantially transforms that suggested by the literature, with, for instance, biospecies impartiality improving on biospheric egalitarianism. Secondly, both the bases and the encompassing theories usually indicated (those diagrammed) are not just highly problematic but are detachable from the core and can be avoided. For example, the various, rather different, epistemic and metaphysical theories that have been proposed as underpinning deeper positions are, to say the least, very dubious. So it is fortunate that the deeper value core is independent of them all - though that is not to say that it is independent of every account, since some (plausible) story of value qualities in the natural world, and our perception and knowledge of them, has to be told, sooner or later.

But perhaps the weakest part of the larger deep eco-

FIGURE 1. SHALLOWER AND DEEPER POSITIONS, AND THEIR ACCLAIMED ASSUMPTIONS, PARTLY SCHEMATIZED

	SHALLOW	DEEP	ENVIRONMENTAL SUBJECT
VALUE CORE	SOLE VALUE ASSUMPTION	(INTRINSIC) VALUES-IN-NATURE	
	GREATER VALUE ASSUMPTION	BIOSPECIES IMPARTIALITY	
FURTHER PHILOSOPHICAL BASES	(separable theoretical underpinning)		ETHICS AESTHETICS
i. GROUND OF VALUE	FEATURES OF HUMANS	DIVERSITY, RICHNESS OF NATURAL (LIFE) FORMS	
ii. METAPHYSICAL	INDIVIDUAL REDUCTION. NATURE AS BACKDROP	IRREDUCIBLE SYSTEMS. NATURE AS INTEGRAL	METAPHYSICS
iii. EPISTEMIC	REDUCTIONISTIC/ANALYTIC SUBJECT-OBJECT ACCOUNT	HOLISTIC/GESTALT/FIELD ACCOUNT	EPISTEMOLOGY
LARGER ENCOMPASSING AND INFORMING THEORY	EMPIRICISM, IDEALISM, POSITIVISM ← DIFFERENT FACETS → OF CHRISTIANITY, BUDDHISM	ECOSOPHY, PANTHEISM, AMERICAN NATURALISM	IDEOLOGY/ RELIGION
VALUE (DEONTIC AND ACTION) COROLLARIES	EXTENSIVE INTERFERENCE FOR HUMAN INTERESTS AND PURPOSES	LIMITED INTERFERENCE AND RIGHTS THERETO	LIFESTYLE
ACTION (META-) PRINCIPLE	← OBLIGATION TO IMPLEMENT COMMITMENTS →		
APPLICATIONS (AS COROLLARIES)	To population, (individual) consumption, (individual) impact, resources, technology, pollution, economic growth and quality-of-life, culture, organisation, science, education; and to the variety of natural (and some artifical) forms, such as land, oceans, atmosphere, arctic regions, swamps, forests, soils, ...		POLICY ECONOMICS POLITICS

logical story as usually told concerns the embedding of deep ecology inn a broader philosophical theory, such as Naess's system ecosophy T or nature mysticism or whatever. What is true is that, as with shallow positions, which can be supported by most of the mainstream, more comprehensive, philosophical theories (for what they are worth), so several very different unorthodox philosophical theories can support deeper positions, for instance. Whitehead's process theory and (adaptation of) Meinong's object theory. But, for reasons we shall come to, such theoretical frameworks as ecosophy, pantheism, Christianity and Buddhism do not include thoroughgoing deep positions, but sustain rather intermediate positions, and a properly deep picture is not derivable from them. This suggests that the proposed derivation of deep ecology from ecosophy is substantially astray (and that so, more sweepingly, is the whole derivational pyramid regularly presented by Naess). So it will prove to be; the success of these derivations would depend upon importing analogues of shallowness into deep ecology.

1. Explaining the core: types of environmental positions. What distinguishes an environmental position is a certain level of constraint with respect to the environmental, the natural environment especially: not anything goes with respect to nature. In this regard environmental positions contrast with a dominant theme of Western cultural heritage, namely, that (provided it does not interfere with acknowledged people, such as property holders) people can do more or less what they like with the land, and with what grows and lives there. It is even there for humans to exploit or manage.

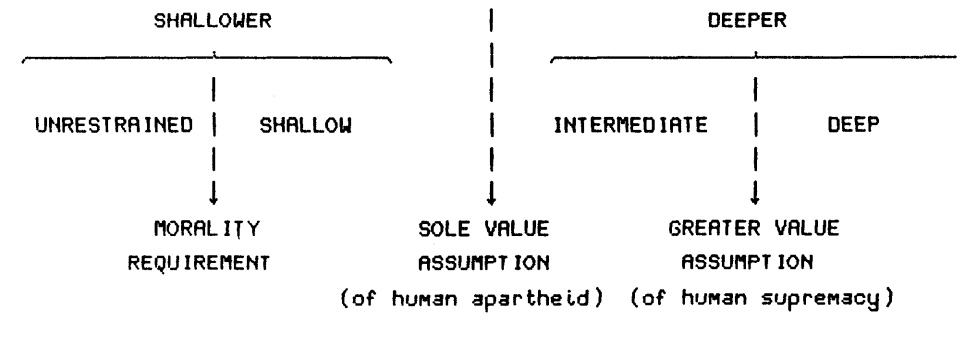
This unrestrained position imposes few or no constraints upon treatment of the environment itself. Under it there would, for example, be little compunction about using up material resources, forests, etc., immediately or even destroying them. But, because it grants such entitlements to exploitation, the unrestrained position can be excluded from properly ethical positions <9>. For it fails to meet person, place or time, a requirement which implies that persons of different races, colours, sexes or ages, or at different places or times, are not treated unfairly or seriously disadvantaged. Insofar as the unrestrained position would permit the exploitation, degradation and even destruction of all present resources and environments, it places future humans at a very serious disadvantage. The position is thus one of expediency, not morality, typically yielding, like economics, evaluative assessments based on short-term narrow local (or national) interests, rather than assessments appropriately based on long-range values.

Opposed to the unrestrained position are various environmental positions (what Leopold saw as the land ethic is just one of these). Such positions can be classified - conveniently for subsequent development but in a way that already refines and extends Naess's classification - into three groups: shallow, intermediate and deep. Unlike the unrestrained position, all these positions would conserve and maintain things - materials, creatures, forests, etc. The shallow (conservation) position differs from the unrestrained position primarily in taking a longer-term view and taking account of future humans, their welfare and so forth. It is more enlightened than the unrestrained position in taking a longer-term perspective: hence its alternative description in the literature as resource conservation. Though this conservation position is only a step away from the unrestrained position, it does pass the test of morality in that future people are not treated unfairly; so it is a very significant step.

