WILD VIRTUE: EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE FOR ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES WITHIN THE TRADITIONS OF DEEP ECOLOGY

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by
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ABSTRACT

This project defends the thesis that the tradition of Deep Ecology offers a practice of education which would foster ecologically sustainable communities. This thesis addresses the problem that nearly all current forms of educational theory and practice, because they are rooted firmly within epistemologies which are infected by the anthropocentric error, foster the destruction of Creation. However, the goal of creating an education system which would foster a more ecologically sustainable relationship between human and non-human aspects of creation cannot simply involve the discovery or creation of a new foundational philosophy. Rather, this quest must be a hermeneutical task which would allow a simultaneous transformation of cultures. While Deep Ecology offers valuable insights into our current ecological crisis through its critique of anthropocentrism, Deep Ecology is not currently understood in a fashion which makes the hermeneutical task of transformation possible. Therefore, I argue that Deep Ecology should be understood as a MacIntyrian tradition complete with practices, specific types of virtue, and narrative genres. This new understanding of Deep Ecology allows the educational researcher to discern theories and practices of education which would foster ecologically sustainable communities. I conclude this project with an investigation of two extant educational programs, Rediscovery and David Orr’s Ecological Literacy, which suggests that both are versions of Deep Ecological education.
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I wish I could actually express my deep gratitude to my committee. Professor Robert Regnier, Professor J. G. McConnell, and Dr. M. R. Wilson gave me the benefit of their knowledge while at the same time keeping me sane with their wonderful friendship. I simply do not have the ability to express just how grateful and privileged I feel to have had them in my life.

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To my friends and family I can only say that I am literally stunned that you have put up with the amount of male bovine manure I have put in your lives. In particular, I want to single out Dianna Thompson and Ginny Brown, who have been two unfailing bright spots in my life day after day for five years. I owe all of you a debt I will probably never be able to repay. Thank you. One free wilderness trip for each of you on me (and a pie for Dianna)!

Finally, to the sand and the stars, to the wind and the water, and to all the ten thousand creatures--all I can say is that you are my life.
DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to the millions of creatures (both human and non-human), comprising thousands of species and cultures, which have been obliterated due to the evil actions of some members of my species. I cannot even begin to express my horror at your passing. In your name, I affirm that I re-dedicate my life to halting this sacrilegious destruction of Creation.

NAMASTE!
EARTH FIRST!
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1. INTRODUCTION

Even an academic journey must have a beginning to define its destination. I start, then, with who and where I am. I am well traveled: I have seen herds of wild animals on African plains and in Indian mountains; I have seen poverty and death and the watchfulness of nomads crossing desert scrub; I have hiked, camped, hunted, and fished on four continents. I am well educated: I have studied in a French Lycee, an English public school, various American public and private schools, two private four-year liberal arts colleges, and at this prairie university; I have seen the artistic, architectural, and cultural achievements of societies extant and extinct. I am an educator: I have taught outdoor and environmental education since I was eighteen; I have been a camp director; I am a university instructor.

Finally, though, I am scared, confused, and angry. Most of the natural areas and indigenous peoples I knew as a child are now destroyed. Today when I teach in the outdoors, I need to make sure that students are wearing sunblock to protect them from harmful rays entering our atmosphere through the increasingly weak ozone layer. Today, there are far fewer species in existence than when I was a child and dozens more disappear each day. Today, I am searching for answers. How and what should I teach to ensure that there will actually be a living Earth for my great-grand-children to play and grow-up in? What culture, what philosophy should my teaching practice be grounded in to ensure such a world? How can I come to see and understand what it is which is destroying my world?
This first chapter of my thesis introduces some answers to the questions I have just developed. I begin by laying out my thesis statement and briefly explaining its terms. I then provide an investigation of the specific educational problem to which my thesis responds and I outline the purpose of the thesis. Since my project is primarily theoretical, this outline takes the form of a literature review which locates the thesis within the field of educational theory. Chapter One concludes by providing outlines of following chapters and a discussion of the various methods of investigation used.

1.1 Thesis Statement

This project defends the thesis that the traditions of Deep Ecology offer practices of education which would foster ecologically sustainable communities. In other words, I will argue that an educational system which followed the precepts of Deep Ecology would foster the growth of individuals who would, in turn, construct ecologically stable and, thus, ecologically sustainable communities.

Deep Ecology is a philosophical orientation in the sense that it is a “personal code of values and a view of the world which guides one’s own decisions (insofar as one does fullheartedly feel and think that they are the right decisions)” (Naess and Rothenburg, 1991, p.36). Further, Deep Ecology is not a single body of theory and practice:

The values that [deep ecologists] share in common cannot necessarily be formulated in terms of a single set of propositions or expressed in a single language. They are the product of a dynamic social movement and cannot therefore be pinned down as if they belonged to a painstakingly formulated philosophy of the relationship between man [sic] and nature, or as if they formed a coherent body of doctrine. . . . Why monolithic ideologies? We have had enough of those in both European and world history. (Naess, 1988, p.128)

Yet, Naess does acknowledge that deep ecologists do, at some level, share common assumptions and beliefs about how to “conserve what is left of the richness and
diversity of life on Earth--and that includes human cultural diversity” (Naess, 1988, p.128).

Consequently, Naess and Sessions (Naess, 1988) have developed an Eight Point Platform for Deep Ecology in an effort to show what it is which people coming from Buddhist, Christian, Taoist, Marxist, Feminist, Scientific, autochthonic\(^1\), etc. backgrounds have in common when it comes to developing the ecologically sustainable ways of life known collectively as Deep Ecology. These Eight Points are:

1. The flourishing of human and non-human life on Earth has inherent value. The value of non-human life-forms is independent of the usefulness of the non-human world for human purposes.

2. The richness and diversity of life-forms are also values in themselves and contribute to the flourishing of human and non-human life on Earth.

3. Humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy vital needs.

4. The flourishing of human life and cultures is compatible with a substantial decrease of the human population. The flourishing of non-human life requires such a decrease.

5. Present human interference with the non-human world is excessive, and the situation is rapidly worsening.

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\(^1\)I use this term throughout this thesis to signify individuals and cultures who still participate in hunting and gathering types of food acquisition activities. I use autochthonic instead of “indigenous” or “aboriginal” because the latter two terms have become too linked to either racial type or location. By using “autochthonic” as a signifying term, I recognize that how a person lives within Creation is, at least in some cases, more important than where they live or what DNA they have. For instance, using this term within the field of Native American studies allows the researcher to see 1) that all Native American cultures are not the same, and 2) that an individual’s placement within a racial group does not automatically signify anything about their lifestyle, e.g., not all actions by Canadian West Coast indigenous fisherpeople are equal simply because all these fisherpeople are indigenous. See the various issues of the publication Cultural Survival for a full discussion on the significance of this distinction.
6. Policies must therefore be changed. The changes in policies affect basic economic, technological and ideological structures. The resulting state of affairs would be deeply different from the present and would make possible a more joyful experience of the connectedness of all things.

7. The ideological change is mainly that of appreciating life quality (dwelling in situations of inherent value) rather than adhering to an increasingly higher standard of living. There will be profound awareness of the difference between "big" and "great."

8. Those who subscribe to the fore-going points have an obligation, directly or indirectly, to participate in the attempt to implement the necessary change. (Naess 1988, p.130)

I will provide an analysis of these eight points, the debate which they have inspired within Deep Ecology, and their relationship to the different types of Deep Ecology in Chapters Three and Four. However, I have introduced them here to provide the reader with an initial and skeletal understanding both of Deep Ecology and of Deep Ecology's conceptions of sustainable communities and the practice and purpose of education (see in particular points 1, 2, and 3 for conceptions of sustainable communities and points 6, 7, and 8 for the practice and purpose of education).

The core of Deep Ecology is its identification of anthropocentrism as the epistemological error which has resulted in the current deteriorating ecological state of the world. Epistemology is the philosophical activity of analyzing how we humans can know if something is real or true (Rorty, 1979; Darcy, 1985). On a small scale, this "something" which is being studied may be a single object, idea, truth claim, or justified belief, e.g., how do/can I know that that apple is red? On a larger scale, an individual might engage in an epistemological study of an entire intellectual and social tradition. Typically, such an endeavor would focus on discovering if there were some fundamental or central belief to the tradition under scrutiny which could be proven to be either false or
questionable. This false belief is what is then known as an epistemological error. The discovery of an epistemological error within a tradition is almost always traumatic to individuals within that tradition because the realization that a fundamental belief is false must then call into question the validity of every intellectual and social construct based on that belief. This traumatic realization is called an epistemological crises.

Deep ecologists argue that anthropocentrism is an epistemological error, shared by many large philosophical traditions, which leads to individuals perceiving and evaluating their actions in Creation as if only humans are of value. So, for example, in anthropocentric traditions the decision to construct a dam is evaluated only by its benefits to humans, the questions of ethics are only human questions, the issue of sustainability concerns only human survival through time. Anthropocentrism is an epistemological error, deep ecologists claim, because it is a belief which denies the fundamental truth that all parts of Creation are inter-connected and inter-dependent. Thus, anthropocentrism is one foundation of the actions which have created and continue to produce the ecological destruction of this planet. Deep ecologists urge people to realize that anthropocentrism is only one way of perceiving the world, and point out that there are other ways of perceiving which recognize the inter-relatedness and rich diversity of Creation.

Within this Deep Ecological orientation, I construct the notion of “wild virtue” to form a moral framework for an education which recognizes that all aspects of Creation demand respect both as moral entities and, in fact, as teachers of a morality which fosters ecological sustainability (see points 1, 2, and 3 in the Platform for Deep Ecology). For the purposes of this thesis, virtues are to be understood in the Aristotelian sense of “states of character,” the sum of which form the total character of a person. From the Aristotelian standpoint, this character is what conceives, evaluates, and guides actions; ideally, the virtuous character aims at producing the “good” both for the individual and the
community. Points 7 and 8 in the Platform for Deep Ecology, with their emphasis on “appreciating life quality” (Point 7) and the “obligation... to participate in the attempt to implement the necessary change” (Point 8), support this Aristotelian idea of the power and centrality of virtue.

However, the concept of virtue developed in this thesis is called “wild” to highlight a fundamental difference between it and its Aristotelian cousin. Whereas deep ecologists agree with Aristotle as to the essential link between participation in community, on the one hand, and the formation of the virtuous character, on the other, they disagree with the identification of some form of the urban polis as the ideal moral community. As I shall show in Chapters Five and Six, Deep Ecology presents a convincing argument that the ideal community for virtuous development is the wild community; the community composed of all those aspects of Creation present in the particular locale in which the particular human group finds itself, where each of these aspects has a significant ability to determine at least some parts of themselves according to their own desires and inclinations. I argue that the notion of wild virtue, in contrast to the anthropocentrism of many current frameworks for education, provides a radical new foundation for understanding the interdependence of all living and non-living aspects of Creation.

When understood within this moral framework of wild virtue, the notion of “practices of education” in this thesis assumes a specific meaning. As formulated by Alasdair McIntyre (1984), “practices” refer to historically continuous and constantly evolving operations of human communities which share assumptions about what constitutes “rationality” and the “good.” However, this notion of practices is modified within the framework of wild virtue by a Deep Ecological understanding that ecologically sustainable communities are not anthropocentric. In fact, the Deep Ecological notion of bioregionalism inverts McIntyre’s anthropocentric notion of community composition by
holding that it is non-human aspects of Creation, e.g., watersheds, climates, plant and animal species, which constitute the communities within which humans are born, become educated, and die.

My thesis, then, is that a Deep Ecological education would foster ecologically sustainable communities because it would focus on the acquisition of non-anthropocentric virtues which, when taken as whole, would form individuals who lived their lives in a non-anthropocentric fashion.

1.2 Thesis Problem

The problem which this thesis addresses is that nearly all current forms of educational theory and practice, because they are rooted firmly within epistemologies which are infected by the anthropocentric error, foster the destruction of Creation. Further, this destruction is beginning to threaten the very existence of life on this planet:

If today is a typical day on planet Earth, we will lose 116 square miles of rainforest, or about an acre a second. We will lose 72 square miles to encroaching desert . . . We will lose 40 to 250 species. We will add 2,700 tons of chlorofluorocarbons and 15 million tons of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere . . . . By years end the numbers are staggering: The total loss of rain forest equals an area the size of the state of Washington; expanding deserts will equal an area the size of the state of West Virginia . . . . (Orr, 1994b, pp. 7)

Orr's figures are supported by the World Resources Institute (1993):

A recent study sponsored by U.N.E.P. found that over the last 45 years, 11 percent of the Earth's plant-supporting soils had been degraded to the point that their original biotic function . . . had been partially destroyed. This area, nearly 3 billion acres, is as large as the combined area of China and India . . . . Deforestation degrades the soil more intensively than any other activity. An estimated 40 percent of soil degradation in Asia and 41 percent in South America is the result of deforestation . . . . Deforestation in some parts of North America has geologists debating some odd long-term effects to soil surfaces . . . . The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization has released preliminary results from a global forest study that considered tropical deforestation from land clearing between 1981 and 1990. It found that the world is losing its tropical forests at the alarming rate of almost 42
million acres per year, an increase of 50 percent from an estimate made a
decade earlier. (p.324-326)

Deep ecological theorists hold that any system of education embedded within an
urban-based epistemology, whether Asian, Meso-american, African, or European in
origin, is anthropocentric and non-sustainable and will lead to such ecological destruction
(Bowers 1993a, 1993b; Martin 1992; Oelschlaeger 1991; Shepard 1973, 1982). However,
this thesis focuses its critique on those systems of education derived from European roots
(see Bantock (1980) for an overview) because they have overwhelmed virtually all other
systems of education and have become ubiquitous since the European expansion began in
the late 15th century. For the purpose of this thesis, these systems of education will be
called “Euro-progenic.”

While the vast majority of theorists argue, when they even acknowledge that
education is related to sustainability, that the educational system does not directly engage
itself in many physically destructive activities, others point to the participation of
educational institutions in activities ranging from animal experimentation to patently
destructive agricultural techniques, and claim that these institutions are on the leading edge
of the global ecological holocaust (Bowers, 1993a, 1993b; Orr, 1992, 1994b; Sarcee,
1990). Furthermore, as Orr notes:

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2 I would like to thank Dr. Keith Walker for helping me develop this term. The other major educational tradition in the world today is the Islamic. See Mohd (1989) and Rahman (1982) for more details. One could also make the argument that both the Chinese and the Japanese systems of education, though urban, industrial, and modeled after Euro-progenic systems, are sufficiently different to be placed in a class of their own. See, Cleverley (1991) for details. However, regardless of how independent or unique each of these types of education are, with slight modifications much of what I say in this thesis with regards to Euro-progenic educational practices can be applied to them as well. This is due to the fact that all three also have an urban origin and an urban focus.
It is worth noting that this [the current state of the Earth] is not the work of ignorant people. Rather, it is largely the result of work by people with BAs, B.Sc.s, MBAs, and Ph.D.s. Elie Wiesel once made the same point, noting that the designers and perpetuators of Auschwitz, Dachau, and Buchenwald--the Holocaust--were the heirs of Kant and Goethe, widely thought to be the best educated people on earth. What was wrong with their education? In Wiesel's words, "It emphasized theories instead of values, concepts rather than human beings, abstraction rather than consciousness, answers instead of questions, ideology and efficiency rather than conscience." (Orr, 1994b, p. 7-8)

Orr's observation leads to the conclusion that regardless of how innocent or guilty educational institutions are of actually participating in ecologically destructive practices, a focus on education must be central to any project of radical change for ecological sustainability because it is the educational system which supports existing ecologically destructive practices by preparing individuals to engage in them (Bowers, 1993; Drengson, 1980; Grumbine, 1988; Oliver with Gershman, 1988; Orr, 1992, 1994a, 1994b; Van Matre, 1990). This preparation consists of the implantation and cultivation in students of a mindset and a moral posture conducive to global ecological destruction. The mindset is one which perceives Creation as a type of complicated machine to be manipulated with abstract and reductionist technological skills by experts, each of whom is trained in a specific and isolated field of knowledge (Bowers, 1993; Orr, 1992, 1994b). Students who have not been taught that local conditions mandate local solutions, or that all parts of Creation are interconnected, continue to implement ecologically destructive policies ranging from the imposition of Northern European farming techniques on tropical ecosystems to the eradication of ecologically vital rainforests for profit.

Further, the moral posture advanced by most Euro-progenic educational systems perceive humans as the sole possessors and purveyors of value (Bowers, 1993; Orr, 1992, 1994b). This posture results in animals, plants, and entire ecosystems being evaluated and treated only according to their value to humans. In the realm of food production, for example, this anthropocentric moral system has led to the attempted eradication of many
ecologically vital species which have been labeled "pests." In the realm of conservation, this posture continues to lead to the creation of parks and refuge areas solely for human benefits in terms of aesthetics and outdoor recreation. Together with the abstract reductionist mindset, this morality leads to the non-human portions of Creation being treated both as a warehouse of resources to be used and managed for the gratification of human desires, and as a dumping ground for the increasingly toxic waste of human civilization.