The shallow and unrestricted positions are closely related by an important feature they share - and which justifies lumping them together as shallower positions. They are both highly anthropocentric; they do not move outside a human-centred framework, which construes nature and the environment instrumentally, that is, simply as a means to human ends and values. Thus they take account ultimately only of human interests and concerns; all environmental values reduce to these. It is in this respect especially that these shallower positions differ from deeper, less resource and management and exploitation oriented, positions.

According to deeper positions, humans are not the sole items of value or bestowing value in the world, and not all things of value are valuable because they answer back in some way to human concerns. But deeper positions differ in the weight or relative importance they assign to human concerns. According to the intermediate position serious human concerns always come first; and while other things, such as higher animals, have value or utility in their own right, their value is outranked by that of humans. The deep position rejects this assumption, and maintains that even serious human concerns should sometimes lose out to environmental values.

FIGURE 2. THE POSITIONS SEPARATED, AND SEPARATING PRINCIPLES



The watershed principle which divides the shallow from the deeper positions is the sole value assumption. According to this major assumption, which underlies prevailing Western social theory, humans are the only things of irreducible (or intrinsic) value in the universe, the value of all other things reducing to or answering back to that of humans in one way or another. This assumption is built into most present political and economic arrangements; for example, only aggregated preferences or interests of certain (present) humans are considered in democratic political choice, and likewise in economic decision making; other creatures and natural items are represented at best through the preferences or votes of interested humans <10>.

Similar assumptions are made in mainstream ethical theories. Typical are reductive theories which endeavour to derive ethical judgements from features of closed systems of humans. Examples are provided by presently fashionable ethical theories, such as standard utilitarianism <11>. According to utilitarianism what ought to be done, as well as what is best, is determined through what affords maxi-

mum satisfaction (preference-fulfilment, pleasure, absence of pain, and so on, for other satisfaction determinates) to the greatest number of individual humans. In theories like utilitarianism, the outside world of nature does not enter through direct inputs or outputs, but only insofar as it is reflected in the psychological states of individuals. Such ethical theories are appropriately described as those of apartness or human apartheid. Man is, or is treated as, apart from Nature; there is virtually total segregation. Nature orthe land enters only as a remote experiential backdrop, and onstage is the drama of human affairs and interests.

However, humans cannot be entirely insulated from their environment; for example, volcanoes affect temperatures, thus affecting climate, thus affecting crop yield and food supplies. At least limited intercourse with the environment has to be admitted as a result. So, in economics, ethics, and poiltical theory, secondary theories, dealing with linkages to the environment, have been appended (thus, for example, externality theory in economics, some allowances for 'side' constraints in more sophisticated utilitarianism, and so on). But the environment remains treated as an awkward or tiresome afterthought or backdrop, when it is considered at all.

There is, however, another approach also with historical standing, vying with (and indeed often confused with) human apartheid which can accommodate secondary theories a little more satisfactorily. That is the position of superiority or human supremacy, according to which Man, though included in Nature, is above the rest of Nature, meaning ethically superior to it. While human supremacist positions can incorporate the sole value assumption and thus remain in the shallow ethical area, they have the option of rejecting it in favour of the less objectionable greater value assumption: other things being equal, the value of humans is greater than other things; the value of humans surpasses that of all other things in the universe. This assumption allows that other objects, such as some higher animals, may have irreducible value; what it insists upon is that, at least for 'normal' members of respective species, this value never exceeds that of humans. What is generally presupposed is that other objects - animals, plants and their communities - are never of very much importance compared with humans. Though human supremacy has appeared in variants upon utilitarianism (from Hutcheson and Bentham on), where animal pain is taken into consideration along with human, Western ethics and associated social sciences such as demography, economics and political theory, remain predominantly apartheid in form. So in practice does most utilitarianism <12>.

It is the repudiation of the greater value assumption that separates deep from intermediate positions. Perhaps the most familiar example of an intermediate position <13> is that of Animal Liberation, in the form in which animals (but not plants, forests, ecosystems, etc.) are taken to have value in their own right, though in any playoff with humans, humans win. Under the deep position such an outcome is by no means inevitable; in cases of conflict of animal or natural systems with humans, humans sometimes lose.

There are various arguments designed to show that the deep assessment is right, that humans do not always matter <14>, and, more pertinently, humans should sometimes lose out. A typical one takes the following form: Some humans lead worthless or negative lives, lives without net value. The point, though not uncontroversial <15>, can be argued even from a shallow utilitarianism. Take for instance a life of pain and suffering and little or no happiness: it has a substantial net negative utility. However, some small natural systems do have net value; one example would be an uninhabited undisturbed island (a live example might be a tropical island before Club Mediterannée depredation). Now consider the situation where the considerable value of a small natural system is to be sacrificed (in a way that shallowly affords no ethical impropriety) on behalf of a set of humans whose lives each have no positive net value. For instance, the system is to be exploited, just for the continued maintenance of these humans, or for their addition (as new settlers) to an established population. Then in such circumstances, these humans lose out; the natural system takes precedence. Similarly, trivial satisfactions of humans do not dominate over the integrity of rich natural environments.

Such arguments deliver outcomes like those correctly assumed by deep ecology, or occasionally argued for on the basis of ecological egalitarianism. But such egalitarian arguments rest on very slippery ground, and, in a way symptomatic of other troubles, especially as to coherence, deep ecology tends to help itself to such results without much or any of the requisite argument (argument often not being considered in the proper style of such a nonanalytical enterprise as deep ecology).

Such arguments, designed to show that human values, interests or concerns, do not always outweigh those of other creatures or the natural environment, also expose the inadequate depth of some of those styled as 'followers of deep ecology'. For (after proper preparation) they make the wrong responses on the crucial tests of depth. A conspicuous casualty who fails to negotiate 'these tricky slopes' is Drengson, behind whose genuine ecological sensibility lies a human supremacist position with humans occupying 'a unique position ... in the scheme of things', at the summit of that old-consciousness hierarchy, 'the great chain of being' <16>. According to Drengson, circumstances

> might force us, sometimes, to choose between the life of a fish or a cow and that of a human child. We do not hesitate to choose the child. Our priorities are a result of our position in the scheme of things, with a spectrum of species (p. 7).

Not even followers of medium-depth ecology need respond in this reflex fashion, for instance where the child is seriously defective. Certainly, in a range of duly elaborated imagined circumstances of forced choice, deeper thinkers would hesitate - since such situations tend to pose moral dilemmas - and sometimes at least their priorities would be different; for example, the fish is rare and the child ordinary, the cow occupies a unique place in an important ecosystem <17>.

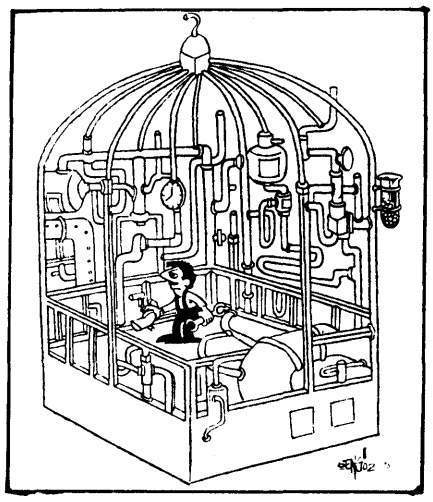
More damaging to the movement is that several of the advertised prophets of deep ecology verge on the shallow <18>. One example is Murray Bookchin, much of whose recent bringing-it-together book, The Ecology of Freedom, is a celebration of humans in very much the old (enlightenment) style. Insofar as it gets to grips with deeper environmental issues, Bookchin's material amounts to an extension of shallow ecology <19>. Ecologically Bookchin, like some of the other prophets, buys into vitalism by way of extended consciousness. Ecological ethics is said to render nature self-conscious; the mechanistic alternative is presented as deadness, an entirely false contrast. Indeed, part of the problem with the selection of prophets is that mechanism is seen as the main bogey - when it is only one of the forms metaphysically underpinning shallower positions, Cartesian dualism being another - with the result that work that simply attacks mechanism and its variants and also advocates some sort of environmental way, gets accounted deep.

In fact there is a considerable lack of discrimination among the pace-setters of the movement about who and what is accounted within deep ecology, and some unwarranted discrimination from this exclusive club. Many of the people classed as within or associated with deep ecology are shallow. And some who are excluded are not. For example (in 1975), Naess presents a long list of people he associates with the movement, many of whom are rather or even entirely shallow in their environmental orientation. Elsewhere (in 1983) Naess proceeds to identify with deep ecology several other positions or movements which only overlap it, and which may be substantially shallow (such as green politics and new natural philosophies). Some of the predominantly American lists Devall and Sessionis assemble

are not so artless. To some extent, this combined discrimination and lack of discrimination again reflects the conceptual murkiness of deep ecology; to some extent it is symptomatic of other old-consciousness malignancies, both within the notion and as regards its use.

2. Reformulating the value core: modifying biological egalitarianism. What is the excuse for so tampering with the very core of Naess's dualistic classification? The reason is now evident; from its inception the shallow/deep contrast represented a false dichotomy, along several dimensions: First and most important, the contrast is not exhaustive, as there are significant intermediate positions. The intermediate positions include all those with accounts of value (erroneously) based on perception, experience, consciousness, sympathy, interests, needs, or the like, which do not illegitimately restrict these to humans but which see the relevant ones more highly manifested in 'normal' humans than elsewhere in the world. (Of course all of these intermediate stances mistake some things sometimes of value for the whole of the value.) Secondly, shallow ecology so-called, or the shallow ecological movement, is not restricted in the way Naess and others have suggested. Naess's characterisation is very brief: 'Fight against pollution and resource depletion. Central objective: the health and affluence of people in developed countries' (1973, p. 95). But shallow ecology commonly operates on a much broader front, and for such things as parks, endangered species, etc. And on the other contrasts suggested, namely developed/developing world and the shorter-term/-long-term, there are shallower environmentalists on both sides. As to the developed/developing world problem, there stands on the one side of proposed redistribution divides, Hardin, Ophuls and the neo-scarcity theorists, some of whom propose nation-state triage <20>, while on the other side of these divides stand the new internationalists, well represented in third-world aid organisations. As to the length of term, that depends in particular on the ('moral') discount rate imposed, if any, and there moralists and (environmental) economists tend to divide.

The bursting apart of the shallow/deep dichotomy is only one of several troubles with the value core of deep ecology as it has been presented. A major source of trouble has been the biocentric and egalitarian assumptions included in earlier formulations of deep positions. So vulnerable was the main egalitarian theme - that of biospheric egalitarianism, according to which everything (alive) has 'the equal right to live and blossom', that it has gradually disappeared or been suppressed from formulations of deep ecology. So, for example, it appears neither in the later account of tenets of Naess (in 1983) nor in the Naess-Sessions formulation (in 1984). Nor is it implied by the core (despite a suggestion in the later discussion that it is, p. 6); for having irreducible value (what is really assumed) does not imply having equal irreducible value, anymore than having weight implies having equal weight.



According to Naess, a biospheric egalitarian principle, of equal value of all life, is 'an intuitively clear and obvious value axiom', at least 'to the ecological field-worker' (1973, p. 96). But empirical surveys would almost certainly not sustain Naess's claims. The principle seems generally neither intuitive nor obvious, and in several ways it appears incompatible with the wider deep ecology platform. It is not even obvious that something has value by virtue of having life. On the contrary, value seems, like yellowness, to be much more patchily distributed across the universe. Special places, for instance, are especially valuable. Nor is value always distributed on living things, but colours tombs of the dead; and sometimes it flakes off constellations of living things, for example things in excess, such as locusts or rats in a plague.

But even if every living thing were assigned value, it would not follow (in the way sometimes invalidly argued) that every thing has it equally. While it could be said that things are equal in having it, this is rather like pretending that people are equal in an inegalitarian society where all have some money - a subterfuge. Indeed proposed principles of deep ecology inform us, correctly, that some ecological items are more valuable than others. For instance, a certain sort of complexity is a virtue (Naess, 1972, principle (7)), so presumably an item with that complexity is more valuable than a simple biological item. Similarly, diversity of system is a virtue, a prime ground of value (principle (2)). The upshot appears to be that a highly diverse ecosystem is more valuable than a simplified and impoverished one.