Another important characteristic of anthropocentric morality concerns how it impacts different groups of people. As ecofeminist and aboriginal theorists point out, one of the most common and successful ways of marginalizing a group of humans is to regard its members as less than truly human. Thus, autochthonic individuals and cultures were, and continue to be, described and treated "as if they were animals," to use an often repeated phrase from the journals of various European explorers. Women, as Warren (1991) and Shepard (1982) point out in their respective studies, have been viewed and treated by dominant men as a part of the Profane Earth, as opposed to the Holy Sky, since at least the Neolithic.

The strength of this morality lies, in large part, in its religious sanction. The 1967 publication of Lynn White, Jr.'s essay, "The Historical Roots of our Ecological Crises," sparked an examination of the role Christianity has played in creating the growing ecological catastrophe. The pertinence of his examination lies in the fact that this religion has had an impact on even the secular aspects of all Euro-progenic cultures.\(^3\) It is well

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\(^3\) See Deloria (1970, 1988, 1992) for an interesting analysis of how this resulted in Native American non-participation in the civil rights actions of the 1960's-70's. Deloria's thesis here is that even though the civil rights movement was, in large part, secular, even these secular cultures of white and black America had been formed on Christian principles. Since the culture of Native America, secular or otherwise, was built on non-Christian bases, Native Americans could not participate in the civil rights movement without abandoning their basic cultural orientation, something they would not do.
documented that Christianity served to support and strengthen the anthropocentric and ethnocentric aspects of the other major root of European civilization, the Greek tradition (Glacken, 1967; Oelschlaeger, 1991). However, from the point of view of now trying to create a sustainable future, arguably the most dangerous of Christianity's contributions has been its eschatology. As Oelschlaeger (1991), Shepard (1973, 1982), Martin (1994), Snyder (1977, 1990), and others have shown, the Judeo-Christian tradition created the idea of History as a uni-linear, anthropocentric process culminating in some other-worldly (whether Heaven or other planets) destination.

This concept of History has had two major impacts on the possibilities for ecologically sustainable human cultures. The first impact of History has been the idea that we humans must successfully manage our planet in order to insure our survival only until the time of our inevitable departure. This notion has served as a primary foundation for the now prevalent attitude in Euro-progenic cultures that non-human Creation is simply a warehouse of supplies (Glacken, 1967). Even the concept of stewardship, supported so persuasively by Christian apologists Thomas Berry (1988) and Matthew Fox (1983)⁴, provides only weak support for sustainability because it retains the split between stewards, who are humans who possess souls and are thus potentially holy, and that over which they have stewardship; non-human aspects of creation which lack souls and are, thus, not quite as holy as humans (although Berry and Fox both agree that Creation is somewhat holy). Both Berry and Fox argue that this distinction is immaterial since the duty of stewardship was given to humanity by the Christian God as a holy duty and is thereby itself holy. Yet, what is to happen if humans do not perform this duty? Is this dereliction of duty to lead to

⁴ To be fair, it needs to be noted that Fox has now been cast out of the Dominican Order because of his open association with witches and radical feminists. While there is definitely support for the argument that Fox has become a panentheist, it nevertheless remains true that virtually all of his work is based on and in the beliefs of Christianity and relies on the Christian Bible, particularly the Book of Job.
some type of damnation and divine punishment? Is polluting, in other words, a major sin? What is the role of free will in all this? Does this albeit modified Christian position still hold that non-human Creation may suffer so as to allow humanity to exercise its freedom of choice in matters of salvation? And what is to happen to the bright blue prairie sky, the smooth tiger, and the pulsating jellyfish after the long-awaited Second Coming? The resounding silence (or well meaning but nebulous answers) which greets these kinds of questions seems to indicate an inability to answer them from the Christian perspective in any non-anthropocentric way.

The second major impact of the concept of History has been metaphysical: The belief in History has affected the very basis of how Euro-progenic cultures understand human existence. In other words, History has affected virtually all the Euro-progenic epistemologies. One possible site to observe this impact is in language. Several philosophers suggest that the language of a culture reflects many of that culture's basic assumptions about existence. Considering how the culture views language reveals even more about these assumptions. Consider, for example, verbs. European languages possess and use a large number of verb tenses, indicating a strong belief in the uni-linear nature of time. The sentence "Sandy shot the sheriff" claims that the action occurred in the past and not in the present or the future. Many non-European languages, particularly those of gather-hunter, or autochthonous, cultures, use only one verb tense, indicating a belief in a certain kind of timelessness or eternal present. A similar discrepancy between cultures

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5 The amount of material on this subject is very large. See Rothenberg and Rothenburg (eds.) (1983), for some interesting view-points.

6 This section is very dependent on the articles in Hymes (ed.) (1964), Snyder (1990), and Rothenberg and Rothenburg (ed.) (1983). My treatment of the subject is nowhere near as extensive as it could be. However, it does serves the purpose of illustrating a particular point which is relevant to my thesis. Readers who are interested in this fascinating topic would do well to start their reading with Hymes.
can be found with nouns. European languages possess innumerable nouns, indicating a strong belief that existence is composed of static, formed things. On the other hand, many autochthonous languages, for example Hopi, have few, if any, nouns. What Europeans view as “things” are seen by people like the Hopi as “objects-in-motion” and described with what Europeans could probably best call verbs.

Now consider how these two different types of cultures mentioned in the above paragraph view language itself. As Martin (1994) has shown, autochthonous groups see language as something sacred, something with the power to create and affect the world. Furthermore, these peoples’ language reflect their belief in what Martin calls the “mythic” nature of reality where what Euro-progenic cultures would call the past, present, and future are all found in, and help create, an eternal present. For these autochthonic groups, how well and when and to whom a story is told or an event is described somehow, somewhere affects Creation.

European languages, on the other hand, reflecting cultural beliefs in a Greco-Judeo-Christian anthropocentric view of time as History, tend not to be viewed by their users as anything other than neutral tools with which to communicate about the world. I say “tend” instead of something more definitive because of the presence, particularly over the last one hundred years, of a growing school of philosophy in Euro-progenic cultures which has begun to concern itself with the power and creative force of language. This approach to philosophy is called “hermeneutics” and its practitioners, called “hermeneuts,” are arguing for some derivative of the autochthonous view of language—namely, that language itself serves to construct reality and that we are each of us in a “hermeneutical circle,” whereby the past and the future are both reflected in and constitutive of the language we use which creates the present. As we shall see, some of these Euro-progenic hermeneuts have come even closer to the autochthonic view by
hypothesizing that communication, far from being limited to human speech patterns, must be understood as the sum total of all our actions within Creation (see, for instance, Kohak, 1984). On this view, the hermeneutic task begins to necessitate the researcher’s complete immersion within a culture and not just a familiarity with that culture’s language.

Hermeneutics has not always had such a broad scope. As Oh (1986) and Gadamer (1987) explain, hermeneutics was originally a form of theological study dedicated to the uncovering of “true” meanings in sacred texts, primarily the Bible. In the late 19th century, Schleiermacher was the first philosopher to broaden the scope of hermeneutics to include non-theological texts. Since that time, Husserl, Habermas, Gadamer, Ricouer, and Rorty, among others, have all worked to expand both the idea of the importance of hermeneutics in everyday life and the notion of what constitutes the nature of the “text” under investigation. The primary thrust of this movement has been:

the resistance within [social] science against the universal claim of scientific method. It is concerned to seek that experience of truth that transcends the sphere of control of scientific method wherever it is to be found, and to inquire with modes of experience which lie outside science: with the experience of philosophy, of art, of history itself. These are all mode of experience in which truth is communicated that cannot be verified by the methodological means proper to science. (Gadamer, 1982, p. xii)

The recent growth of the field of ethnopoetics (Rothenberg and Rothenberg (eds.) 1983) continues this struggle against the power of the scientific method and advances the realization of the importance of hermeneutics to understanding the human condition.

Generally, hermeneutics recognizes that “there are always both conscious and unconscious interests at play determining us. . . . It is quite artificial to imagine that statements fall down from heaven and that they can be subjected to analytical labor without once bringing into consideration why they were stated and in what way they are responses to something” (Gadamer, 1987, pp. 333-334). In other words, hermeneutics is motivated by the notion that there must be a reason behind the formation and use of language (and
culture, if communication is seen in its widest, autochthonic sense) and sets as its task the understanding of that reason. For the purposes of this thesis, then, hermeneutics can be understood as an unending, yet compelling, almost instinctive, quest for an understanding of the human condition through the investigation of languages and their epistemologies, where language is understood as encompassing all forms of communication.

Understanding hermeneutics in this way is useful because it clearly delimits this general method of investigation over and against several others, such as analytical philosophy, which do not recognize the importance of language (Ellul, 1964; Skinner, 1979). So, for example, Habermas (1979) and Kuhn (1970), although neither are declared hermeneuts and Habermas has, in fact, critiqued hermeneutics as it is understood by Heidegger and Gadamer (Dews (ed.), 1992; Bernstein (ed.), 1985), can be seen as part of the hermeneutical family which works to create “a self-reflective counteraction to th[e] dominant tendency of the so-called ‘culture of positivism’ (Whitty, 1974), especially in the social sciences” (Oh, 1986, p.3). This “tendency” is to see language as a mere unproblematic tool in the quest for “objective” truth (Skinner 1985). Hermeneuts argue that truth needs to be seen as “interpretation, explication, translation, or even only [as] understanding” (Gadamer, 1987, p.323). The corollary is, of course, that “self-understanding is always on-the-way; it is on a path whose completion is a clear impossibility” (Gadamer, 1987, p.330).

What does tend to separate hermeneuts from each other is their respective opinions about what constitutes language, or text, on the one hand, and about what constitutes the nature and genesis of the reason for and in language, on the other. The exploration of both these issues is central to this thesis because of the connection they have with moving beyond the current anthropocentric epistemological crises. From a hermeneutic point of view, given the fact that humans perceive, analyze, and determine action while embedded
in the necessity of being able to communicate (somehow, even non-verbally) this process to others\(^7\), any investigation of epistemologies and epistemological crises must be inescapably hermeneutic. This intimate relationship between language, epistemology, and hermeneutics also suggests a reason why Euro-progenic hermeneuts, as a group, have thus far been firmly anthropocentric;\(^8\) their submersion within a verbal language which is Historical and anthropocentric tends to blind them to the possibility of seeing everyday, and not so everyday, actions as other equally important forms of communication.

The uniform association of non-anthropocentric hermeneutical approaches to language with a type of culture which represents approximately two million years of successful, sustainable existence on Earth strongly suggests that some rigorous investigation of the possible relationship between hermeneutics, autochthonic views on culture, and sustainability be undertaken by members of Euro-progenic cultures who possess neither a non-anthropocentric hermeneutical approach to language nor a record of sustainability. This thesis represents, in fact, the beginnings of such an enterprise. Given the state of European languages, part of this investigation must be aimed at creating a theoretical space within Euro-progenic languages which will enable investigators to begin the task of determining just what the hermeneutical relationship is among anthropocentrism, culture, language, individual lives, morality, and sustainability.

As the work of Habermas (1979; and Dews (ed.) 1992) shows, it is theoretically possible to pursue a hermeneutical line of thought while remaining a stout anthropocentrist

\(^7\) Or to other parts of ourselves. Several deep ecologists are investigating the realm of psycho-analytic theory. See, in particular, Fox (1990), Glendinning (1994), and Rozak et. al. (1995).

\(^8\) See Habermas (1979; Dews (ed.) 1992; Eckersley 1992) for a classic example this. On Habermas' view, communication is language and it is what marks us off from the rest of Nature, a classic Euro-progenic anthropomorphic dualism.
with regard to sustainability (Eckersley, 1992); the issue, of course, is whether Habermas’ notion of sustainability is actually sustainable. Conversely, several deep ecologists have argued very convincingly that no change to non-anthropocentric theorizing is possible without a radical shift to some form of non-anthropocentric hermeneutics (see, in particular, Oelschlaeger (1991) and Snyder (1990)). My thesis is consistent with the latter position. I consider anthropocentrism to be the primary issue of concern within education today. However, the fundamental role that a non-anthropocentric hermeneutical approach to language and culture must play in analyzing and overcoming anthropocentrism demands that my first concern in this thesis must be to provide such a hermeneutics.

To reiterate, the general problem to which this thesis responds is that the theory and practice of the educational system derived from, and reflective of, European cultures is a causal factor in the on-going destruction of the Earth. Within this general problem, this thesis focuses specifically on how to overcome both the anthropocentric hermeneutical and the non-hermeneutical approaches to language, culture, and morality which support, manufacture, and perpetuate this ecocidal version of education.

1.3 Thesis Purpose

This thesis initiates a conversation on theoretical ways of moving Euro-progenic educational practice beyond the epistemological crises of anthropocentrism in which it is currently mired. As such, it makes a contribution to several different bodies of theory. For instance, educators have become increasingly aware in recent years of their responsibility to foster in their students an appreciation of our species' ecological impact on Creation (Orr 1992, 1994b). Furthermore, the slow spread of the hermeneutical approach into educational theory has led to this ecological impact being increasingly defined out of the traditional Euro-progenic scientific focus on the natural world to include perceived impacts
on other people, our interior mindscapes, and the culture in general. Thus, the term “environmental education,” with its focus on the “environment,” seems no longer appropriate to describe the type of education needed to foster ecologically sustainable communities. Indeed, current writers on ecological education and ecological matters in general focus not only on science but on social justice, physical and psychological health, politics, epistemology, geography, literature and language, to name just a few areas.

However, this thesis is the first attempt to synthesize the hermeneutical theory of Alasdair MacIntyre with Deep Ecology to provide a coherent theoretical alternative to the Euro-progenic educational practices, including environmental education, in use today. Because MacIntyre explicitly links hermeneutics to morality, this synthesis illuminates the fundamentally moral nature of the ecological-epistemological crisis and provides a way to overcome it. Although some philosophical writers (see, in particular, Cheney, 1993) have briefly noted MacIntyre's potential contribution to Deep Ecology, they have not yet clearly formulated how his contribution could be put to use. This thesis suggests one such application: the creation of a non-anthropocentric hermeneutics which sees communication as the sum total of all a culture’s practices. Conversely, while some educational writers have commented on the ecological shortcomings of current educational practices (Orr, 1992, 1994b; Shepard, 1982), no one has yet seen the potential which MacIntyre's work offers to the task of developing ecologically sustainable educational practices. This thesis investigates that potential.

While the literature in the field of Deep Ecology continues to grow and provide cogent, even formidable, critiques of Euro-progenic philosophical orientations (Eckersley, 1992; Oelschlaeger, 1991; Reed and Rothenburg, 1993; Sessions, 1995; Snyder, 1990), the

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9 See, in particular, the essays in Rozak et.al. (1995), Nabhan and Trimble (1994), and Glendinning (1994). Classics in this field include Bateson (1972) and Berman (1988).
task of producing a specifically Deep Ecological and thorough critique of Euro-progenic educational practices has been attempted by only David Orr (1992, 1994b) and C. A. Bowers (1990, 1993). This thesis further investigates the issue from a different, explicitly moral standpoint, which I propose to call wild virtue.

1.4 Methods of Investigation

As I stated above in discussing the thesis problem, I have been persuaded that any quest for ecological sustainability requires a non-anthropocentric hermeneutical understanding of the human condition. In other words, the acquisition and maintenance of ecological sustainability by humans requires the re-acquisition by humans of a concomitant ability to listen to and understand non-human aspects of Creation. One barrier to this approach is that almost all the literature on sustainability is solidly anthropocentric and/or non-hermeneutical (Eckersley, 1992; Fox, 1990). However, the de facto argument for the power of a non-anthropocentric hermeneutics, based on the observed correlation in existing autochthonous groups between their sustainability on the one hand and their non-anthropocentric hermeneutical understanding of Creation on the other, suggests that this approach should be more thoroughly investigated.10

A more serious problem with trying to tackle anthropocentrism with hermeneutical moves is itself hermeneutical. Probably the most prevalent concept within Euro-progenic hermeneutical philosophy is the notion of the “hermeneutical circle.” The most commonplace interpretation of this concept holds that each individual, or group of individuals, is caught within a circle of understanding composed of themselves (subjects),

10I do not mean to imply by this that all autochthonic groups are everywhere and always ecologically sustainable--they are not (see Boyden, 1992). However, the anthropological record does support the notion that as a type of culture, the autochthonic has an immeasurably superior record with regards ecological sustainability.
language, and the objects under consideration. Further, it is generally held that of these three components to the circle, language is by far the most powerful because it is that which constructs itself, objects, and subjects. According to this theory, then, not only can certain things only be understood from within a particular circle, but certain other things cannot be understood at all from within the same circle.

Within this notion of the hermeneutical circle, two possible understandings of the relationship between language and existence pose serious problems for my thesis. The first, put forward by Habermas (1979; in Dews (ed.) 1992), is that language carries within it all possibilities for good, and that bad, or evil, has only a relative existence based on mis-understanding. Under this notion, the job of humans is to work towards more perfect understandings of the messages carried within language, Habermas' Ideal Speech Situation.