Furthermore, biospheric egalitarianism is inconsistent with the holistic, anti-reductionistic, anti-individualistic ethos which deep ecology imports from holistic ecology (see e.g. Naess, 1973, principle (1) concerning the total-field image). To generate inconsistency, whether of values or rights or whatever, suppose that one living thing, such as a forest, consists of several other things, 1000 trees for instance, and suppose moreover that the equal unit assigned to each living thing is 1 unit. Then, by virtue of the composition of the forest, 1 unit equals 1000 units, 1 = 1000. This unit problem appears in a particularly severe form in Snyder's account of deep ecology, where 'all land deserves equal attention. Every bit of land is nature at work and at play' (see Ecophilosophy VI, p. 50). But a 1000 acre bit is composed of 1 acre plots; so again, 1000 = 1. To be sure, by restricting equality to atomic individuals, whichever they are, such inconsistency can be avoided. But it is a heavy cost to pay. It involves qualifying egalitarianism anyway to some given atoms, and it is out of keeping with the spirit of deep ecology. It is better to start again.

Analogous conclusions can be reached for 'equal rights' formulations. For one thing, equal rights are characteristically based on equal merit or equal worth. For another, arguments like those given can be rerun with rights supplanting values. As a theoretical principle, biospheric egalitarianism has to be scrapped. The immense difficulties of such a principle in practice Naess had already partially recognised, qualifying egalitarianism to equality in principle 'because any realistic praxis necessitates some killing, exploitation, and suppression' (p. 95). The extent of erosion in equality this affords remains obscure; but it could be close to total, with theoretical equality lapsing whenever conflict of rights or values loomed. Such egalitarianism would be like a maxim of honesty in principle, which applied in practice only when it was not inconvenient; that is, an empty maxim.

Whatever Naess's intended qualification <21>, it still seems to people with much practical experience on the land or in gardening, especially in places where the surrounding natural environment has not been totally transformed, that he has considerably underestimated the extent of qualification needed, and that due qualification does begin to strangle the principle. Biospheric egalitarianism in practice is for people who do not supply their own shelter or sustenance, but pass the business of ecosystem interference

and modification on to others (as they typically pass the butchery of their meat and the like on to others <22>). Even were it desirable, universal hunter-gathering is no longer possible or feasible, with so many mostly unsuited and ill-adapted humans; and even hunter-gatherers terminate the lives of many creatures - a substantial interference with their rights to live and blossom - and, more important, substantially modify their environments, thus interfering directly and indirectly with enormous numbers of living things.

Whatever rights simpler living organisms, especially ones such as bacteria and viruses, have to live and blossom, they have heavily qualified and much attenuated ones. With biospheric egalitarianism (in principle) the deep ecology movement has latched onto a principle which is both too powerful, and yet, if the 'in principle' qualification is applied so as to cover typical lifestyles of deep ecologists, a principle so riddled with exceptions as to barely hang together. But without some of the intended force of biospheric egalitarianism, deep ecology is in danger of collapsing (like many of its followers) into an intermediate position, as no other part of the platform adequately sustains its separation. Part of what is sought with the egalitarian principle - limited interference, human interference to an extent and on a scale far below that present prevailing - is already afforded a basis in the theme of values-in-nature and outside the human sphere, since interference with what is of value is (ipso facto) limited. Such a principle of Limited Interference deserves, in any case, separate formulation (which it usually gains in Deep Ecology platforms). But even so it hardly achieves the requisite separation, since intermediate positions can, and do, grant or maintain some such principle of limited or reduced interference (thus e.g. Birch, Attfield, Singer).

What is required is a positive equivalent of the separating feature, of the rejection of the greater value assumption, and therewith of the rejection of human supremacy, of the value picture of humans as always number one. What is needed, more generally, is a principle telling against the favouring of one species - humans in particular - over others simply on the basis of species, a principle of biospecies impartiality, to give it a similar grandiose title. There is some reason to suspect that, as elsewhere, a requirement of impartiality has been hardened into one of egalitarianism, that fairness, because often difficult to assess, has been mistakenly taken to involve equality. Biospecies impartiality implies the avoidance of species chauvinism, that is the avoidance of unfair treatment of items outside the given species. Because unfair, the treatment concerned lacks any sufficient justification. Hence, the avoidance of species chauvinism involved is effectively that previously explained <23> as a special case of class chauvinism. Similarly, the requirement of biospecies impartiality is a special case of the requirement of class (or natural group) impartiality, for which the arguments are the same as those for the avoidance of class chauvinism.

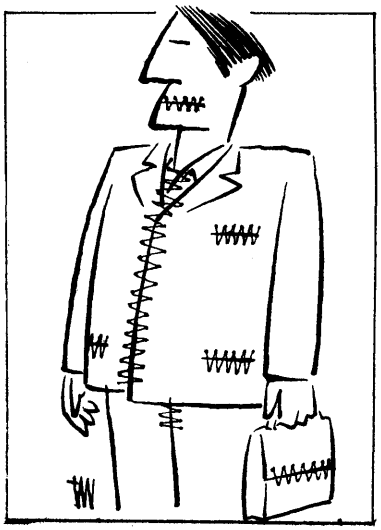
The danger of species partiality, of favouring some species, is much encouraged by a species fallacy, which is commonly invoked in favouring humans. This is the error of concluding that because a few members of the species have accomplished something of (immense) value, all members of the species therefore are (highly) valuable; all members of the species manage to free-load for the ride, obtained by a few members, so to say. The argument, once challenged, usually falls back on an argument that goes by way of capacities: the remaining members of the species have the capacity to achieve these sorts of things also <24>. But, firstly, that is not true: intelligence, skills, and the like, vary somewhat within species, and from our narrow perspective, vary considerably among humans, some of whom have no capacity for advanced mathematics or music. Secondly, it requires more than capacity: it requires circumstances, a favourable environment to exercise them (hence, in part, the folly of more humans in decidedly sub-optimal cities), together with a will and drive actually to follow through appropriately on capacities.

3. Rectifying the mistake of biocentrism. Biospheric egalitarianism is intimately tied to biocentrism, a prominent theme of such deep ecology. One of Sessions's regular criticisms, for example, is that other environmental positions are not biocentric. But the biocentric emphasis of much work in deep ecology, though a welcome palliative to thousands of years of still-persisting anthropocentrism, itself represents a mistake of the same chauvinistic type, though of vastly less magnitude. For it risks, and effects, unwarranted exclusions from the class of items of irreducible value. The impression that comes through from much West Coast deep ecology, as with that of certain insufficiently penetrating intermediate positions, is that what is important is life, raw life, life and nothing but life. This is not so: not all life is particularly valuable or even valuable at all <25>. But more significant here, much that is not alive (and not dead either) is valuable, and irreducibly so, not merely because of reflection back to things that are alive.