The second possibility, based on Kuhn's (1970) work with scientific paradigms, holds that truth and goodness do exist separate from language (or paradigms), although it is only through language that we can come understand them, and that some languages are better than others in detecting this truth or good. These languages do not, however, meld into one another. A person within a language will begin to detect a growing discrepancy between his/her experience and the language used to describe and analyze it. When this discrepancy gets too big, this person or persons will make a "jump" to a different language. Furthermore, while Kuhn is not specific as to how, exactly, these new and superior languages are formed, his writings leave a distinct impression that each evolves out of a more primitive--because it could not provide satisfactory answers to all questions--progenitor. This stance, in addition to Kuhn's belief that only humans use language, means that his theory also carries at least a touch of the Historical belief in value-laden and anthropocentric Progress.

The Habermasian threat to this thesis is that it denies what I take to be a central
problematic: that Euro-progenic languages (and, thus, epistemologies) carry with them cultures which are destroying Creation. Fortunately for the length of this thesis, Robyn Eckersly (1992) has recently done an excellent critique of the Habermasian position to show how Habermas retains his Historic and anthropocentric position only by completely denying any significance at all to non-human creation. In short, Eckersly has shown how Habermas's understanding of the hermeneutic circle is simply another manifestation of the very problem he is trying to solve.

A more serious threat to this thesis is posed by Kuhn's theory for, if his notion of the hermeneutic circle (although he does not explicitly use this phrase) is valid, then only two possibilities exist for this project. First, if this thesis is written in academic English, then the most it could do is raise some questions concerning discrepancies between my experience and the language used to describe it: not an ignoble task but one which many, many far better writers than I have already accomplished. Second, if I choose to write the thesis in a way which might analyze and provide solutions to the problems I wish to address, and if these problems do indeed possess the nature I have ascribed to them, then, again according to Kuhn, I run the same risk as a Heidegger or a Hegel: namely, that I will have to invent and use so many new words and phrases that I will be comprehensible only to those who choose to make the leap to this new language with me. Given that one of the aims of this work is to initiate general conversation on possible theoretical movements around the current epistemological crises in educational practice, and given that conversations, if they are to be fruitful, need to take place between people who understand each other, I need to find some way around Kuhn's version of the hermeneutical circle.

So, the method of investigation I use in this thesis must do more than support and prove the identification of anthropocentrism as the source of the epistemological crises underlying the ecological destruction of Creation and the various links between
anthropocentrism and hermeneutics. It must also be of such a nature that it is accessible enough to its audience to enable those people to participate in the conversation the thesis instigates. Since this audience is composed of scholars, the thesis must be conducted in a generally accessible scholarly language.

1.5 Thesis Structure

My first task, then, is to identify a conception of a non-anthropocentric hermeneutical process which, theoretically at least, allows scholarly participation in the general conversation opened by this thesis. Furthermore, this hermeneutical process must itself be presented in such a way as to allow scholarly participation. In Chapter Two, I argue that the work of Alasdair MacIntyre provides the beginnings of such a hermeneutical framework. In that chapter, I investigate MacIntyre's understanding of the link between hermeneutics, morality and sociology, his definitions of tradition and education, and his views on the relationship between healthy traditions and education. The primary sources are MacIntyre's own work (1984; 1988). The goal of this chapter is to introduce the reader to the notion that the hermeneutical circle might be better described as a hermeneutical "spiral" whereby changes in language and, thus, in cultural metaphysics, can be understood as occurring not as leaps to new and different locations/languages, but as a progression rooted in past experiences constantly cycling through the myriad and changing challenges of life while spiraling around the brute proof of sustainability, existence. In concluding this chapter, however, I show the validity of certain criticisms of MacIntyre, particularly as they apply to his theory of traditions (Wallace, 1989; Hittinger, 1989; Annas, 1989; Frankena, 1983).

In Chapter Three, I introduce the reader to the philosophical orientation of Deep Ecology through an analysis of the works of two leading deep ecologists, Naess (1973,
1979, 1984, 1988, 1995, with Rothenberg 1989) and Fox (1991). Yet, in Chapter Four, I argue that current definitions of this philosophical position, while useful, do not provide an adequate conception of either the deep ecological community or of what constitutes communication between community members.

In Chapter Five, I show how an alternative definition of Deep Ecology, a Post-historic Primitive Deep Ecology (Deep Ecology(PhP)), can provide individuals within Euro-progenic traditions with an accessible non-anthropocentric theory of community and communication. This is accomplished by demonstrating that this interpretation of Deep Ecology meets the requirements of, and can, therefore, be understood as, a MacIntyrian tradition.

My goal in Chapter Six is to demonstrate how this understanding of MacIntyre and Deep Ecology as two sides of the same coin creates a new hermeneutical structure, the non-anthropocentric hermeneutical spiral. To demonstrate the moral and social strength of this new hermeneutical framework, I devote Chapter Six to a study of its concomitant virtue-based morality, wild virtue.

Chapter Seven explores the educational practice of Deep Ecology (PhP) with special emphasis on how it would foster sustainable communities. This investigation will focus on the two versions of Deep Ecology (PhP) educational theory and practice represented in the Rediscovery program of British Columbia and in the work of David Orr (1992). I conclude this chapter with some suggestions for further research.
2.0 ALASDAIR MACINTYRE'S THEORY OF TRADITIONS

2.1 Introduction

The goal of creating an education system which would foster a more ecologically sustainable relationship between human and non-human aspects of Creation cannot simply involve the discovery or creation of a new foundational philosophy. As was indicated in the previous chapter, the first focus in the creation of a new, non-anthropocentric and sustainable education must be the hermeneutic task of creating or re-creating a language within which many people from diverse epistemological backgrounds can talk about such a move—a language whose words and concepts will help reveal the new, alternative philosophy. The central task of this chapter is to show how Alasdair MacIntyre's notion of traditions can provide a framework for this hermeneutical work.

This chapter starts with an exploration of MacIntyre's conceptions of tradition, community, morality and sociology, narrative genre, and practice through an examination of two of MacIntyre's major works, After Virtue (1984) and Whose Justice? Which Rationality? (1988). I then investigate some criticisms of MacIntyre's position, particularly those advanced by Wallace (1989), Hittinger (1989), Frankena (1983), and Annas (1989). The goal of examining these criticisms is to provide a clear idea of the general strength of MacIntyre's position, and an understanding of some of its specific weaknesses. I chose to focus on the works of these four authors for two primary reasons. First, their arguments are frequently referred to as "significant" by both MacIntyre himself, and other
MacIntyrian commentators. Second, I found their arguments cogent, direct, and well formulated.

Why have I chosen MacIntyre's version of hermeneutics over other possibilities? Indeed, a survey of the Deep Ecological literature would suggest that Heidegger would have been a much more obvious choice (see Zimmerman, 1994; Oelschlaeger, 1991, 1992). So, why MacIntyre and not Heidegger? Why not Gadamer? or Ricoeur? First, my choice of MacIntyre in no way represents a claim that the work of other hermeneuts should not be investigated for their possible contributions to the creation of more ecologically sustainable societies. The work that Michael Zimmerman (1994) and Delores LaChapelle (1988) have done with Heidegger shows that such hermeneutical endeavors can be very productive from a Deep Ecological stance because of Heidegger's (non-anthropocentric?) philosophical belief that humans are simply the channel through which Creation comes into being.

That said, I would like to point out what it is that attracted me to MacIntyre. As with most hermeneuts, MacIntyre investigates the relationship between language and moral and political issues. However, a unique feature of MacIntyre's work is his accounting for the existence of diverse traditions and how conflict among these traditions comes about and is resolved. MacIntyre, in other words, accepts the reality of diversity in the operations of Creation. This overt acceptance of diversity to the continuation of life provides the first and fundamental link between MacIntyre and Deep Ecology. Furthermore, MacIntyre's insistence that differing moral and intellectual frameworks are manifest in specific embodied institutions within which they must be experienced in order to be understood is clearly in line with Deep Ecology's argument that the quest for ecological sustainability is a practical, moral one rather than a search for increased technical efficiency or superiority.
Very few hermeneuts, including Heidegger, place this much importance on the practical nature of hermeneutical theory.

2.2 The Traditions of Alasdair MacIntyre

MacIntyre begins *After Virtue* (1984) with an analogy which he feels describes the state of current discussions about morality. Imagine, he says, that for some reason the general population developed an anger towards science so great that they attempted to destroy it through burning texts, killing practitioners, and forbidding its instruction in school. Imagine that they were generally successful in this action to the extent that all that continued to exist of science were fragments of theories and terrified scientists living quiet lives hidden in out-of-the-way places. Imagine, further, that at some significant time (100, 200, 500 years) after this catastrophe society realized that it had over-reacted, that in fact it needed what science had to offer, and so individuals began to try and resurrect science using what few fragments had survived the persecution. Attempts follow to revive and to reform all the disciplines of science based on surviving memories and fragments. However, this resurrection actually leads to competing gangs of scientists roaming the laboratories of the world advancing rival, and diametrically opposed, theories of science each based on a particular surviving fragment of the ancestral whole. Although the language used by these competing groups is a common one in terms of vocabulary and grammar, “many of the beliefs presupposed by the use of these expressions would have been lost and there... would appear to be an element of arbitrariness and even [biased] choice in their application” (MacIntyre 1984, p.1). Since the anti-science holocaust had been so effective and so little remains of the ancestral scientific knowledge base, no appeal can be made to that original pool of knowledge for clarification. Further, since each group is convinced that their understanding of science based on their interpretation of their
fragments is coherent and correct, no group has undertaken to systematically attempt to reconstruct some semblance of the entire original field of science based on examining all the fragments together. Chaos reigns! Such, MacIntyre believes, is the history and the state of moral philosophy today, and *After Virtue* was written both to establish that thesis and provide some description of what MacIntyre takes the original language of morality to have been. *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (1988) is MacIntyre's attempt to show what form current moral argument would take if it were conducted in that original language.

At the beginning of *After Virtue*, MacIntyre points out three characteristics of the nature of current moral arguments to support his thesis about the history and current state of morality. First, since it can be demonstrated quite easily that the conclusions of each system of morality do follow logically from their respective premises, MacIntyre argues that current moral disagreement is actually taking place on the level of premise. Furthermore, the interminable nature of moral debate indicates that we have no way of rationally comparing and deciding among these premises. However, MacIntyre's second point is precisely that we do talk as if we should be able to make such a rational decision. Moral argument will commonly use a phrase or word, e.g., "should," whose "appeal is to a type of consideration which is independent of the relationship between speaker and hearer. Its use presupposes the existence of impersonal criteria "the existence, independently of the preferences or attitudes of speaker and hearer, of standards of justice or generosity or duty" (MacIntyre, 1984, p.9). Finally, MacIntyre suggests that the fact that each moral theory does indeed have a particular historical starting point strongly supports the notion that "all those various concepts which inform our moral discourse"

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11 Given MacIntyre’s insistence on the link between moral philosophy and sociology, it should come as no surprise that he believes that the chaos within moral philosophy is mirrored within general society as well.
originally at home in larger totalities of theory and practice in which they enjoyed a role and function supplied by contexts of which they have now been deprived" (MacIntyre, 1984, p.10). There is a wealth of evidence, in other words, for MacIntyre's notion that each "moral philosophy... characteristically presupposes a sociology" (MacIntyre, 1984, p. 23.) made manifest in specific and embodied institutions, practices, and ways of life, whether in the past or the present. MacIntyre argues that these three points collectively support the idea that some great cataclysm occurred in the past which destroyed the common European moral heritage within which moral arguments were adjudicated. Furthermore, from a hermeneutical point-of-view, MacIntyre argues that any accurate understanding of a culture's language, morality, or social institutions must be dependent on a lived experience of that entire tradition.

However, in order to prove his hermeneutical theory MacIntyre must now accomplish three tasks. First, he needs to establish that different moralities do indeed manifest in specific sociologies and institutions. Second, he needs to identify and give an accounting of the catastrophe which damaged the original morality (and sociology). Third, he needs to show what the original morality (and sociology) was, introduce us to its language, and show us that it could indeed provide a means of making rational choices among today's competing moral premises. Moreover, since each aspect of this project is in some way dependent on the others, MacIntyre must accomplish all three tasks almost simultaneously.

MacIntyre begins by identifying the "catastrophe" which destroyed the ancestral moral language. He argues that evidence for the date of this catastrophe can be found by looking for a point in history before which moral debate was more coherent than it is today. On MacIntyre's view, the moral language of Europe before the Enlightenment, and as far back as the Greek city-states, was just such a cohesive whole. MacIntyre argues that
the paramount philosophers of this older cultural tradition were Aristotle and Aquinas, and it is to their works that he turns to find a description of its structure. At the same time he is aware, however, that there must have been some flaws in this ancestral moral tradition for “[i]t was... the failure of that culture to solve its problems, problems at once practical and philosophical, which was a and perhaps the key factor in determining the form” of the Enlightenment revolution (emphasis in original, MacIntyre, 1984, p.36).

On MacIntyre’s view (1984, 1988), the European ancestral moral philosophy hinged on the belief that the primary goal of philosophy was to employ practical reason to determine how a person could best act to be in-line with the over-all telos of humanity, a telos based on what were assumed to be unquestionable truths, whether biological or theological. Thus, philosophy was the practice of arguing backwards from the telos both to divide human activity into those practices necessary for the achievement of the telos, and to determine the proper behavior required of people in each role within each practice. A “good” person was someone who possessed that particular character which enabled them to meet the requirements of their social role, no more and no less (for another discussion of this view of the “good” person, see Heer, 1961). This good character was built through the cultivation of certain universal character traits, or virtues, in a ratio specified by the requirements of each societal role. In this ancestral philosophical system, all behavior was viewed as a reflection of character and, thus, as moral action, either good or bad. Judgment about the quality of behavior, whether individual or corporate, e.g., that of a kingdom, or between the moral claims of rival parities, could be accomplished through examining the pertinence of each type of behavior to the achievement of the over-all telos. The cause of the catastrophe (the Enlightenment) was, of course, that this unifying telos could not adapt itself in response to the changes to the European knowledge base and culture brought on by the side-effects of European expansion across the globe.
MacIntyre, then, is not simply going to offer us a regurgitated Aristotelianism or Thomism as a solution to our current moral crises. He realizes that this older system had serious problems for it to have been attacked the way it was by the Enlightenment, and he admits that part of the job of resurrecting some form of the older system must include identifying and addressing these issues. On MacIntyre’s view, the primary flaw of the pre-Enlightenment philosophical position can be found not just in what it considered its telos to be, but in the fact that it had a telos at all. By the end of the 13th century, Aquinas had modified the original Aristotelianism by replacing its telos, Aristotle’s metaphysical biology, with a Christian one focused on the on-going Historical process of change leading to the Second Coming of Christ. However, even this Thomistic telos proved incapable of being flexible enough to handle the degree and quality of intellectual change which began to sweep Europe in the late Middle Ages. MacIntyre argues that any telos is, in fact, too static to work within, and give meaning to, the constant change which is human life. Yet, how to have a form of Aristotelianism without a telos? It was, after all, precisely the acceptance of a common teleology which provided the cohesion in Aristotelian and Thomistic thought and culture which, in turn, created the ability for widely separate members of those philosophical schools to have rational conversations about, and judge between, differing moralities.

MacIntyre is aware of this problem, and in After Virtue he posits that a static telos can be replaced with the more flexible notion of the goal for human life as a narrative quest wherein “the good life for man is the life spent in seeking for the good life for man” (MacIntyre, 1984, p. 219). While this suggested goal of life does solve the problem arising from a static telos, since “seeking for the good life” allows for a certain flexibility,

12 Unfortunately, MacIntyre’s otherwise excellent work is marred by sexist language. I have left this language intact in all quotes.
the following examination of MacIntyre’s philosophical position shows that it also necessitates changes to other aspects of Aristotelian/Thomistic social theory.

MacIntyre argues that the human experience needs to be understood as a mosaic of different responses to specific human needs in specific, yet ever-changing, historical circumstances. Groups of responses formed around specific activities (e.g., shelter building) form practices. These practices, when they are healthy, are historically continuous complex activities aimed at the creation of what is perceived by the participants of the particular practices as a specific good. The determination of the nature of this good is not arbitrary. A practice’s conception of the good must incorporate both the purported goals of the practice and a form of the practice which assures its own perpetuation.

For example, acquiring the skill to drive a nail through two pieces of wood is not a practice but a response to a need to connect the lengths of timber. Amish barn-raising, on the other hand, is a practice because it is a complex behavior aimed at the creation of a good, the protection and storage of a farmer’s produce. Further, this specific idea of the good is a result of generations of lived experience within the overall Amish tradition. Finally, the nature of the good, i.e., the activity of raising the barn and the use to which the barn will be put, works towards both the continuation of the practice and the continued refinement of the practice’s conception of the good.

This example also serves to clarify three further characteristics of practices. First, the way any activity is conducted within a practice has a moral nature; as such, it is either good or bad. This evaluation of an activity is made with reference to the overall good of the practice. Further, the moral evaluation of the activity may extend to the person doing

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13 One could also make the claim that the practice of Amish barn-raising produces several other goods, including, for instance, community bonding. Given the complex nature of practices, it follows that each practice may, indeed, have a complex range of goods. Information for this and other examples involving the Amish are based on information in Hostetler (1980) and Kraybill (1989).
the activity. So, for instance, a person would be a bad barn-raiser if, due to impatience or sloppiness, the beams s/he joined fell apart and the barn collapsed. The second characteristic of practices this example highlights is that all practices are manifest in concrete, embodied institutions and produce concrete results. The result of the practice in this example is the barn, and the embodied institution which raised the barn is, on the large scale, the institution of Amish farming or, more particularly, the institution of Amish carpentry. These institutions are embodied in the actions of the lives of the Amish themselves. MacIntyre would argue that a mere description of Amish barn-raising, no matter how detailed, must not be confused with the practice itself, but seen as a manifestation of a different practice, perhaps one of anthropological description.