Many of the natural items revered by deep ecologists are not alive: mountains, waterfalls, wild rivers, sunsets, and so on. Naess and Sessions try to escape this difficulty flowing from their biocentric restriction of intrinsic value to life <26> by stretching the term 'life' beyond its ordinary and biological use to include favoured natural objects that are not alive.

> The term 'life' is used here in a more comprehensive non-technical way to refer also to what biologists (and also dictionaries) classify as 'non-living'; rivers (watersheds), landscapes, ecosystems. For supporters of deep ecology, slogans such as 'let the river live' illustrate this broader usage so common in most cultures.

Of course the metaphor is intelligible, as is 'Let the river run free' (and there is a different literal use of 'live river' and 'dead river') <27>. But a convincing theory had better not be built only on metaphorical assignment of value to inanimate things or by appeal to dubious or discredited mythologies of other cultures in which natural things are (considered) alive. For one thing, this looks too like the anthropocentricism that biocentrism is supposed to be a major leap beyond; and indeed many of the mythologies that bring out the river as alive are of this anthropocentric type. The river is alive because of the river god or river nymphs or like (nonexistent) projections of humans. Presumably then - and this should show much of what is wrong with the 'life' extension - an analogous stretch of the term 'human' can be justified by appeal to other cultures: 'The term "human" is used here ... to refer also to what deep ecologists classify as non-humans: bears, wolves, mountains, ...'.



TIGHT MONEY POLICY

The extension of spirit or the like to landforms, rivers and rocks takes even stranger form in Snyder, for whom such 'non-living beings' 'have a right to survive and blossom' (Ecophilosophy VI, p. 10). To exist, in some cases, perhaps; to survive, in the sense of going on living, no; to blossom, certainly not. These breakdowns are, moreover, not mere contingent failings, but represent category mistakes; rocks are not the sorts of things that can significantly blossom.

Given that the category of intrinsically valuable items does include things like mountains and caves that are (biologically) not alive, there can be no objection to reformulating key principles of deep ecology in a literal non-biocentric way, to include also such natural things which, though they may exhibit diversity, complexity and richness, cannot (significantly) be said to flourish or blossom, or to have interests or well-being. (These literal reformulations should also, presumably, be extended to encompass artificial things like buildings and works of art?) Clarity and informativeness alone would justify such an attempt at reformulation.

In this reformulation the first principles of most recent formulations of deep ecology are swept away. For they are narrowly biocentric. Thus Naess tells us (in 1983, principle (1)) that 'life on earth and its well-being has a value in itself', which becomes, in Naess and Sessions (principle (1)) that 'the well-being and flourishing of human and nonhuman Life on Earth have value in themselves'. It is surprising that these parochial formulations have gained ground: why life on Earth, when there is no such local restriction in Naess's original preentation? When some life elsewhere may be as valuable? Part of what they are no doubt worried about are the monstrosities scientists may turn out in test-tubes, and perhaps the perhaps evil things that have evolved elsewhere in the universe, things that may be even exceeded in demonosity and devilry by non-carbon-based (inorganic) life. The underlying assumption seems to be the highly contentious one that what (life) occurs naturally in this part of the universe is always of value, or more generally, Nature is benign and good, at least hereabouts. There seems no reason to subscribe to such dubious assumptions, no matter how widely intrinsic value is seen to be distributed, and how accordingly diluted. Moreover, it is unnecessary to go beyond local Nature, or human nature, to find evil life flourishing; human life provides examples in comparative abundance.

The nonbiocentric first principle can simply be a (deliberately vague) version of the wider values of values-in-nature theme:

(1) Much in nature beyond humans and their features has irreducible value, namely such animate and inanimate things as ...

Different valuers will fill this out in somewhat different ways, for instance with different lists of valuables. But biocentric elaboration which restricted the list to living creatures would be inadequate, and inadequate on familiar deep ecological grounds. There are several arguments for these claims against biocentrism - arguments which also tell against defenced intermediate positions, since these are contained within biocentrism <28>.

A first style of argument, familiar from utilitarianism, compares two worlds and asks for their comparative value rankings. Let one world contain a complex diverse and rich system of self-programming computers (perhaps their makers have died or been exterminated, perhaps the system simply evolved from late generation computers), and let the other world be simple uniform and poor but contain in one isolated area an elementary single celled organism. On the usual grounds of value offered in deep ecology - richness, complexity, diversity, etc. - the first world should rank above the second, but biocentrism would be forced to the reverse ranking. (Such putative counterexamples to biocentrism are designed by evading the standard assumption, generally satisfied hereabouts, that living systems are the most complex systems to be found: cf. Naess, 1973, p. 97).

A second type of argument takes advantage of the assumption (a mistaken one) that deep ecological principles emerge, indeed are derivable, from a range of different ideological positions: Christianity, Buddhism, and Philosophy are the three working examples Naess usually offers (e.g. in his pyramidal diagram) <29>. Let us take Christianity, and consider its standard account of the Creation. In this way it should become evident that Christianity, so far as it informs a value theory that is not homocentric, does not support a narrow biocentrism either. To push Christians and fellow-travellers beyond the usual homocentric ethics, the following First Man (or People) argument was used. The argument, deliberately contrasted with the Last Man argument (of EP), was also designed to show intrinsic value independently of humans. The argument is this: in Genesis, Chapter 1, it is recorded that God created the universe and all that is in it over several 'days'. Only on the final day is man introduced and given dominion. But at each earlier day, before man appeared on the scene at all, God surveyed his work and saw that it was good - not that it would be good when man appeared, but that it was good. The obvious inference is that other parts of the universe, such as the heavens and the earth and its seas, and the plants of the earth and fishes of the sea, had value independently of man. Suppose further that God had somehow been interrupted in his work before the last day and not managed to create man. The remainder of the universe would have remained good: thus value does not depend on humans or answer back only to them. As a general persuasive argument, this has a couple of serious weaknesses, namely the appeal to authority aspect, though many non-Christians would grant premises of a similar sort, and the role of God as sort of super-human. However, in a broad Christian setting, such as we are temporarily supposing, these assumptions are not damaging. Now observe that the argument has a First Creature variation, since it was not until the fourth day that God created life. The intended consequence is that a universe such as God created was already good before life appeared, and an entirely similar universe (to that of the third day) without life would accordingly also be valuable. Thus a narrow biocentrism concerning value is mistaken. No doubt other religions, including pantheism, also sustain cases against such biocentrism.