Finally, this understanding of practices denies the existence of any is/ought experience whereby an individual retreats to a hypothetically neutral moral space to evaluate the moral nature of a variety of future actions based on a comparison between what is and what ought to be according to some abstract ideal. In the first place, there is no morally neutral space for a practitioner to retreat to, for every action (which includes the action of not acting) and actor is seen within the overall context of the practice and, thus, is morally evaluated. The barn-raiser who sat beneath a still uncompleted roof and pondered the moral implications of placing a queen post here or there based on an abstract notion of where a queen post should be while autumn’s first snow-fall crept over the horizon and destroyed the crops needed for winter survival could not be morally evaluated as anything except bad.

It is also questionable whether this barn-raiser would even have an abstract ideal to ponder. The idea of the good which is the focus of a practice is not an immaculately conceived, abstract notion. Rather, it is an idea which is perpetually being revised through continual evaluation of, and within, the lived experiences leading to its creation. For
instance, each Amish barn is unique because of differences in site, available materials, and the skill levels of those practitioners who participated in its construction. These differences are evaluated within, and thus affect, the creative process which leads to the barn's existence. What MacIntyre is claiming, then, is that understanding the human experience as a mosaic of practices necessitates an understanding of decision-making not as an unending series of is/ought episodes based on abstract notions of the good, but as a smooth participation within praxis whereby past experiences, future hopes, and immediate circumstances constantly interact to guide action.

Since no single practice can provide all the goods of life, first, a particular person might be involved simultaneously in several practices, and second, several practices must occur together for all practices, and practitioners, to continue to exist. This mandatory collaboration forms the community and the tradition. The community, as the entity composed of different practitioners involved in different practices all with different conceptions of specific goods, serves to determine how all these goods are to be related in such a way as to form and achieve the overall community good. The cement holding the various practices together and forming the community are certain presuppositions, most frequently a common presupposition of what constitutes rationality, shared by all the practices. The tradition is the pursuit of this coordinated conception of the good, embodied and carried by the community and its constituent practices.

Narrative genre is the language used to carry, discuss, and understand the tradition within the community. Because language imposes structure on how we think of the world, each tradition's genre structures how participants in that tradition are able to think of the world. Conversely, it is the experience of individuals within the practices which compose each tradition which construct the tradition's language. The existence of the narrative genre prevents changes in conception of the good from being indiscriminate. MacIntyre argues
that since "man is in his actions and practice, as well as in his fictions, essentially a story-telling animal," (MacIntyre, 1984, p. 216) we understand and live our lives within a specific narrative genre with a specific past. The fact that this past provides the narrative structure (words, concepts, grammar) with which we construct and make sense of our present means that it acts as a brake on the rapidity with which new ideas and story-lines concerning the good can be created. It also serves as a commonly held history of past conceptions of the good against which current, but differing, conceptions of the good (and of morality) can be judged in a rational fashion.

During a tradition's lifetime there will occur, on occasion, what MacIntyre calls an *epistemological crisis*, when a previously accepted certitude of the tradition becomes problematic. A tradition in the throes of such a crisis is marked by general confusion and uncertainty as to what constitutes proper behavior in any particular situation. Since for MacIntyre any behavior is necessarily moral behavior, any crisis is fundamentally a moral crisis. A tradition continues to exist if it can surmount such a crisis while retaining coherent and substantial links to its traditional form, language, and conception of the good.

Crises can be overcome in one of two ways. First, the roots of the tradition can be explored to see if some concept, originally aboriginal to that tradition yet previously discarded, can be re-woven into its tapestry as a curative. Second, a remedial idea, or constellation of ideas, can be transplanted into the tradition in crisis from another tradition. This transplantation is, however, rarely an easy task if the importing tradition wishes to maintain any sort of historical continuity (and, therefore, continue to exist as a distinct tradition), because the transplanted idea, or ideas, must fit within the importing tradition's general framework. Since different traditions have different histories in different specific milieus, finding an idea in one tradition which can fit comfortably in another is necessarily problematic.
The full extent of this difficulty is illustrated by the tie between community and
tradition, which indicates that at a fundamental level traditions are very localized. However,
the localized nature of communities does not mean that each tiny community has its own
tiny tradition completely different then that of its neighbors because the concept of tradition
operates at several spatial, temporal, and conceptual levels. As MacIntyre states:

Particular small-scale theories come to us for the most part embedded in
larger bodies of theory; and such larger bodies of theory are in turn
embedded in still more comprehensive schemes of belief. It is these
schemes of belief which provide the framework of continuity through time
within which the transition from one incommensurable body of theory to its
rival is made; and there has to be such a framework, for without the
conceptual resources which it affords we could not understand the two
bodies of theory as rivals which provide alternative and incompatible
accounts of one and the same subject-matter and which offer us rival and
incompatible means of achieving one and the same theoretical goals.
(emphasis in original, MacIntyre, 1984, p.42)

So, for example, the Amish community of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, has its
own particular tradition dating back at least as far as the arrival of the Amish to the area. It
is, in turn, part of the larger Anabaptist tradition which, in its turn, belongs to the even
larger Protestant tradition within the huge Christian tradition. What holds all these levels
together are several commonly held assumptions which become increasingly nebulous the
more abstract the level of tradition being discussed becomes. For instance, the image and
religious role of Mary as the Mother of Jesus is a concept which, while common to all
forms of Christianity, holds very different meanings for specific Christian groups. She is
the absolute focus of several Catholic sects, while many Protestant groups never
acknowledge her except in Nativity scenes. The hierarchical nature of traditions leads to a
situation where, on the one hand, an Amish congregation might align itself with a Mormon
congregation from Salt Lake City, Utah, in a discussion concerning the merits of
Christianity as opposed to Buddhism. On the other hand, the two congregations could
come to blows over several Christian doctrinal points. Thus, the utility of the concept of
tradition in trying to understand the human condition is dependent on a careful correlation being made between the level of community and the level of tradition being discussed. The necessity for this correlation can be seen particularly at the level of a tradition’s conception of the good, because it is here that differences most easily appear.

MacIntyre considers a practice’s good as being defined by: a) the concrete purpose of the practice; b) the necessity of perpetuating that practice; and, c) previously held conceptions of the practice’s good. While all three definitional aspects of the practice's good are relevant, the latter two determine what MacIntyre considers to be a practice's “health,” equivalent to sustainability through time. MacIntyre argues that the necessity of perpetuating a practice mandates the cultivation, in individuals involved in the practice, of a character formed by virtue, particularly the virtues of courage, justice, and honesty, since these are precisely the virtues needed to assure the continued existence of practices. To the extent that these virtues, and the character they develop, are missing, communication between individuals over the goals and procedures of a tradition will diminish or disappear and the tradition will die out. For MacIntyre, then, a virtue is a concrete aspect of character which manifests itself through actions in everyday life. Note that the location of these virtues is firmly within the practices, and not derived from any idea of eudaemonia, or the perfect life for humans. In other words, the acquisition and practice of the virtues is not done to achieve some idealized and theoretical notion of the perfect human life. Rather, the virtues are acquired through active participation in the specific practices need to live in a particular place.

The power of understanding human life as a mosaic of traditions which are each a local response to the human drive to develop the best possible formulation of the human good at that particular time, in that particular space, and within that particular tradition's history, is two-fold. First, it offers an alternative to the static teleologies of past forms of
Aristotelianism by recognizing that conceptions of the good are constantly being modified as life experiences accumulate, both on the individual and cultural level. Second, this modified Aristotelianism provides grounds today for rational disagreement and decision-making between opposing moral systems because it retains (but builds upon and improves) the original Aristotelian and Thomistic understanding about the intimate relationship between practical philosophy, lived life, morality, and rationality. However, MacIntyre insists that an understanding and evaluation of a tradition necessitates an examination of the history of that tradition in both theoretical and embodied social forms, what he refers to as an historicist approach. A codicil to this point is that this historicist approach will be legitimate only if the investigator immerses him/herself in the language, practices, and beliefs of that tradition, MacIntyre’s conception of the hermeneutical task. This is so for two reasons. First, to evaluate one particular tradition using a second tradition’s conceptions either of good or of rationality would be to automatically prejudice the case against the former since the traditions may not share similar conceptions of the two concepts. Second, there is no guarantee that one tradition's narrative genre can be adequately translated to, or be intelligible within, the narrative genre of another. MacIntyre, in fact, presents a convincing argument for an almost complete untranslatability and incommensurability of concepts between genres:

It is not that the beliefs of each such community cannot be represented in any way at all in the language of the other; it is rather that the outcome in each case of rendering those beliefs sufficiently intelligible to be evaluated by a member of the other community involves characterizing those beliefs in such a way that they are bound to be rejected. ... There are indeed large parts of every language that are translatable into every other... [however] it is precisely those features of languages mastery of which cannot be acquired from such phrase books that generate untranslatability between languages... They include a power to extrapolate from the uses of expressions learned in certain types of situations to the making and understanding of new and newly illuminating uses. The availability of this power to the members of a whole linguistic community of the type I have been characterizing depends in part upon their shared ability to refer and allude to a particular common stock of canonical texts, texts that define the
literary and linguistic tradition that members of the community inhabit. For it is by allusion to such texts that linguistic innovation and extrapolation proceed; what those texts provide are both shared exemplars from which to extrapolate and shared exemplars of the activity of extrapolation. (MacIntyre, 1987, pp. 390-392. See, also, MacIntyre, 1988, Chapters 18-20).

Does this mean that we are caught in a hopeless relativity with regards the investigation and evaluation of moral traditions? No. In the first place, nowhere in his warning does MacIntyre claim that coming to understand an unfamiliar tradition is impossible: it is simply an activity that requires the utmost rigor. Second, it is important to keep in mind that an evaluation of a tradition must be done based on the appearance or absence of an epistemological crisis as perceived from within that tradition. If the circumstances of the respective traditions under consideration are sufficiently different and neither is undergoing an epistemological crisis, then each can claim to be workably rational in its own local environment. In a similar fashion, if the traditions' circumstances are similar but neither tradition is facing an epistemological crisis then both can claim to be equally rational. If, however, the traditions' circumstances are similar, and one of them is undergoing an epistemological crisis while the other is not—or is not undergoing that particular epistemological crisis—then this second tradition is able to lay claim to a superior rationality (at least in respect to that particular crisis) and it would behoove members of the first tradition to heed the other's teachings if they wish to remain rational.

Two further points need to be made to complete this overview of MacIntyre's work. On a specifically educational level, MacIntyre alerts the researcher to the location and form of education within traditions. The cultivation of character can only take place within a craft or apprenticeship framework operating under the direction of an authority who insures continued progression towards the good. This authority is embodied within an individual as s/he acquires both a character formed by virtue and a knowledge of the practice's former conceptions of the good. It is this experience of working and growing
within a practice under the supervision of recognized elders that, for MacIntyre, constitutes an education.

However, in a related example, MacIntyre argues that while forces within practices will inevitably create communities, there still exists a specific practice of community politics. Thus, under MacIntyre's view, community politics takes place on at least two levels: overtly within the practice of politics, and covertly within and between practices. Much the same can be argued, I believe, for MacIntyre's conception of education. While there may exist an overt practice of education within a tradition, much (if not most) education within a healthy tradition with healthy practices must take place within the practices themselves. Thus, MacIntyre urges the educational researcher not to be content merely to look at and evaluate the overt practice of education within a particular tradition; an investigation of the quality (in the sense of how it contributes to the continued existence of the tradition) of education occurring within the practices constituting the tradition as a whole might very well be more diagnostic of that tradition's health.

For instance, because the Amish of Lancaster County do not allow their children either to attend modern urban schools or to progress beyond the eighth grade in rural, Amish schools, an educational researcher who attempted to evaluate the educational achievement of Amish individuals, or who tried to predict the future survival of the Amish as a whole based on the performance of Amish adolescents in the Euro-progenic school system, could not but arrive at the dual conclusions that Amish individuals are not educated and that the Amish tradition will, thus, eventually disappear because they will not be able to keep pace with a rapidly changing world. Just such conclusions have, in fact, been drawn for several decades. The problem with these conclusions is that they fail to explain 1) how the Amish consistently score at least as well, if not better, than non-Amish on standardized
education tests and 2) that apart from the Hutterites, the Amish are the fastest growing ethnic/religious group in North America (Hostetler, 1980).

While no one, to my knowledge, has tried to provide an explanation for this phenomenon with the explicit use of MacIntyre’s theory, it often appears implicitly within explanations of the Amish educational practices:

An Amish school leader provided hints of the deeper reason for rejecting progressive education... ‘With us, our religion is inseparable with a day’s work, a night’s rest, a meal, or any other practice; therefore, our education can much less be separated from our religious practices.’... The Amish felt that high school education would separate children from their parents, their traditions, and their values. Education would be decontextualized--separated from the daily context of Amish life. The Amish world, laced together by religious threads of meaning, would be divided into component parts: academic disciplines, courses, classes, grades, and multiple teachers... Professional specialists--educated in worldly universities and separated from the Amish in time, culture, and training--would be entrusted with nurturing their children. Such experts would encourage Amish youth to maximize their potential by pursuing more education to ‘liberate’ themselves from the shackles of parochialism... Amish parents would be severed from the curriculum, policies, and administrators that would indoctrinate their youth. Abstract textbooks, written by distant specialists, would encourage intellectual gymnastics that surely would turn manual labor into drudgery... In an environment that championed individuality; they would become self-confident, arrogant, and proud. Academic competition would foster individual achievement and independence, which in turn would sever their dependence on the ethnic community. (Kraybill, 1989, p.131-133)

Clearly, the Amish understand that there are two completely different types of education; one grounded in local tradition and practices and the other abstract and focused on the individual acquisition of bits of knowledge ultimately unconnected to local realities. Just as clearly, the Amish see that this second type of education, far from being neutral or providing for a level playing field for all, will ultimately destroy their culture by inculcating values within Amish children which are diametrically opposed to those of the Amish tradition, in general. Yet the Amish do want their children exposed to the outside world; indeed, a fundamental aspect of the Amish tradition is that an individual can only become a full member after experiencing the world and then freely choosing baptism, typically
around the age of twenty. But the Amish realize that the defining characteristic of this outside world, because it is now grounded in the abstract world of ideas as opposed to the concrete community, has become an inability to make such a commitment to community. Thus, the Amish feel that too much exposure to abstract education can easily lead, not only to a personal focus on mere aggrandizement, but to an actual inability to commit to any community tradition. In other words, the Amish realize that to make a decision for or against community membership a person must at least be grounded within a tradition which holds that community exists and is valuable. The Amish solution to this problem has been to establish their own rural schools. These schools, typically of one or two rooms, are built to accommodate all the children who live within walking distance. They provide a curriculum which, while incorporating information about the outside world, focuses on living well within Amish rural society. Education after the eighth grade is provided by a system of vocational schools which resemble an apprenticeship type of education in rural skills. The over-all flavor of these schools can be deduced by this description of Amish teachers:

The Amish teacher teaches with his [sic; typically Amish teachers are young women] whole life. He must be a person who has integrated his life with that of the community, for every aspect of behavior and personality is related to teaching. He must be well grounded in his religious faith, exemplifying the Amish traits of steadfastness and love of fellow man. In addition, he must be interested in education and have sufficient factual knowledge to keep ahead of the scholars. One becomes a teacher by being asked to teach, by serving as an apprentice for a specified period. After three years of teaching, a person is considered qualified by Amish standards. Teachers attend annual statewide teachers’ meetings and local meetings in their community for the purpose of lending one another support and advice. (Hostetler 1980, p. 184)

Clearly, then, the Amish would understand and value MacIntyre’s analysis of education. Their centuries-old experience as a distinct society surrounded by an often hostile human world would lead them to agree with MacIntyre’s argument that the most
important education, the education which enables the continued existence of a community, is precisely that education which occurs within the practices which constitute the community. Further, the continued existence of the Amish tradition—indeed, the continued growth of their tradition—argues that MacIntyre's understanding of the power of education inherent within practices to support traditions is correct.