A scientific variation on the First People argument onsiders things before man, and generally before life. Consider the Earth itself. Before 4000 million years ago there was no life on earth. But still the earth was valuable and exhibited value (as in beautiful red volcanoes), and not merely by virtue of its potential. Even if chemical evolution had been blocked or gone astray value would still have been there. There is value in existence of certain sorts - though again existence does not exhaust value, since what doesn't exist can also be valuable, as for instance a splendid theory. The theme 'to be valuable is to exist' thus fails in both directions, as does its biocentric mate 'to be valuable is to be alive (or, worse, as in its anthropocentric analogue, to be human)'. These are all fallacious in connected ways. The restriction to life, rather like Moore's restriction to consciousness and Attfield's to concerns, imposes a difficult and unbelievable series of reductions straight off. And that is simply the beginning of its troubles.

The problems with the natural nonliving environment reappear, in slightly different guise, with the fabricated environment. The attempt to dispose, by some kind of reduction, of a wide range of artificial ('aesthetic') objects, such as works of art, buildings, cities, cemeteries, precious stones, etc., does not work. For these do not reduce, their value does not reduce in plausible ways, to that of living creatures. Consider, for example, landscapes of works of art and insects (such as Schell's post-nuclear republic). In any case, once again such reductionism is incompatible with the spirit of deep ecology, with the nonreductionist metaphysics <30>.

To be sure, biocentrism could mean (and could be interpreted to mean) something much weaker and fairly acceptable, for instance, that we should focus more on life and less on humans, while not excluding other natural things (or even the fabricated environment). Something like that is what Naess sometimes seems to mean <31>. But it is not what his theses say, nor what he elsewhere says, nor what the enormous emphasis he puts on self-realisation as the fundamental theme suggests. Nor is it what the West Coasters generally mean. But nothing very much stronger can be justified. And the worst excesses of biocentrism should certainly go, as they parallel those of anthropocentrism, for instance, that the universe was made, or designed, or evolved for life, that that is what, and all, that is valuable in it.

4. The grounding of the value core of deep ecology in ecosophy and elsewhere. With the rejection of narrower biocentrism, Naess's proposed derivation of deep ecological themes from his ecosophy, and in particular from the fundamental principle of (maximum) self-realisation, is cast into serious doubt. The general idea is that the grounds of intrinsic value - such (ecological universals) as diversity, complexity and richness, and also more biological attributes like symbiosis, which are what make life systems valuable - are derived from more fundamental principles, specifically from the fundamental normative principle of maximizing self-realisation. A relevant part of a block diagram of the system Ecosophy T looks like this (after Naess, 1977, p. 66):

Ecosophy T is pretty much an old-fashioned hypothetico-deductive system (on one of Naess's own accounts) <32>, disconcertingly like classical (Bentham) utilitarianism, which also starts from the top down with a similar single objective function, perhaps as follows (see Figure 4).

And as a way of trying to ground deep ecology, ecosophy T is open to a range of fundamental objections similar to those that a thorough-going deep ecology would direct against utilitarianism, namely:

01. The initial objective function, that of universal self-realisation, or total utility, is off-target.

02. The whole systemic framework, especially that of maximizing a (quasi-measurable) objective function, is passé, old dominant paradigm stuff, out of keeping with an alternative environmental paradigm.

Both ecosophy and utilitarianism are resolutions, compatible with the value core of deep ecology <33>, of the starting point of optimization theory, namely, in unconstrained form:

Maximize the objective (function)!

But what is the fundamental objective in normative matters, in value theory? Rather obviously, value. And, it becomes clear, ecosophy and utilitarianism are attempted, but faulty, applications of value:

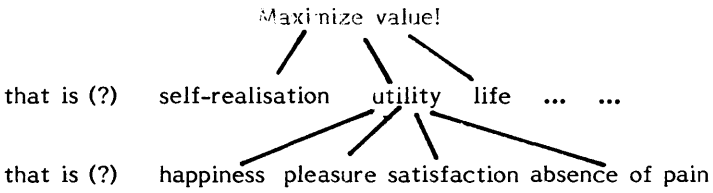
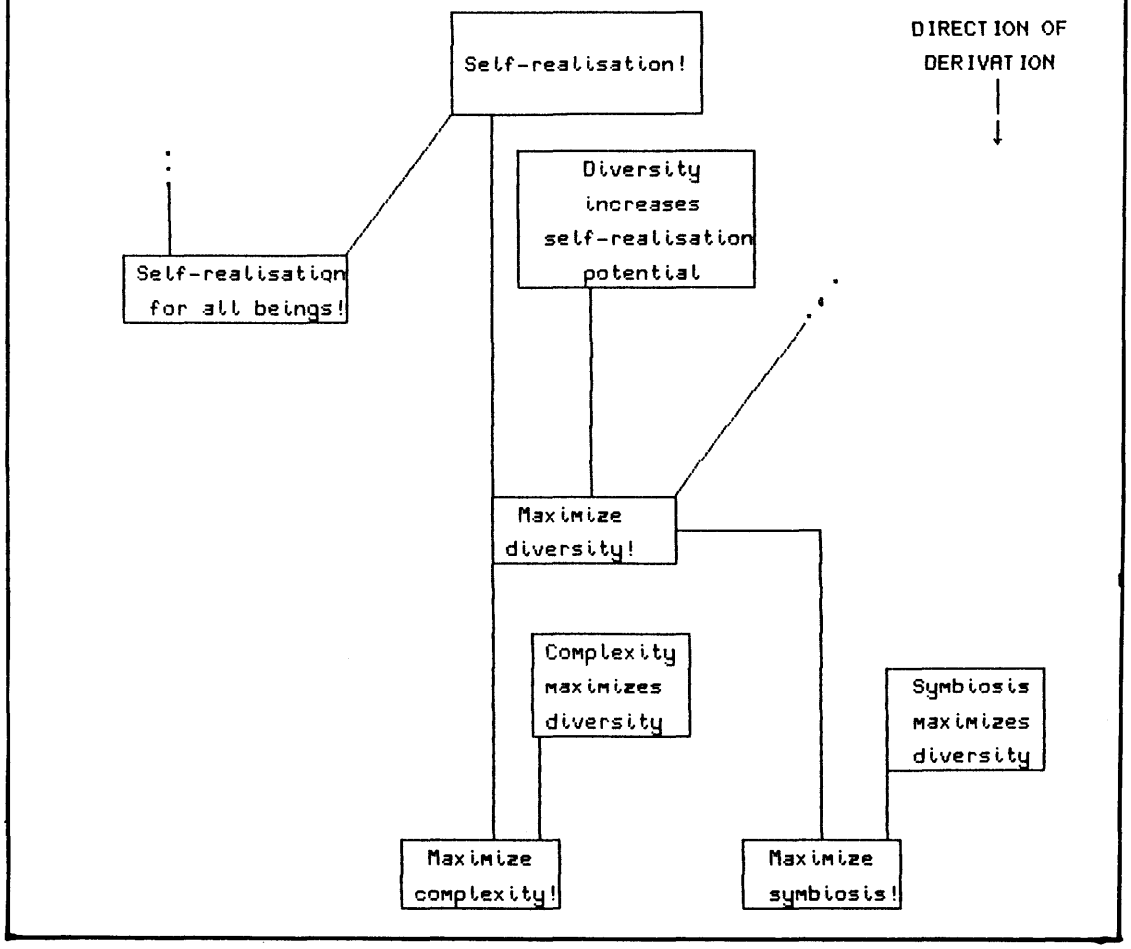


FIGURE 3: Diagram of part of the system Ecosophy T.