The final point I wish to make with regard to MacIntyre's theory concerns the scale at which human traditions should exist. There is a clear argument running throughout MacIntyre's work that humans are social creatures with a natural (in the sense of genetic) inclination to work together in order to achieve certain goods. An important issue for MacIntyre is to determine at what scale this cooperation must take place to insure a healthy tradition. Again, MacIntyre defines a healthy tradition as a complex of practices which provides meaningful participation, guidance, and continuity in life's work through time. Further, a healthy tradition has the ability to change through time, in response to changing local situations, while retaining coherent connections with its previous incarnations. Two items related to scale become immediately obvious from this definition. First, the scale at which a healthy tradition operates must be such as to allow communication between adherents of its respective practices at some meaningful level. Second, there is a definite sense within MacIntyre's work that the most fundamental aspect of a tradition's or practice's health is its sustainability through time, or its continued embodied existence. And, since traditions are embodied in communities, sustainable traditions imply sustainable communities. For MacIntyre, the level of human organization which most effectively allows for healthy traditions and, thus, for the evaluation of the health of traditions, is the urban community or city-state.
2.3 Critiques of MacIntyre

MacIntyre argues for the re-acceptance of an Aristotelian type of philosophical position precisely by offering an Aristotelian interpretation of the last 2000 years of European history. The strength of his position lies in his claim that this Aristotelian interpretation is superior to other explanatory frameworks by virtue of the fact that its understanding of history and history’s effects on the present would help us resolve many issues which seem otherwise unresolvable. Further, he argues that his modified form of Aristotelianism does not carry with it any of problems of older forms of that philosophical orientation or present any new and unresolvable issues.

MacIntyre’s position can be criticized in at least two ways, one substantive and the other structural. The substantive argument, which claims that MacIntyre’s understanding or presentation of history is simply false, seems difficult to sustain. Unless it could be shown that MacIntyre is just simply inventing history—for example, by changing the date of the Norman Invasion to 1945 or by claiming the Borgia Popes were actually compassionate individuals—it is difficult to see how offering an interpretation of history different than MacIntyre’s in any way damages his position. After all, a central tenet of MacIntyre’s Aristotelianism is precisely that different traditions will have different interpretations of history and that these interpretations are necessarily in conflict during epistemological crises.

The structure of MacIntyre’s position has been attacked from two perspectives. The first route was taken by the analytical philosopher William Frankena (1983) who argued against MacIntyre’s position by 1) claiming that anyone could understand any philosophical position without historical or sociological knowledge if they had the right conceptual framework, then 2) suggesting that what MacIntyre was actually doing was not philosophy but history, but 3) quickly abandoning that line of argument in favor of suggesting that
MacIntyre had actually used the tools of analytical philosophy and was not, therefore, a true historicist. MacIntyre's opinion of the strength of Frankena's position can be judged by the fact that his rebuttal takes up only two paragraphs in the fourteen page postscript to the 1984 edition of *After Virtue*, a postscript notable for the thoroughness with which it considers various critiques. Further, Wallace (1989)--in a much longer and more thorough analyses of MacIntyre's work--points out that "one does not have to be a thorough-going historicist... to find this kind of attitude [Frankena's] obtuse. Surely, an appreciation of our inherited moral concepts has something to contribute to an argument about the possibility of justifying those concepts rationally" (Wallace, 1989, p. 330). How, in other words, can the rationality supporting the morality behind the actions of the various factions in the former Yugoslavia be understood apart from understanding the history that each faction has had in the region over the last several centuries?

The second avenue of structural criticism focuses on MacIntyre's claim to have dealt with the issue of relativity: the question of being able to choose among traditions. Critics such as Hittinger (1989) accept MacIntyre's argument regarding the superiority and structure of virtue-based morality, but question how we are to choose between such moralities: or, within the moralities, how we are to choose between virtues. As Hittinger states:

the problem is today the same as it has been, at least since the advent of modern theories of practical reason. It is difficult, if not impossible, to make sense of, much less to justify and sustain, the component parts of the "Common Morality" without having recourse to what was once called speculative reason: that is, the relation of reason to an order not of its own making or doing... [for] rival conceptions of what the world is like will give rise to rival accounts of what is a virtue or a vice in the first place... Thus, unless one is prepared to rest in a kind of conventionalism [Hittinger's term for relativism], an inquiry into the principles governing hierarchical ordination of the virtues [or systems of virtues] is absolutely critical. (Hittinger, 1989, p.449-453)
While Hittinger is willing to allow that MacIntyre's concept of the narrative structure of a life will provide a sufficient ordering of the virtues within the larger narrative of a tradition, he questions how we are to choose between traditional narratives in the absence of some meta-narrative or theory of natural law to which we can appeal through speculative philosophy (Hittinger 1989, p. 454). MacIntyre, it should be noted, does little to defend himself from Hittinger's critique. First, his discussion of what he calls the a priori "moral laws" necessary for the functioning of all practices and communities is under-developed, he simply states that there must be such a priori laws without providing any substantive justification for their existence (see MacIntyre, 1984, Chapter 14). Second, he makes a confusing move from the position in After Virtue that "the good life for man is the life spent seeking for the good life for man" (MacIntyre, 1984, p. 219) to the rather circular (and much weaker) position in Whose Justice? Which Rationality? that the good life can be determined only through dialectical reasoning from within the context of the community. This argument is weak and circular because it derives its justification from certain preconceptions of what the good life consists of which the community had already adopted at its inception (MacIntyre, 1988, p.133).

But the issue of relativism is not the only problem raised by Hittinger's critique. A much more troubling aspect of MacIntyre's omission of any sort of natural law theory (apart, as noted above, from his brief mention of a priori moral laws) is his resulting failure to come to grips with the problem of evil. It is true that MacIntyre's theory of traditions provides practitioners with the ability to judge some action or actor as bad, where bad signifies that that action or actor is acting in such a way as to prevent the accomplishment of the practice's good. But surely there must be a difference between bad and evil, a difference between an Amish barn-raiser who prevents timely completion because of laziness and a Nazi barn-raiser whose structure is purposively aimed at the extermination
of millions of people. And MacIntyre does acknowledge the existence of evil, even the possibility that some practices are aimed explicitly at the performance of evil, saying:

I want to allow that there may be practices—in the sense in which I understand the concept—which simply are evil.... For the range of practices includes the arts, the sciences and certain types of intellectual and athletic game. And it is at once obvious that any of these may under certain conditions be a source of evil: the desire to excel and to win can corrupt, a man may be so engrossed by his painting that he neglects his family, what was initially an honorable resort to war can issue in savage cruelty (MacIntyre, 1984, p. 200).

But MacIntyre nowhere says just what this evil is or how it is different from the merely bad. Further, he effectively closes off the two traditional ways moral philosophers concerned with virtue have dealt with this issue. First, because he fails to provide any substantive discussion of natural law theory, he cannot claim that something is evil because it works against, for instance, the law of God or the laws of nature. Second, because he locates the source of the virtues within practices and not within any concept of eudaimonia, he cannot claim that something is evil because it works either to destroy a good person or to destroy our conception of what a good person should be.

Critics such as Wallace (1989) and Annas (1989) arrive at a conclusion similar to Hittinger's with regards the problem of relativity and traditions, although from different angles. Annas's primary concern is to explore MacIntyre's idea that traditions exist as distinct embodied communities each of which manifests a particular rationality. She has perceived, quite correctly, that a pure form of MacIntyre's argument necessitates that these communities must actually exist. Again, MacIntyre's argument is that conflicts about rationality are not purely cerebral appeals to abstract intellectual standards but conflicts that take place on the level of lived experience, such that individuals must experience, learn the language, and live within the embodied forms of combating traditions before they choose between the relevant rationalities. Annas's comment that "Traditions, for [MacIntyre], live or die by how well they reason" (Annas, 1989, p. 392) is true on at least two levels. First,
because a central tenet of MacIntyre's thesis is that rationality is manifest in lived reality and a failed rationality is equivalent to an extinct community. Second, because the truth of MacIntyre's theory of traditions is dependent on the existence of visibly distinct communities (embodied rationalities) complete with their own institutions.

But the issue of evaluating MacIntyre' notion of embodied tradition is not as simple as determining whether or not these distinct communities exist, for as she also notes, MacIntyre claims that:

The historical particularities of traditions, the fact that each is only to be appropriated by a relationship to a particular contingent history, does not of itself mean that those histories cannot extend to and even flourish in environments not only different from but even hostile to those in which the tradition was originally at home. (MacIntyre, 1988, in Annas, 1989, p. 391)

What are we to make of this statement which carries a message so different from the one which generally informs MacIntyre's work? Are traditions dependent for their continued existence on embodied social institutions or can they exist in any environment at any time? If the latter, then what impact does this have on MacIntyre's overall theory?

Annas begins her investigation of traditions by proposing that two different interpretations or theories concerning the relationship between locale, community, and tradition seem to exist within MacIntyre's work. The first of these is the theory of historical understanding which she defines by saying:

We shall not understand why a reason counts as a good reason for Aristotle, say, still less why it has no weight at all for Hume, if we think that a reason either has force timelessly and without context, or has no force at all. . . . [W]e shall not achieve this grasp if we ignore the historical setting in which this structure was developed, for all sorts of aspects of it will turn out to be conditioned, to one degree or another, by particular contingent historical factors, and these factors will be particularly important in explaining why one set of principles rather than another is taken to be basic and explanatory. (Annas, 1989, p. 394)
The second form of the theory, the theory of essential location, holds that:

a tradition of reasoning is essentially located in a particular historical setting, and depends on that setting for its defining features. It is created by the needs of a particular social configuration, and it answers to the satisfaction of those needs. If the tradition develops in an intellectually satisfactory way, these needs will be met, leaving the social configuration strengthened; but if the tradition falters intellectually, then the social configuration is itself weakened. The coherence of the intellectual tradition's social embodiment stands or falls with the coherence of the reasoning the tradition produces. (Annas, 1989, p. 394)

The difference between these two theories is one of degree. In the theory of essential location, institutions must exist to support intellectual traditions. In the theory of historical understanding, they must only have existed at the particular time the intellectual tradition came into being. The theory of essential location, with its claim that a tradition’s rationality is intimately entwined with its survival as an embodied form, is obviously the stronger of the two, and according to Annas, the one used by MacIntyre throughout most of his writings. Annas is willing to conceded that this theory may work in terms of MacIntyre's discussion of the Aristotelian and Thomistic traditions, although she does point out (p. 390) that the ancient polis seems to have experienced just as much “interminable” debate as modern times. However, she becomes suspicious when it is applied to Hume because, she claims, MacIntyre is now trying to equate specific rationalities with an idea of national traditions. At this point in her paper Annas launches a major critique of MacIntyre's treatment of Hume to show that Hume could not have Anglicized Scottish society because he and that society already shared so much with English society that it makes no sense to talk of radically different Scottish and English traditions. From here Annas then makes a quick move to a position which holds that since MacIntyre has failed to show that the theory of essential location means that traditions can be understood as nationally determined, we must understand his thesis as being that of historical understanding. Annas has no intellectual quarrel with this theory but notes that:
This thesis is obviously very different from the thesis that traditions are essentially located in particular historical contingencies. The thesis of historical understanding implies that we can come to accept an intellectual tradition which in our society is merely one among several that are available. Our acceptance of this tradition cannot then depend in any strong way on the institutions and culture we live with. (Annas, 1989, p. 403)

The force of this critique, as Wallace (1989) shows in his article, is that it reopens the question of whether MacIntyre has dealt successfully with the issue of relativity. MacIntyre's original position is that since traditions, with their rationalities, are inextricably tied to embodied societal institutions, then the only way of making serious choices between them is to experience them fully. Relativity is avoided because each tradition is making truth claims whose success or failure in making sense of the world are concretely manifest in the success of that tradition's embodied institution. Thus, making a choice between traditions is not a matter of arbitrarily picking one or another from some neutral standpoint, but of deciding, based on lived experience within the embodied traditions, which tradition's language and rationality provides the story which makes the most sense of one's life.

However, Wallace points out that if an understanding of traditions does not involve actual physical participation within traditions but only an intellectual involvement with and historical understanding of them, as Annas seems to show, and further, if many traditions can exist simultaneously and share the institutions of one society, as they seem to do in ours, then MacIntyre in fact does not provide a solution to the question of how a person or group of people is to choose between them. So:

The proponents of relativism might occupy a particular tradition which is in a state of epistemological crisis, and see no alternative tradition available which both resolves and explains the crisis. . . . [This] would seem very like the situation of contemporary liberals. . . . Presumably the prevalence within liberal societies of interminable moral disagreements. . . . would be taken by [MacIntyre] as evidence of epistemological crisis—an inability to make continued progress in moral inquiry, by liberalism's own internal standards. And yet, MacIntyre's advocacy of an Aristotelian alternative notwithstanding, no other tradition has emerged which is clearly superior to liberalism, in all respects. (Wallace, 1989, p. 345-346)
In fact, Wallace ends up at least surreptitiously advocating that liberalism is indeed superior to MacIntyre's Aristotelianism because "if we look carefully at the conditions in which [MacIntyre] thinks this kind of rational conversation is possible, it turns out that there must after all be standards of rationality which are shared between the contending traditions" (Wallace, 1989, p. 345). And, further:

What [MacIntyre] seems to me to ignore is the possibility of treating rationality as an ideal... [so] the Enlightenment project can and should be construed as an attempt to associate morality, not with human nature as it is, but with an ideal of rational attainment. (Wallace, 1989, p. 331)

Thus, this avenue of critique ends up by arguing that since the thesis of essential location breaks down and is replaced by the thesis of historical understanding, individuals and communities are, after all, left needing some universal standards with which to evaluate traditions because the importance of personal experience in the embodied forms of particular traditions is questionable. Wallace argues that the Enlightenment project provides such standards by advocating the existence of general standards of rationality which must be shared between traditions. Actually, in identifying these standards as "standards of explanatory adequacy" Wallace moves very close to the position advocated by Habermas and critical theory with their focus on the supposedly innate drive towards truth-telling within the speech act itself.

Both of these critiques are valid. Hittinger is correct in pointing out that MacIntyre's case is weakened both by its failure to provide a theory of natural law and by attempting a substitute that cannot really work. Annas is correct in pointing out the weakness in MacIntyre's use of the theory of essential location. Wallace is correct in pointing out that if traditions are not manifest in embodied institutions, then much more emphasis needs to be placed on rational evaluation, a position which seems to necessitate some rational universals and thereby validates the Enlightenment project. In fact, these critiques seem to effectively reduce MacIntyre's work either to a very incomplete attempt to
reintroduce compliance to one universal morality and rationality (Hittinger), or to simply another way of understanding how each of us differs in philosophical attitude from others (Annas and Wallace), a rather ignominious ending for a philosophical project which set out rectify the “catastrophe” of modern morality.

2.4 Conclusion

The goal of this chapter was to begin the re-creation of a new language, one which will be used in Chapter Five to explore ecologically sustainable educational practices, through an investigation of the philosophy of Alasdair MacIntyre. In sum, MacIntyre is offering what at first appears to be a well-thought-out and coherent hermeneutical way to move beyond the interminable moral disagreements of today's world. His framework, or language, of traditions would provide an environment within which moral disagreements could be evaluated and resolved in a clearly comprehensible fashion while still incorporating those safe-guards that MacIntyre argues are needed to encourage further growth in the diversity of the human condition. MacIntyre is not, in other words, advocating the pursuit of yet another eternal unchanging truth, nor is he condoning rampant post-modern individualism.

But there remain valid concerns with this framework. What is the role of evil? How can it be identified and fought? Does MacIntyre indeed provide a way around relativism, at least with regards to choice between conflicting traditions? These questions as raised by Hittinger, Annas and Wallace are all valid and create serious doubts as to the applicability of MacIntyre's philosophical in today’s world.

There are, however, certain features about these critiques, and MacIntyre's work, that I feel raise some doubts about how quickly MacIntyre's work can be discarded. In the concluding chapter of Whose Justice? Which Rationality?, MacIntyre warns that:
Liberalism . . does of course appear in contemporary debates in a number of guises and in so doing is often successful in preempting the debate by reformulating quarrels and conflicts with liberalism, so that they appear to have become debates within liberalism, putting in question this or that particular set of attitudes and policies, but not the fundamental tenets of liberalism with respect to individuals and the expression of their preferences. So so-called conservatism and so-called radicalism in these contemporary guises are in general mere stalking horses for liberalism: the contemporary debates within modern political systems are almost exclusively between conservative liberals, liberal liberals, and radical liberals. There is little place in such political systems for the criticism of the system itself, that is for putting liberalism in question. (MacIntyre, 1988, p. 392)

The interesting thing about this warning is not what it tells us of the motivations of Annas and Wallace, but what it says about certain aspects of MacIntyre's work itself; aspects which turn out to be the same ones which form the root of the critiques by Hittinger, Annas, and Wallace. For example, the basis of Annas's critique, which also supports Wallace's subsequent argument, is that MacIntyre cannot apply the theory of essential location on a national level because nations do not support the same type of locally determined institutions as city-states do. And MacIntyre does do this. The interesting question is why MacIntyre chose to apply a theory from the Aristotelian tradition based on localized city-states to the nation-state concept of the Enlightenment tradition: even according to his own logic, such a move was bound to fail.