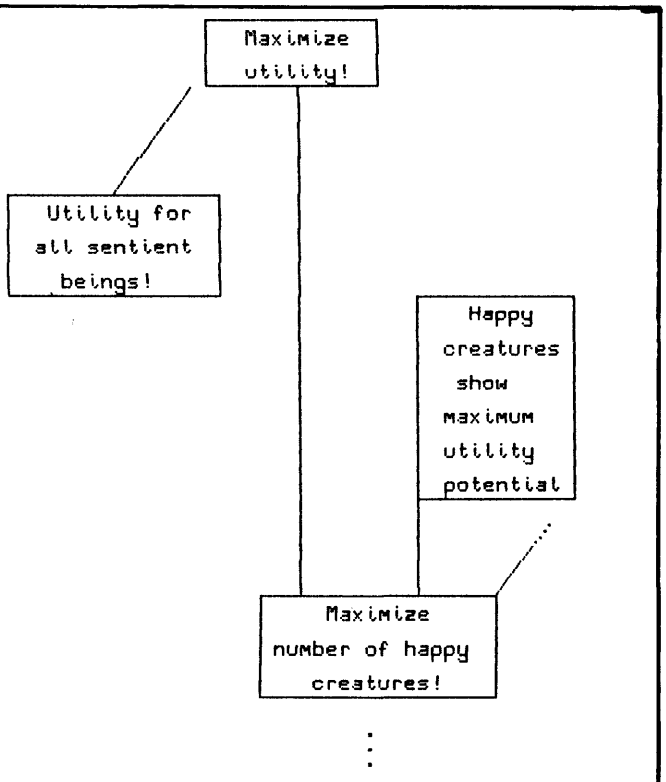


FIGURE 4: A top-down utilitarian replica T of part of Ecosophy T.

What exception can possibly be taken to the overarching directive to maximize value. That is a story which is told elsewhere <36>; but, in brief, directives are like obligations (in fact imperatival analogues thereof), and there is no obligation to try to fulfil or satisfy such objectives. Even if it would (analytically) be best for value to be maximized, there is no obligation on anyone (or on nature: God is different, He's a maximizer) to endeavour to do so; that would be extensive, and ridiculous, and probably counterproductive, supererogation. A more relaxed alternative, more in accord with the spirit of deep ecology and natural practices (though perhaps still too analytic in formulation), is

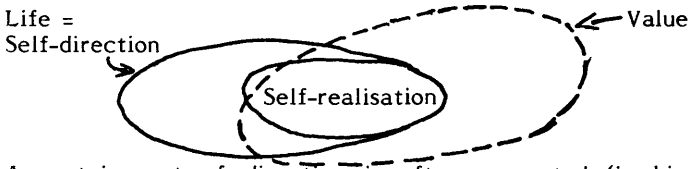
Satisize value!

That is, the alternative directive to turn out a maximum is to turn out enough.

Some of the merit of satisizing shift appears immediately with questions of population. Maximizing self-realisation appears to imply maximizing as far as possible the population of self-realisation capable creatures, and since (on usual perceptions) humans are among such creatures par excellence, maximizing (self-realising) humans. But this is a directive contrary to other tenets of deep ecology, concerning reductions in world (human) population. So some awkward back-tracking, familiar from utilitarianism <35>, has to be done. Satisizing avoids all this.

But what is wrong with the widely applauded attempt, running through much idealistic and Eastern thinking, to explicate value through self-realisation? Firstly, like utilitarian explications, such as those through happiness and satisfaction, it is much too experiential. It renders value a feature of those who experience value - roughly of valuers - rather than of what is valued, and bears value. It is like saying that colour is a matter of those (humans) who perceive colour, not of the (composition of) things that are coloured. And remove the experiences, those undertaking self-realisation, as in the days before life appears, and value disappears. And that too is wrong.

Secondly, even if self-realisation is always worthwhile and never tied to evil - by contrast with life - there are examples of value which fall beyond self-realisation, as earlier argument has revealed. The picture is as follows:



A certain sort of direction is often presented (in biochemistry texts interested in explaining life) as a minimal condition of life of an organism or system: call that direction, self-direction. Thus, deep ecology, insofar as it values (just) life, values (just) self-direction. In these terms, the contraction from self-direction to self-realisation, as in ecosophy T, looks like a mistake. A similar mistake appears to underly contractions to ecological consciousness (as in Devall); for self-realisation looks remarkably like conscious self-direction, roughly an intersection of self-direction with consciousness. (The more sweeping West-Coast-inspired conversion of deep ecology into awareness psychology, to a certain sort of exercise in self-realisation and consciousness raising, is rejected below.)

The arguments assembled thus undermine both of what Devall presents as the 'alternate norms of deep ecology', namely self-realisation and biocentrism. 'These are not proved but "felt"' (1983, p. 5). But they are not felt at least by those who perceive value beyond what lives, but rather disproved, by a series of counterexamples to both as ultimate norms.

The derivation of the deep ecology core from ecosophy is not the only derivation that fails with the fall of biocentrism. Those from Buddhism and other than exotic strands of Christianity are in trouble or fall. This is especially evident with Buddhism, which emphasizes experience and personal valuation and appears in the end, to admit the reality of consciousness only. So, as it leaves no room for intrinsic value beyond conscious experienced life <36>, it founders in much the way that ecosophy does.

The failure of suggested ideological bases for deep ecology, though it casts reasonable doubt on the pluralistic ideological appeal of deep ecology, does not mean that the movement is left without bases. Presumably suitable modifications of such difficult philosophical systems as those of Whitehead and Spinoza can be made to work; certainly adaptations of Meinongian object-theory will do. But along with expected bases, there are some less welcome and simpler systems, which will serve to ground deep ecology, especially the biocentric egalitarian form already rejected. The Benthamite model for the value core of deep ecology - just one of many consequentialist modellings - simply assigns an equal utility to each atomic life form <37>. In this way both sole and greater value assumptions are avoided, biocentrism is satisfied, and even egalitarian requirements are met (in a curious Benthamite way: bacteria are as good as banyans and bats).

The Benthamite model, and variants which assign value more widely, show that the value core of deeper positions can be combined with highly individualistic theories. Indeed elaboration of such models reveals that the value core is substantially independent of metaphysical issues concerning individualism, that to maintain the value core it is not essential (contrary to what is sometimes suggested) to adopt a holistic metaphysics involving the wholesale rejection of all forms of individualism, i.e. analyses of complexes and wholes into individual atoms.

The Benthamite model has some systemic appealing consequences, despite its atomistic basis: any forest is much more valuable (because of higher utility count) than a mere human; Brazil is far more valuable than the USA; and so on. But with its reductionist atomistic features it is in diametric opposition to the nonreductionist holistic metaphysics characteristically included in deep ecology.

To be continued in our next issue ...

FOOTNOTES

1 In case it is supposed this sort of conceptual muddiness is limited to less exact science, consider such recent notions as the anthropic principle, from physics, and nonmonotonic logic, from computer science.
2 See Naess, 1973, p. 98ff.
3 The claim is documented below. Naess's larger presentation, in his book (1974, available only in Scandinavian languages) is different again.
4 Thus, according to Naess (1973, p. 99), '... the significant tenets of the Deep Ecology movement are clearly and forcefully normative. They express a value priority system ...'
5 This is one of three different collections with this title which have been circulated or announced recently: see references.
6 See Naess, 1973, p. 95; but Naess's rejection is rejected below.
7 Devall, 1979, p. 83.
8 In Routley, 1984.
9 This is a substantial, and controversial, claim, especially since it accounts much economic activity unethical, as involving practices of expediency, not morality. For the fuller case for obligations and commitments to future humans, see, e.g., Routley, 1981, and other essays collected with it in Partridge, 1981. This section is drawn from my 'People vs the Land' (1984).
10 The points are explained in more detail in EP, where too account is taken of the shift from humans to persons (which would be important were it taken seriously and adhered to). With value for natural items goes, of course, concern and sensitivity with respect to them.
11 But the same holds for other fashionable theories, on the American-dominated ethical scene, namely contractualism and libertarianism. More broadly based historical utilitarianisms, which allow for some input from other sentient creatures, are considered below.
12 Here practice contrasts with what the theory allows. Utilitarianism is like much pollution control, where regulations are on the books or part of the law but only occasionally or never applied.
13 Other examples are considered below. Two of the four forms of ecological consciousness considered by Rodman fit here (as Rodman has remarked). For instance, falling into the intermediate range are the types of environmental positions adopted by Birch and Cobb, and by Attfield and by many other consequentialists.
14 See the arguments of EP, beginning with the Last Man argument.
15 The point is argued in detail in Routley and Griffin.
16 See The Trumpeter 1 (4) (1984), pp. 6-7. Drengson is not the only casualty; Berry, whose criticism Drengson is trying to meet, is another.
17 Differently, the child is Hitler or the President who chooses to press the nuclear button. Such cases were considered in Routley (1974).
18 See, e.g., B. Devall and B. Sessions, 'The books of deep ecology', Earth First! 4 (8) (1984). A number of these books do not penetrate very deep ecologically, or even sometimes otherwise.
19 See especially p. 344, with remarks like 'and wherever possible the wildlife they may support on their fringes'. The paragraph portrays a very human-centred (and conquered land) picture. See also p. 342, middle.
20 Such triage positions are severely criticised in Griffin and Bennett.
21 See Routley (1982).
23 In EP, p. 96. Thus the value core arrived at fits snugly into the framework of an environmental philosophy already outlined, viz. that of EP.
24 A similar defence is often tried for evil members of species, an assumption being that there are no irremediably evil creatures.
25 So it has already been suggested. For a detailed case see Routley and Griffin. Here we may seem to weave a dizzy course between shallow and deep ground. For it is usually shallow ground that nonhuman life is not intrinsically valuable. But it is often mistakenly taken to be elitist ground that not all human life is (equally) valuable.
26 See principle (1), Ecophilosophy VI, p. 5; also principle (2).
27 Some of the metaphors projecting life into natural things, favoured by deep ecologists and Zen Buddhists, are more perplexing, e.g. 'the mountain is thinking', 'the mountain walks', 'the blue mountains are walking' (Dogen).
28 For what is valued - whether, variously, rationality, consciousness, sentience, central nervous systems of backbones, (having) interests, concerns, or just being alive - is always some feature confined to (individual) living things. Thus the arguments are also directed against such ecophilosophers as Birch and Cobb, Fox, Singer, Attfield, and many others. Attfield, for example (1984, p. 16), claims that 'it is where life enters that we detect the presence of value', and tries to use this as an argument for his value atomism (but inconclusively, e.g. because of symbiosis). As some sort of empirical claim, which it purports to be, this is surely several ways astray: we? (irreducible) value?
29 Recently Taoism has been added to the list. Philosophy is short for ecophilosophy, or ecosophy, and is not to be approximated by uncongenial positions such as Humanism.
30 The spirit of deep ecology corresponds, more or less, to what gets into the wider deep ecological paradigm, sketched below.
31 Thus in 1983 he remarks, as a sort of aside, that 'life, but not only life, has inherent value'. But most of his 1983 is committed to a thorough-going emphasis on life and life conditions.
32 It is old-fashioned in other ways as well; for it is largely a biocentric adaption of neo-Hegelianism, perhaps most strikingly that of Green. In Green, as in other neo-Hegelians committed to organism and holism and opposed to materialism and individual reductionism, self-realisation is each person's goal, complete self-realisation that is, which thus includes that of other persons.
33 Devall's contrast (in 1979) of utilitarianism and deep ecology, though accurate for standard utilitarianism, fails for a broader utilitarianism. This is important beyond the core, where holistic elements appear. But his claim (in 1983) that shallow ecology is utilitarian is seriously astray.
34 See DEP, #10 and #7.
35 As presented, e.g., by Singer, where the theory is modified to maximise the happiness of those sentient beings that do exist - or some such.

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