On another level, while the caution in the above-quoted passage is concerned specifically with debates within and against liberalism, the question arises as to why MacIntyre did not expand it to include conversations within and against what is generally known as the Western philosophical tradition. After all, the same dynamic is evident in

14 And also about the techniques they use in their analyses. It is notable that both authors choose to ignore MacIntyre's claim that the only way to fairly evaluate a tradition is from within that same tradition. They make no effort to do this, choosing instead to evaluate MacIntyre's work after translating it into post-Enlightenment terms. The result certainly supports MacIntyre's argument for the untranslatability of concepts between traditions.
those types of discussions as well\textsuperscript{15}, and by neglecting to recognize and attend to those subversive pressures MacIntyre's position suffers. For example, in all of his discussions MacIntyre limits the concept of institutions to European urban forms such as the university\textsuperscript{16}. Further, he does not clearly acknowledge that, as a group, the European traditions he considers have an affinity for urban institutions like universities which is not shared by other equally intellectual but non-European and/or non-urban traditions, such as Druidism, witchcraft, or Zen Buddhism. These characteristics of MacIntyre's work open him to Wallace's equally European- and urban-biased critique, based as it is on the presupposition that now, in the modern world, all traditions are comfortably at home in shared, urban institutions: "Local institutions and practices... no longer play a prominent role in distinguishing proponents of different doctrinal points of view" (Wallace, 1989, p. 347). These liberal blinders also prevent both MacIntyre and Wallace from acknowledging that at least two methods other than rational conversation or experience within rival traditions have been and continue to be used to convert members of one tradition to another; namely, economic blackmail and the threat of genocide. Finally, MacIntyre's Euro- and urban-centric focus may also account for his disregard for any environmental concerns, moral or otherwise. Indeed, it would be quite simple to use MacIntyre's modified Aristotelianism as a justification to further the environmental degradation of this planet. Given the already poor environmental state of the globe, and the impact this

\textsuperscript{15} Post-colonial critics are especially aware of the power Euro-progenic cultures and epistemologies have to form questions in their own way as opposed to others. See N'gugi (1986) and the various works by Vandana Shiva (1991, 1995, et al., 1991) for excellent examples.

\textsuperscript{16} The lack of reference to medieval monasteries or European pagan traditions is notable within MacIntyre's work, especially since he purports to deal with an era within which they were powerful actors. See Davidson (1988), Duerr (1985), Erickson (1976), Glacken (1967), and Heer (1961) for information on these aspects of European medieval culture.
deterioration is having all human cultures, such an anthropocentric theoretical weakness is inexcusable.

Yet, there could be a way to retain what is useful of MacIntyre’s position through changing those aspects of his philosophical theory which allow continued environmental degradation and provide the weaknesses so well exploited in the critiques by Annas, Wallace, and Hittinger. Is there, in fact, a philosophical position which could provide these strengths to MacIntyre, and, in its turn, benefit from MacIntyre’s rigorous social theory? In Chapter Three, I examine one such philosophical position—Deep Ecology.
3. THE ORIGINAL DEEP ECOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Chapter Two established that MacIntyre's claim to have provided a coherent and complete alternative to the current chaotic state of moral and social theory is optimistic because aspects of his work open him to valid criticisms with regards to natural law theory, relativism and, from an environmental view, anthropocentrism. These criticisms all have their roots in MacIntyre's weak, urban-biased definition of what constitutes a community. It remains true, however, that there is much of use in MacIntyre, primarily because he resurrects the ancient hermeneutical argument that morality must be understood as lived, therefore contextualized, social theory carried and reflected in a tradition's narrative genre. Thus, if MacIntyre's critics can be satisfactorily answered, his understanding of human existence could provide a method for rational decision-making between different moral/social systems.

This chapter introduces another practical philosophy, Deep Ecology. Since in subsequent chapters I will argue that Deep Ecology provides some solutions to problems within MacIntyre's theory, the reader must first clearly grasp what this ecosophical position is. Thus, I devote this chapter to examining general Deep Ecology principles through focusing on the works of Arne Naess and Warwick Fox. I have chosen to focus on the work of Naess (1973, 1979, 1984, 1988, 1989, with Rothenberg, 1989) and Fox (1990) because they provide two of the most philosophically rigorous and widely
known explanations of Deep Ecology. The purpose of this chapter is to provide the reader with a general introduction to 1) Deep Ecology and ecosophies, 2) later developments in Deep Ecology, and 3) the corresponding development of the Self-centered critique of anthropocentrism, currently the most commonly accepted defining characteristic of this radical environmental philosophy.

As this chapter will demonstrate, however, Deep Ecology is open to serious criticisms. These concerns will be outlined, and rebutted, in Chapter Four. I will then argue in Chapter Five that Deep Ecology is actually quite similar to MacIntyre's position in terms of structure and overall aims, and that each provides solutions to the other's weaknesses. In Chapter Six, I demonstrate how merging the two philosophical positions creates a powerful new practical philosophy. This new philosophical position provides a coherent social theory, complete with a virtue-based morality I call "Wild Virtue," which addresses our current moral, social and environmental crises. In Chapter Seven, I provide two examples of educational theory which are grounded in this notion of Wild Virtue.

3.2 Arne Naess's Introduction of Deep Ecology

Deep Ecology is a particular type of ecophilosophy, that branch of philosophy which deals with human relationships with nature (Naess, 1988, 1989). An ecosophy is a particular, locally generated type of Deep Ecology. The terms "ecosophy" and "Deep Ecology" were introduced to the international environmental community by Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess at the Third World Futures Conference at Bucharest in 1972. They then first appeared in print in an article by Naess called "The Shallow and the Deep, Long Range Ecology Movements," published in 1973 in the journal Inquiry. It would be a mistake, however, to assume that either the terms or what they represent sprang solely from the fertile mind of Arne Naess.
As Reed and Rothenburg (1993) document, ecophilosophy had had a long history in Arne Naess's home country, Norway, before he introduced the terms Deep Ecology and ecosophy to the international world in the early 1970's. Norway is a country, these authors argue, which could be expected to breed radical environmental thought. Geographically, the area now known as Norway, with its deep fjords and river valleys surrounded by high and snow-covered peaks, has always forced its human inhabitants both to rely on one another and to be aware of the health of their local eco-systems. Further, Norwegian culture has always stressed the value of outdoor activity for character formation, and continues to resonate with images and stories of the older pagan gods and the care they showed towards Creation (Reed and Rothenburg, 1993). Finally, the continued existence of the Saami, a semi-nomadic reindeer herding people, in northern Norway acts as a constant remainder to all Norwegians of the benefits of a non-modern lifestyle and of how such benefits are tied so closely to the health of the land.

This fertile ground gave rise to a wide variety of environmentally active groups throughout the twentieth century, ranging from “back-to-the-land” educational programs for kids through to one of the first forms of eco-feminism. Virtually all of these groups were involved both in direct action campaigns against particular environmentally dangerous projects and in a public process of aggressively questioning those aspects of Norwegian culture which led to such ecological destruction. One of Naess's goals in adopting the terms “Deep Ecology” and “ecosophy” has been to argue that all these (sometimes very) different radical environmental positions should be understood as branches of one coherent alternative to what he calls “shallow” or “reform” environmentalism. According to Naess,

17. “Radical,” it should be noted, from one point of view, that of western urban industrial culture. As tribals and deep ecologists point out, however, from the point of view of the majority of Creation, the truly radical environmentalist is s/he who blindly destroys that upon which they depend for survival.
adherents of shallow environmentalism typically choose to work within established societal guidelines on projects, such as recycling, which do not call into question fundamental societal norms and attitudes. And it is precisely these norms and attitudes, these “deep” attributes of culture, that Naess and other ecosophers feel are ultimately responsible for any culture’s attitudes and actions towards both non-human and human aspects of Creation. Naess argues that the result of this “deep” questioning is an “ecosophy,” which he defined in 1973 as:

*a philosophy of ecological harmony or equilibrium. A philosophy is a kind of *sophia wisdom, is openly normative, it contains both norms, rules, postulates, value priority announcements and hypotheses concerning the state of affairs in our universe. Wisdom is policy wisdom, prescription, not only scientific description and prediction. . . . An ecosophy. . . . is . . . like a system of the kind developed by Aristotle or Spinoza. This is expressed verbally as a set of sentences with a variety of functions, descriptive and prescriptive. The basic relation is that between subsets of premises and subsets of conclusions, that is, the relation of derivability. The relevant notions of derivability may be classed according to rigor, with logical and mathematical deductions topping the list. . . . An exposition of an ecosophy must necessarily be only moderately precise considering the vast scope of relevant ecological and normative (social, political, ethical) material. . . . It is the global character, not preciseness of detail, which distinguishes an ecosophy. It articulates and integrates the efforts of the ideal ecological team, a team comprising not only scientists from an extreme variety of disciplines, but also students of politics and active policy-makers.* (Naess, 1973, p. 155)

Several aspects of Naess’s thought are immediately obvious from this quotation. First, Naess’s background as a philosopher specializing in analytical theory is evident in his description of an ecosophy as a system of “norms, rules, postulates, value priority announcements and hypotheses” connected through a “relation of derivability. . . . with logical and mathematical deductions topping the list” (Naess, 1973, p. 155). As understood by Naess, each ecosophy begins with certain ultimate premises (norms) which serve as the ground for the construction of a system of further (secondary, tertiary, quartenary, etc.) norms all of which serve to guide our actions. Higher-level norms are
created by combining lower-level norms with hypotheses, beliefs about aspects of Creation or about actions which are believed (as opposed to known) to be true.

As Naess realizes, any system of this type must finally rest on some ultimate or foundational norm whose validity is effectively un-questionable. So, an ultimate norm is ultimate because the people who live within the particular ecosophy derived from that ultimate norm cannot, at least in any point in time when the ecosophy is operating to meet their needs, progress beyond or around the norm in any fashion. Further, the norm is ultimate because no subsequent norm or hypothesis may violate it if the derived ecosophy is to remain logically coherent. All subsequent norms, however, because they rest in part on hypotheses which may change through time, possess a hypothetical character: "Their validity depends upon the validity of non-normative assumptions, postulates, theories, and observations. Example: one does not accept the hostile norms of a systematic racism without accepting certain hypotheses about the peoples in question. The norms are not logically derived from the hypotheses, only psychologically motivated by them" (Naess, 1989, p. 43). This racist example also serves to show why an investigation of norms and hypotheses is important for Naess, because "when the intricate interconnection between norms and hypotheses is left unarticulated, each norm tends to be taken to be absolute or ultimate. This reduces or eliminates the possibility of rational discussion" (Naess, 1989, pp. 43-44).

Thus, Naess’s own ecosophical system, Ecosophy T, beginning with the norm "Maximize Self-realization!," unfolds, in part, as:
The “Self” which Naess speaks of is not any sort of ego-self as understood within the traditional Euro-centric psychological paradigms. It is not, in other words, an aspect of personality focused on self-gratification. Rather, Naess sees the “Self” as one local manifestation of a potentially infinite and certainly wide-ranging gestalt or field upon which it is dependent for existence. For Naess, the ego self, because it is by definition so totally self-ish, must be overcome to achieve maximum Self-realization. Further, the dependency...
of the Self on the larger gestalt for existence results in an imperative to maximize the self-realization of the entire gestalt in order to achieve maximal realization in any local manifestation of the overall Self. Finally, by “Self-Realization!”, Naess does not mean the achievement of some static, materialistic ontological state. Rather, he is referring to the re-acquisition of a mode of existence wherein natural evolutionary processes are allowed full rein: “there is not, strictly speaking, a primordial causal process of identification, but one of largely unconscious alienation which is overcome in experiences of identity” (Naess, 1984, p. 262). Finally, the “Self” which Naess speaks of is not ontologically materialistic, but relational and evolutionary; not static or constructed, but temporally fluid and growing. As we shall see, the question of what constitutes such a natural evolutionary process is a difficult one to answer, and this issue has provided one of the avenues of critique for opponents of Deep Ecology.

As I have noted already (p. 57), Naess’s training as an analytical philosopher is apparent in his understanding and use of the concepts of Deep Ecology. However, the possibility of identifying all ecosophies as only specialized forms of an analytical philosophy called Deep Ecology is contradicted by two other aspects of Naess’s thought. Naess, for example, goes to great lengths to associate ecosophy both with wisdom defined as “policy wisdom, prescription, not only scientific (or philosophical) description and prediction” (Naess, 1973, p. 155), and with the practical philosophies of Aristotle and Spinoza (Naess, 1989). Further, Naess sees ecosophies as having a “global character” and as being the result of the work of “an ideal ecological team” made up of individuals coming from many different walks of life. The nature of this global character of ecosophies is further clarified by considering what Naess identifies as “ecologisms”: that is, “deviations from the deep movement... primarily with a one-sided stress on pollution and resource development” (Naess, 1973). An ecosophy is global, and therefore different
from an ecologism, precisely because it is prescriptively holistic, it provides guidance in and is derived from all the experiences which comprise a human life, understood as one local manifestation of the “Self.” It should be noted here, however, that Naess's use of the term “global” has also become problematic: the Deep Ecological meaning of the term is diametrically different than that contained, for instance, within the phrase “the global village,” because it does not contain the same technological or homogenizing connotations. More recent Deep Ecological works, in an effort to highlight this difference, have begun using the term “planetary” to signify a support of diversity.

The suggestion (see the extended quotation on p. 57) that many different ecosophies, each with its own character, can exist simultaneously is supported by another paragraph in the same section of this seminal paper where Naess states that “ecosophy will show many variations due to significant differences concerning not only “facts” of pollution, resources, population, etc., but also value priorities” (Naess, 1973, p. 155). It is perfectly possible, in other words, for ecosophies to differ from one another, on the one hand because each geographical area within which ecosophies are constructed will possess different “facts” about Creation, and on the other because the people creating the ecosophies may very well begin with different ultimate norms, e.g., autochthonic, Buddhist, Pagan, etc. However, these ecosophies are related, Naess argued in 1973, because they share seven characteristics not held by any of the “shallow” environmental movements. These seven characteristics are:

1) A rejection of the man-in-environment image in favor of the relational, total-field image. Organisms as knots in the biospherical net or field of intrinsic relations...
2) Biospherical egalitarianism-in principle. The “in principle” clause is inserted because any realistic praxis necessitates some killing, exploitation, and suppression...
3) Principles of diversity and of symbiosis. Diversity enhances the potentialities of survival, the chances of new modes of life, the richness of forms...
4) *Anti-class posture.* . . . The principle of diversity does not cover differences due merely to certain attitudes and behaviors forcibly blocked or restrained. . .

5) *Fight against pollution and resource depletion.* [in addition to the other six points]. . .

6) *Complexity, not complication.* The theory of ecosystems contains an important distinction between what is complicated without any Gestalt or unifying principles—we may think of finding our way through a chaotic city - and what is complex. . .

7) *Local autonomy and decentralization.* The vulnerability of a form of life is roughly proportional to the weight of influences from afar, from outside the local region in which that form has obtained ecological equilibrium. . .

(NAESS, 1973, PP. 151-153)

According to Naess, each of these points will appear in what he defines as an ecosophy. Just as clearly, only point 5 and rarely point 7 could ever be found in the platform of any "shallow" or "reform" environmental movement, dedicated as they are to preserving all the essential social and political features of the Euro-centric urban-industrial status quo. It was the union of all the ecosophies behind these seven points which Naess, in 1973, called the "deep, long range ecology movement," a title subsequently shortened to Deep Ecology.

3.3 Later Developments in Deep Ecology

Unfortunately, Naess’s rather clearly defined system whereby Deep Ecology was to be understood as a conglomeration of locally determined ecosophies united through their acceptance of seven common ideas received a severe buffeting in succeeding decades. After 1973, the notion of Deep Ecology spread rapidly, particularly into North America and Australia/New Zealand. Yet, as it spread it also suffered some rather extreme mutations. By the mid-1980’s a number of books on Deep Ecology had been published, particularly in the United States, each of which tried to define Deep Ecology in different ways (see LaChapelle, 1988, for an account of this process). The same years also saw the formation of several Deep Ecological groups. For example, Earth First! is an organization
which echews intellectual discussion about environmental issues in favor of direct action against those who they perceived to be destroying parts of the global ecosystems (Manes, 1990). Another example is The Society for Conservation Biology, an organization of scientists and other academics who gather scientific evidence and form methodologies to support major ecosophic projects, e.g., the necessity of forming huge wilderness areas where urban industrial technologies would be forbidden.\(^{18}\)

One startling aspect of this explosion in the popularity of Deep Ecology was the diversity of positions upon which ecosophic systems were being built. Naess, Sessions, and several others chose to explore ecosophies using Spinoza. Abbey (1977, 1979, 1981, 1985, 1988) and Earth First! built on anarchist theory and practice (Manes, 1990), while Conservation Biologists and philosophers such as J. Baird Callicott (1989) tended to use some aspects of science (primarily biology and ecology) and the work of Aldo Leopold (1968). Gary Snyder (1960, 1974, 1977, 1980, 1986, 1990) and Joanna Macy (with John Seed, Pat Fleming, and Arne Naess, 1988) have used Buddhism and autochthonic culture as a base for their efforts. Delores LaChappelle (1988) and Michael Zimmerman (1994) have both explored certain aspects of Heidegger and feminist theory. Warwick Fox (1990) approached Deep Ecology from a psychological standpoint, eventually arguing for a new position he called “Transpersonal Ecology” in his book by the same name. As we shall see, this has become the most commonly accepted definition of Deep Ecology. Meanwhile, Robyn Eckersley (1992) provided a wonderful service by clarifying Deep Ecology from the viewpoint of political science. Furthermore, two other groups, the ecofeminists and Murray Bookchin’s Social Ecologists, simultaneously built positions nearly identical to the ecosophical from roots in radical feminism and communitarian

\(^{18}\) It should be noted that there is still a lively debate going on in the pages of the Society’s journal, *Conservation Biology*, on the appropriateness of biologists “meddling” in politics.
anarchism, respectively (as introductions to Social Ecology see Bookchin, 1990; to eco-feminism see Diamond and Orenstein (eds.), 1990; Warren (ed.), 1991).

The immediate and continuing result of all this activity was confusion:

If, for example, both a Heidegger and a Leopold are members of the Deep Ecology research community, then by what criteria are they included? And by what criteria might anyone be excluded? Any one who attempts to reconcile Heidegger’s with Leopold’s contributions to Deep Ecology finds the going rugged... Their differences are enormous, both in method and in subject... [So] if both Heidegger and Leopold are part of the Deep Ecology movement, then the implications are devastating, for it must account for itself both as a philosophical discipline and an ecological science. (Oelschlaeger, 1991, p. 304)

And from Oelschlaeger’s point-of-view, if Earth First! anarchists, political scientists such as Ekersley, and ecofeminist theorists such as Karen Warren (1991) are included within ecosophy, as Naess argues they should be (Naess, 1988), then the situation becomes even more complex: Ecosophy must now give an account of itself not only as a philosophy and an ecological science but as a social movement, as well.

Unfortunately, the result of this ecosophysical diversity has been conflict reminiscent of the American anti-Communist movement of the 1950s, with various factions setting themselves up as rival Committees for Un-ecosophic Affairs. This conflict has been particularly apparent in discussions occurring between Social Ecologists and Earth First!ers and those between ecofeminists and everybody else (who happens to be male) 19.

19 There appears to be a strong element of essentialism within the ecofeminist literature which holds that the validity of a particular idea or theory is determined by the biological sex of its author (see, for an introduction to eco-feminism, Diamond and Orenstein (eds.), 1990 and Warren (ed.), 1991). The presence of this essentialism is quite possibly due to another tendency, at least among Euro-progenic ecofeminists, to create and operate within worldviews dominated by the idea that the Earth should be understood as a sort of “Great Mother” with whom women have a particularly strong bond. This worldview can be seen as the diametric opposite of that of several of the world’s patriarchal religions, e.g., Christianity, Islam, which hold that the Supreme Deity is a Male with whom human males have a special bond. However, both these worldviews are very different from either the animist position, which holds that there are many different holy ones, or the Deist position, which understands the sacred as an androgynous entity. Unfortunately, many deep ecologists continue to operate within one of the two essentialist
This vicious conflict over ecosophical purity has, in turn, led to rather pathetic situations, which I have personally witnessed, where conferences set up to work out strategies to counter both environmentally unsound government and industry policies and the weak initiatives proposed by mainstream environmental groups frequently devolve into situations resembling street brawls. Not surprisingly, very little work is accomplished at these meetings and mainstream environmental groups (and government and industry) benefit by appearing comparatively reasonable and polite.

The root of this problem has been that since Naess’s original work in the early and mid-1970’s, the meaning of the term Deep Ecology “has been turned and twisted in quite different directions. Much of the writing on this idea tends to retool it to apply to specifically normative, particularly radical visions of the human relationship with nature, or else decide that it properly belongs to those few thinkers who have devoted themselves to a philosophical refinement of the special terminology invented by Naess” (Reed and Rothenburg, 1993, pp. 1-2). Further, there have been attempts to create single, universalistic theories of Deep Ecology, from which others are then deviants. This tendency has been particularly evident in some, usually non-academic, American deep ecologists who typically limit their discussion of Deep Ecology “grand-parents” to Americans such as Thoreau, Muir and Carson (a similar tendency is also sometimes apparent in otherwise good academic treatments of Deep Ecology by Devall (1988) and Devall and Sessions (1985)). That these attempts at universalization completely ignore the role of ecosophies in Naess’s original schema seems to have escaped almost everybody’s worldviews. This thesis is not long enough to present a thorough investigation of the impact these differing worldviews may have on ecophilosophical theorists. A very productive thesis could be written on the role the belief in a Divine Matriarchy has played in the development of Euro-progenic eco-feminism.
notice and suggests that one of the non-Deep Ecology “Others” has become the original formulation of Deep Ecology.

Naess and a few of the other ecosophers who are concerned with the future of Deep Ecology as a coalition of distinct ecosophies, notably David Rothenberg and Dolores LaChappelle, have reacted to this attempt to universalize Deep Ecology in two ways. First, they have produced a number of books and articles which emphasize the importance of diversity in ecosophies in the face of the destruction occurring in today's world (Naess, 1988; Reed and Rothenburg, 1993; Naess and Rothenburg, 1991; Rothenburg, 1993; LaChappelle, 1988). Second, to provide a unifying structure for this diversity, Naess and Sessions have re-worked and clarified Naess’s original seven point platform from the 1973 Inquiry article into a formal “Eight Point Platform for Deep Ecology.” Originally brought out in a 1988 article in The Ecologist entitled “Deep Ecology and Ultimate Premises,” these eight points are:

1. The flourishing of human and non-human life on Earth has inherent value. The value of non-human life-forms is independent of the usefulness of the non-human world for human purposes.
2. The richness and diversity of life-forms are also values in themselves and contribute to the flourishing of human and non-human life on Earth.
3. Humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy vital needs.
4. The flourishing of human life and cultures is compatible with a substantial decrease of the human population. The flourishing of non-human life requires such a decrease.
5. Present human interference with the non-human world is excessive, and the situation is rapidly worsening.
6. Policies must therefore be changed. The changes in policies affect basic economic, technological and ideological structures. The resulting state of affairs would be deeply different from the present and would make possible a more joyful experience of the connectedness of all things.
7. The ideological change is mainly that of appreciating life quality (dwelling in situations of inherent value) rather than adhering to an increasingly higher standard of living. There will be profound awareness of the difference between “big” and “great.”
8. Those who subscribe to the fore-going points have an obligation, directly or indirectly, to participate in the attempt to implement the necessary change. (Naess 1988, p. 130)
Naess has also provided a visual illustration of the relationship between the various ecosophies and this Platform for Deep Ecology:

**Figure 2** The Deep Ecological Apron Diagram

(\textit{Naess, 1995, p. 77})

On Naess's view, then, ecosophies may start from different ultimate norms, at Level One; are linked by the Platform, at Level Two; and then may diverge again in terms of general policies and specific actions at Levels Three and Four.

Australian deep ecologist Warwick Fox (1990) has argued, however, that the unity proclaimed by the above platform is illusory. In a very detailed investigation of Deep Ecology, Fox has determined that Naess actually proposes three different definitions of a Deep Ecological position, or ecosophy: a formal definition; a popular definition; and a philosophical definition. Naess has often stated that any philosophical position formally arrived at through “deep” questioning is part of the Deep Ecology family (see, for instance, Naess, 1984. The most complete defense of this position, however, is in an unpublished
paper by Naess quoted in Fox, 1990, p. 93). There is, argues Fox, a fundamental problem with this definition. While Naess has tried to define what constitutes “deep” questioning, Fox asserts that these definitions do not do enough to establish just what a Deep Ecological ultimate norm should be. In fact, Naess has often stated that individuals need to be free to choose their own ultimate norms and that these norms could come from a variety of positions including, significantly, those of established religion. Thus, according to Fox, a person could start with the ultimate norm “Obey God!,” build on it with the use of religious hypotheses, and potentially arrive at a very unecosophical ecosophy (see “Ecophilosopy O (for ‘Obedience to the will/ways of God’)” in Fox, 1990, pp. 134-137). Since Naess has presented deep questioning as a purely formal definition of Deep Ecology, and since he has not provided any criteria for determining, in a formal sense, what constitutes a truly ecosophical ultimate norm, a critic of such an unecosophical ecosophy as Ecophilosopy O would seem to be left with no foundation for criticism on Deep Ecological grounds.

Fox is also opposed to Naess’s popular definition of ecosophy, represented by the Eight Point Platform, because he feels that it does not acknowledge the distinctiveness of what he sees as actual Deep Ecology. This real Deep Ecology, Fox argues, is contained within Naess’s third, philosophical definition of Deep Ecology with its focus on the Self, which, Fox argues, leads to a distinctive form of the critique of anthropocentrism. On Fox’s view, the Eight Point Platform is not specific enough to exclude philosophical positions which are not built around the Self. To highlight the distinctiveness of this philosophical position, I will briefly discuss some other, more commonly accepted ecosophical moral postures before I return to the notion of the Self.
3.4 Animal Rights and the Land Ethic

As I noted above, what marks ecophilosophy apart from other philosophical disciplines is its concentration on investigating the human/nature relationship, both actual and potential. Even a quick review of the literature in this field reveals that most discussions about human action in Creation have been of an axiological nature, concerned with determining the moral rules and regulations which should guide human conduct. Typically, these discussions start from one of two bases (see Oelschlaeger, 1991, and Glacken, 1967 for a good review of these arguments). In the first case, Creation is held to have intrinsic moral worth and the effort is to determine what moral claims Creation has qua Creation with regards to human actions. In the other instance, Creation is held to have only instrumental moral worth, worth as regards the value humans put on it. In this instance, discussion typically revolves around one of two axes: 1) it is concerned with the wise use of Creation in order to provide for a continued human existence, or 2) it is concerned with how our relationship with Creation makes us either better or worse humans, in a moral sense.

The instrumental position can be easily critiqued because of its anthropocentrism. For example, it can be fairly easily determined that the current, ecologically deteriorating condition of Creation is a direct result of human activity. Further, it would be difficult to prove that this destruction was purposively done by humans; it commonly occurred as an unrecognized, unanticipated or simply unvalued by-product of human activity which was aimed at a good, albeit a human good (see, for instance, Boyden, 1992). Given this historically supported understanding of the human/Creation relationship, it is difficult to see how a purely instrumental interpretation of the value of Creation could produce concrete safeguards with respect to the condition of Creation. While a river may be instrumentally valuable to humans today as a scenic recreation site, what is to prevent the same river from
becoming instrumentally valuable as a hydroelectric resource tomorrow and, thus, being
dammed and suffering all the subsequent environmental damage? While the chimpanzee
is today (modestly) free to roam the jungle because of an instrumental argument that such
munificence on our part makes us better humans, what is to prevent the same chimpanzee
from being captured, strapped to a table, and subjected to head wounds inflicted with a
blunt object in the name of medical advancement when it is determined that this action has
superior instrumental value by and for humans who insist on driving fast cars and
suffering head injuries? The only two ways of ignoring the dangers of this position viz.,
the human impact on Creation are 1) to make an assumption that the state of Creation has
no ultimate impact on humans, or 2) to make a claim that humans have such infallible
insight that our decisions with regards to the instrumental value of Creation will never be
wrong. The former position is extremely difficult for many to hold in the face of
increasing evidence of the impact of environmental degradation on human communities,
while the latter, in view of human history and our current conduct, is outright hubris.

The axiological argument from the position that Creation has intrinsic value
appears, at first, more promising because it avoids the dangers of anthropocentrism
through positing moral worth in Creation, i.e., moral worth that is not dependent in any
way on humans. This non-anthropocentric moral posture is deceptively simple: It is
wrong to make moral judgments, or to take action in Creation, based solely on the needs
and values of humans. Unfortunately, many in our Euro-progenic society, affected both
by the general belief in “Progress” and by decades of exposure to movies like Bambi, have
interpreted this criticism as meaning only that we humans should, somehow, “develop”
beyond the use of animals for our needs, focusing instead on utilizing plants or
human-made materials. At its most virulent, this position has spawned a thoroughly
unexamined and uncritical movement to enforce this vegetarian, or even vegan, attitude
onto non-human species, as well; an increasingly popular coffee-house argument, for instance, is that domesticated cats and dogs should now become vegetarians on moral grounds!

What this rather facile interpretation of the anthropocentric critique hides is the incredible complexity involved in devising any non-anthropocentric moral system. Where, for instance, are we to locate the source of moral action or moral worth if not in the human? What type of moral system is it to be? One of rules like the ten commandments? A derivative of utilitarianism? A species of essentialism? And why do moral questions surrounding carnivorous behavior, which usually revolve around a strong dislike of death, apply only to prey animals? Is a blade of grass so very different from a deer or krill? All these questions have been answered in a variety of specific ways by various philosophical systems grounded in the notion of intrinsic moral value in Creation.

One of the most popular of these philosophical systems is based in the notion of animal rights, best typified by the work of Peter Singer (1990), the person generally accepted as the grandfather of this movement. Briefly, Singer’s position is that entities possess rights based on whether they possess the ability to feel and be aware of pain. Most of Singer’s work has been devoted to determining which life-forms possess this ability and, thus, should be accorded rights. Other animal rights theorists claim that the determining factor in according rights should be whether or not an entity is living. Christopher Stone (1974; 1987) has done admirable work in this area which shows how difficult such a determination can be, due to the fact that there is no agreed-upon definition of life.

20 It should be noted that this is a type of animal rights based in the notion of intrinsic value. Other animal rights positions are more instrumental in that they argue for the extension of rights to animals because this action will make humans more fully human, in the sense that a distinguishing feature of humanity is its supposed concern with justice and equality.
There are at least two problems with this animal rights approach to morality. First, it draws a definite moral distinction between those aspects of Creation which deserve moral consideration, which are all alive, and those which do not, some of which are alive (plants and "lower animals") and some of which are not. As we have seen, a variety of criteria have been proposed as determinants for inclusion within the moral fold. Yet how are we to choose among them? Further, is it so certain that we should be limiting the possibility of moral significance only to living things? What is the argument, in other words, for a bio-centric morality over an eco-centric one? And finally, of course, who are we to choose who or what has moral worth? The animal rights position has yet to satisfactorily provide answers to these questions, particularly in view of the intimate (some would say internal and indivisible) relationships which do exit between overtly living beings and those aspects of Creation within which they are embedded, but which most Euro-progenic intellectual traditions, at least, do not consider alive.

The second problem with this position is that its roots are still firmly grounded in anthropocentric moral theory. The central discussion within the animal rights movement, even that portion of the movement grounded in the notion of intrinsic moral value in Creation, is concerned precisely with the extension of "human rights" to the non-human world. Yet, rights are not only distinctly a human creation, they are a creation of one particular human culture, that of the European Enlightenment. Significantly, there are even other human cultures which do not subscribe to this particular type of moral discourse (Claster, 1989; Hocking, 1988). This culturally specific notion of what constitutes the proper structure of morality creates the possibility for two rather easy criticisms of the animal rights position.

First, one can argue that even if the language of rights is appropriate for one species, the human, there remains a problem with expanding this discourse to encompass
other species. For example, if it is taken as given that rights are an appropriate concept for discussions with regards human morality, it is not so difficult to arrive at the conclusion that every human has the right not to be treated as a food source by another human. The validity of this right becomes problematic, to say the least, when attempts are made to extend it to the non-human world. Can we claim that wolves are infringing the rights of the moose they drag down one beautiful winter evening? On what grounds?

The second criticism questions the use of rights as a concept in moral discourse. Even within the Euro-progenic traditions it is by no means a given that “rights language” is the superior moral language (see Chapter Two of this thesis, pp. 24-54, for an introduction to one such argument). An examination of some non-European reactions to the imposition of rights language onto non-Euro-progenic cultures reveals the ease with which one could conclude that the extension of rights discourse to the non-human world is simply another example of the continuing spread of neo-colonialism for the benefit of a privileged minority (see, for instance, the various works of Vandana Shiva (1991, 1995, et al., 1991) with respect to the use of rights language within the environmental and feminist movements).

An initially more promising critique of anthropocentrism based in a notion of intrinsic value in Creation, at least from the point of view of rigorous philosophical justification, is the Land Ethic of Aldo Leopold (1968). Leopold was a wildlife manager who worked for the federal government for a number of years before becoming a professor at the University of Wisconsin. Although Leopold began his professional life thoroughly immersed in the anthropocentric resource management paradigm which dominated American culture at the time (circa 1920’s), a now famous event in the mountains of New Mexico caused him to begin creating a new philosophical position:

We reached the old wolf in time to watch a fierce green fire dying in her eyes. I realized then, and have known ever since, that there was something
new to me in those eyes—something known only to her and to the mountain. 
I was young then, and full of trigger-itch; I thought that because fewer 
wolves meant more deer, that no wolves would mean hunters’ paradise. 
But after seeing the green fire die, I sensed that neither the wolf nor the 
mountain agreed with such a view. (Leopold, 1968, p. 130)

While Leopold wrote several articles and books during his professional life in 
which he described the new orientation towards Creation which this experience caused him 
to develop, none is perhaps more famous or more succinct than A Sand County Almanac, 
originally published posthumously in 1949. Leopold’s thesis in this book is that humans 
have to move away from the traditional view of themselves as dominators of the land to a 
new, more humble posture of “plain member and citizen“ of the biotic community 
(Leopold, 1968, p. 204). Humans within this community need to guide their actions 
according to the following moral precept: “A thing is right when it tends to preserve the 
integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends 
otherwise” (Leopold, 1968, pp. 224-225). The body of A Sand County Almanac is taken 
up by Leopold’s accounts of how he arrived at this philosophical position and how his life 
had been guided by it.

With the possible exception of Rachel Carson’s (1962) Silent Spring, A Sand 
County Almanac has probably been responsible for more North Americans changing their 
attitudes about their role in Creation than any other single book written in the twentieth 
century. The huge impact of A Sand County Almanac has been due, in large part, to the 
heart-felt, passionate message it conveys in simple, easy-to-understand language. 
Unfortunately, Leopold’s use of this language, and the fact that he refused to allow the 
book to be published while he was alive, has meant that those individuals concerned with 
developing a philosophically rigorous and axiologically complete version of the Land Ethic 
have been deprived of Leopold’s original intellectual insights. Much of this struggle with 
the Land Ethic has revolved around two issues: first, to find some grounding for it within
the Euro-progenic ethical tradition; second, to come to a clear understanding of exactly
what it would require of us in terms of everyday life. It is this latter characteristic of the
Land Ethic which so clearly sets it off from the animal rights position: instead of picking
his way through the great family of life assigning some rights to a few, fewer rights to
larger crowd, and no rights to the majority, Leopold perceived Creation as a mosaic of
complex land communities within which our actions could only be guided by a general
precept. While many individuals have struggled to clarify both the roots and the
implications of the Land Ethic since Leopold’s death, the person who has done more than
any other to develop it into a fully functional practical philosophy is University of
Wisconsin philosophy professor J. Baird Callicott (see, in particular, Callicott, 1989.
Much of the following argument comes from this book).

On Callicott’s view, the Land Ethic was developed within, and needs to be
understood as an extension of, a sociobiological understanding of morality. Callicott
argues, in other words, that Leopold understood that “this extension of ethics [the Land
Ethic], so far studied only by philosophers, is actually a process in ecological evolution”
(addition mine, Leopold, 1968, p. 202). Callicott supports this interpretation and, with
Leopold, turns to a variety of studies by such individuals as Charles Darwin and E. O.
Wilson to support both the contention that morality can indeed be understood as having
biological roots, and the position that the history of morality is one of progress from a
position of mere self-focused barbarity to one of benevolent, enlightened care. The Land
Ethic, under this interpretation, is the evolutionary response to the fact that:

we are witnessing the painful birth of a human supercommunity, global in
scope. Modern transportation and communication technologies, international economic interdependence, and nuclear arms have brought into
being a ‘global village.’ . . . and . . . the next step in this sequence beyond
the still incomplete ethic of universal humanity, a step that is clearly
discernible on the horizon, is the Land Ethic. The ‘community concept’
has, so far, propelled the development of ethics from the savage clan to the
family of man. ‘The Land Ethic simply enlarges the boundary of the
community to include soils, waters, plants, and animals, or collectively: the land’ (Leopold, p. 204). (Callicott, 1989, p. 81)

The biological foundation for ethics, according to Callicott, is the ability to experience feelings, particularly those altruistic feelings leading to community formation. So Leopold’s Land Ethic, Callicott argues, can be understood as a continuation of the work of such philosophers as David Hume (Callicott, 1989, p. 85).

Callicott has also worked to clarify the implications the Land Ethic has for everyday actions. The argument that Leopold’s formulation of the Land Ethic is simply too nebulous to be of any good is facile, Callicott argues, because it penalizes Leopold’s concise, yet easily understood, writing style and ignores the rest of his writings. Callicott contends that the Land Ethic must be understood within the context of Leopold’s belief that the Earth was a type of supra-organism.21 Leopold, in other words, saw creation from an ecological standpoint whereby relationships have ontological primacy over what most Euro-progenic philosophers would call objects. The most important of these relationships is the process of evolution, within which new species are continually being brought forth from existing populations. Thus:

‘Natural’ species extinction, that is, species extinction in the normal course of evolution, occurs when a species is replaced by competitive exclusion or evolves into another form. Normally speciation outpaces extinction. . . . What is wrong with anthropogenic extirpation and extinction is the rate at which it is occurring and the result: biological impoverishment instead of enrichment. (Callicott, 1989, p. 91)

Callicott claims that understanding the Land Ethic within this evolutionary context does provide specific guidelines for everyday human life, including “Thou shalt not extirpate or render species extinct; thou shalt exercise great caution in introducing exotic

21. It is often assumed that the Gaia Hypothesis was invented by Lovelock and Margulis and that it is a new phenomenon. Its roots are actually far deeper. See Glacken (1967) for an excellent history of this view.
and domestic species into local eco-systems, in exacting energy from the soil and releasing it into the biota, and in damming or polluting water courses; and thou shalt be especially solicitous of predatory birds and mammals" (Callicott, 1989, p. 91). The emphasis on the protection of predators is, of course, the result of Euro-progenic science’s current belief that predation is one of the major engines within evolution.

Many have found this understanding of the Land Ethic terrifying: If humans are really simply “plain members and citizens” of the land community, and if we are indeed called to an ethic which values evolutionary processes above all else, then we clearly must change many of our current practices; we must, it would even appear, work towards producing a massive human “die-back.” If, in other words, the Land Ethic is purely deontological, i.e., if it means we have only duties to others, and it is not prudential, i.e., it is something we humans should adopt for our own good, then it is difficult to see how we cannot support some massive reduction to the human population as a duty to the rest of creation. It is because of this apparently strong deontological strand in the Land Ethic that Tom Regan has been moved to call it “environmental fascism” (Regan, 1989).

Callicott’s response to this critique is less than satisfactory because it calls into question both the integrity of the Land Ethic as a moral system and the coherency of its supposed historical roots. Callicott argues that the Land Ethic does not, in fact, call for or support a necessary reduction in human population because:

Prior moral sensibilities and obligations attendant upon and correlative to prior strata of social involvement remain operative and preemptive. . . Being citizens of the United States. . . does not mean that we are not also members of smaller communities and social groups. . . or that we are relieved of the peculiar moral responsibilities attendant upon and correlative to these memberships. . . Similarly, our recognition of the biotic community and our immersion in it does not imply that we do not also remain members of the human community—the ‘family of man’ or ‘global village’—or that we are relieved of the attendant and correlative moral responsibilities of that membership, among them to respect universal human rights and uphold the principles of individual human worth and dignity. (Callicott, 1989, p. 93).
This understanding of the human relationship with Creation, Callicott goes on to argue, means that the Land Ethic can be understood as being both deontological and prudential "depending on point of view. From the inside, from the lived, felt point of view of the community member with evolved moral sensibilities, it is deontological. . . . From the outside, from the objective and analytic scientific point of view, it is prudential" (Callicott, 1989, p. 99). And where are we to turn for an example of this Land Ethic in practice? According to Callicott, to the American Indian cultures.

As I have suggested above, this response, far from successfully defending the Land Ethic, immediately creates even further problems. First, while the original formulation of the Land Ethic is at least logically coherent in its treatment of humans as plain citizens of the land community with clear, non-anthropocentric duties to and rights within Creation based on a notion of moral worth inherent to ecosystems, Callicott's modifications seem to re-inject a rampant anthropocentrism. First, because no previously realized "universal" human right may be abridged in following the "new" dictates of the Land Ethic and second, because it turns out that the real reason for adopting the Land Ethic is prudential, or for the good of humanity, period. And Callicott's arguments for this new interpretation, though coherent from within the evolutionary paradigm he claims for his own, retain all the weaknesses of post-Enlightenment liberal thought. What is a universal human right? What is this "global village"? Who is in charge? Is it true that obligations within smaller moral communities retain precedence when we are subsumed within a larger community? History, at least over the last two hundred years, would seem to show the falsity of this position. Literally hundreds if not thousands of articles and books have been written critiquing these liberal ideas, yet Callicott deploys them as if they were self-evident truths. And what are we to make of this sudden appearance, in strength, of the prudential aspect of the Land Ethic? As plain citizens of the land community, we must surely accept that it
cannot be wrong for some percentage of us to succumb to predation, perhaps from microbes.

And finally, it is logically incoherent for Callicott to argue that various American Indian cultures provide some of the best examples of the Land Ethic in practice. First, of course, Callicott's claim must raise serious questions about the supposed evolutionary aspect of Land Ethic. If the Land Ethic claims importance from being the most recent moral rung to appear on the evolutionary ladder which begins in "the savage clan" (Callicott, 1989, p. 81), how is it that we must look down the ladder to see what we should do in the present or the future? Second, how can Callicott account for the fact that many of the most vocal and serious opponents to any creation of a "global village", or, for that matter, to many of the supposedly "universal" human rights, are the very tribal peoples he seeks to use as examples of cultures using the Land Ethic, an ethic he claims is supportive of both universal human rights and the creation of a global village (Hocking, 1988)?

In the end then, the Land Ethic, or more properly Callicott's interpretation of the Land Ethic, fails to provide a satisfactory non-anthropocentric basis for morality both because Callicott smuggles anthropocentric concerns and concepts back into his arguments in order to avoid precisely those moral demands which a non-anthropocentric moral system would require of humanity, and because his arguments, at least from the historical point of view, are logically incoherent. In fact, from the point of view of a non-anthropocentrist, Callicott's understanding of the Land Ethic is flawed both by incorporating the most serious flaw of the instrumental philosophical stance, by positing that humans can know enough about Creation to judge when an action is justified from a prudential stance as opposed to prohibited on deontological grounds, and by attempting to smuggle in a weakness in the animal rights argument, that our relationship with Creation can be based on rights and duties. Callicott magnifies his latter error in an imperialistic
fashion by at least implying that this rights orientation can commonly be found in autochthonic cultures (Callicott, 1989).

One final observation must be made on the utility of the Land Ethic as a guide for conservationists. While Callicott’s interpretation of Leopold’s philosophy is based on an accurate understanding of some of what Leopold says in his writings, it seems to me that it ignores another, more intuitive and caring side of Leopold’s intellect, which a careful reading of A Sand County Almanac also reveals. I would argue that Aldo Leopold must be seen as a man in transition, and that his writings must be interpreted in that light. Leopold began life as a solid anthropocentrist, yet arrived at point where he called for an understanding of humans as plain biotic citizens. Is it not possible that he was also experiencing a similar transition away from an anthropocentric evolutionary and axiological understanding of morality to one grounded more in the notion of virtuous action determined by character, community, and situation? If this is the case, and I think that such an argument could be made based on a great many passages from A Sand County Almanac, then one could argue that Callicott’s interpretation of the Land Ethic, while partially correct, is too focused on the moral worldview of an older Leopold, a Leopold who had yet to make a total transition to a new moral ground. Further, one then has to wonder what the Land Ethic would look like from such a different, non-axiological moral stance. It is precisely this type moral posture that deep ecologists argue that they are in the process of re-furbishing.

3.5 Warwick Fox and the Deep Ecological Self

According to Fox (1990), the uniquely Deep Ecological ground which has been proposed as a basis for the critique of anthropocentrism involves a reconceptualization of the Self. As will become evident, this version of the critique of anthropocentrism is
attractive not only because it provides a philosophically consistent argument against anthropocentrism, but also because it provides coherent explanations for the weaknesses of other, axiological approaches to understanding the human relationship with Creation.

On Naess’s view there are two selves in operation within each human; the self, which is solely concerned with narcissistic demands, and the Self, that which is aware of its dependence on the continued working of the evolutionary mosaic or gestalt for existence (Naess, 1989). Naess argues that a focus on the Self, in the form of a foundational norm “Maximize Self-realization!” recognizes both the intuitive connection all of us feel to the larger gestalt of our planet and the moral necessity of living in this creation in such a way as to maximize as many evolutionary pathways as possible if we are to attain the highest possible level of Self-realization. The most thorough investigation of this stance has been conducted by Warwick Fox (1990) in his book Transpersonal Ecology, although the Self is also the basis for the non-anthropocentric stance of the majority of self-proclaimed deep ecologists.

Fox begins by arguing that investigation of the Self is appropriate because “Naess’s philosophical sense of Deep Ecology obviously refers to a psychologically based approach to the question of our relationship with the rest of nature as opposed to an axiologically based (i.e., a value theory based) approach” (Fox, 1990, p. 197). Further, argues Fox, this sense of the Self does have Euro-progenic roots in, and is related to, the discipline of transpersonal psychology, which has long recognized the existence of a transpersonal Self. Despite the fact that most of these psychologists have limited themselves to an anthropocentric definition of the Self whereby humanity, although linked to the rest of creation, is still seen as the pinnacle of creation, a “we are God in the process of becoming at the apex of the Great Chain of Being” attitude (Fox, 1990, p. 200), other transpersonal psychologists have been far less anthropocentric. Maslow, for instance, while he may not
have been as rigorously non-anthropocentric in his practice as he was in his theorizing, did believe in a theoretical position which would be "transpersonal, transhuman, centered in the cosmos rather than human needs and interest, going beyond humanness, identity, self-actualization, and the like" and give us "something 'bigger than we are' to be awed by and to commit ourselves to in a new, naturalistic, empirical, non-churchly sense, perhaps as Thoreau and Whitman, William James and John Dewey did" (Maslow in Fox, 1990, p. 200). Fox uses the term "transpersonal ecology" to differentiate the discipline which uses this wider and more ecological view of the Self from the more anthropocentric and traditional transpersonal psychology.

The basis of Fox's argument for the primacy of the Self as the definitional feature of Deep Ecology is at least partially dependent upon a psychological understanding of the differences between the self and the Self. This psychological argument is not as unusual for a philosopher to make as it may first appear to Euro-centric academics, affected as we are by decades of reductionism which have sensitized us to the position that disciplinary borders are inviolate. Philosophers, as far back as Aristotle, have realized that investigating psychological issues is often an integral part of the pursuit of wonder.

Fox begins his argument by showing how each form of instrumental and intrinsic value ecophilsopohy corresponds to one of the generally accepted aspects of the self. Thus, the purely exploitative position corresponds to the desiring-impulsive aspect of the self, the resource preservation or wise use position corresponds to the rationalizing-deciding aspect, and the various rights positions correspond to the normative-judgmental aspect. Of course, some positions are based in more than one aspect. For example, the wider animal rights position can be understood as being related both to the rationalizing-deciding aspect of the self, to the extent that decisions are made as to what type of rights correspond to what creatures, and to the normative-judgmental aspect, to the extent that rights are understood to
be inherent and to the extent that respect for these rights is taken to be a requisite action for a moral entity.\textsuperscript{22}

On Fox’s view, there is one major and pertinent distinction between this traditional view of the self and an understanding of the Deep Ecological transpersonal Self. This distinction is based on the notion, best described in Maslow’s hierarchy, that beyond or surrounding the tripartite self there exists a holistic Self which approaches Creation and itsSelf, not in the fragmented and competitive way of the tripartite self, but through love, caring, and a deep sense of interconnection. The immediate moral result of this holistic view of what constitutes the Self is that the role of axiology is diminished in favor of an understanding of action as taking place within a field of love or care. For example, just as I don’t usually think about actions directed towards my hand in axiological terms, once my transpersonal Self has connected with, for instance, my lover, I would not usually think my actions towards her axiologically either.

Traditional Euro-centric psychology and philosophy has always held that the self is strictly limited by the spatial limits of the physical body, whether atomistically floating in space or linked hierarchically to a Great Chain of Being.\textsuperscript{23} This individualistic bent has led to a view of action in Creation as being something which occurs between, over, or on objects which requires axiological regulation. More important, however, from a hermeneutical view, has been the concomitant dominant Euro-progenic view that this ontologically individualistic understanding of existence is the one, the true, and the only

\textsuperscript{22} Fox’s treatment is quite thorough and cannot be duplicated here. Individuals who want to pursue this issue should read Chapter Seven of \textit{Transpersonal Ecology}.

\textsuperscript{23} This does not apply, of course, to Euro-progenic philosophers such as Spinoza, Leibnitz, Whitehead, or Heidegger who all worked on some theory of intimate and/or intrinsic connection between what are generally conceived as mere objects. Many these philosophers have been used by deep ecologists to help construct ecosophies.
possible truth. This narrow ontological attitude has limited the Euro-progenic understanding of the workings of more holistic worldviews, such as those of various autochthonic groups, typically by attributing some "mystical," and thus suspect, quality to them. This mysticism is usually opposed to the hard-headed "realism" of the reductionist Euro-progenic philosophical posture. Thus, any belief, such as that held in John Seed's (1988) now famous statement "I am the rain-forest defending itself," which purposes or is based on a wide, particularly non-human, definition of the Self, is immediately subject either to derisive attacks or is comfortably ignored as the ramblings of a person dissociated with reality.

The Deep Ecological response to this charge of "mysticism" has been to try and clarify what is meant by "identification," the process they argue is central to expanding the Self. Typically, this attempt at clarification has relied on work done by transpersonal psychologists and investigations of various spiritual practices, such as Zen and shamanism, which also recognize the existence of the Self. It must be admitted, however, that thus far this work is still only in its initial stages and that this interpretation of Deep Ecology remains vulnerable to attacks in this area.

3.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have introduced Deep Ecology and demonstrated how it differs from two other leading forms of environmental philosophy, Animal Rights and the Land Ethic. Briefly, the notion of Deep Ecology was invented by Arne Naess to distinguish one group of environmental philosophies, which are based on the critique of anthropocentrism and known as ecosophies, from other environmental philosophies which remain anthropocentric. Deep ecologists argue, for instance, that both the Animal Rights position
and the Land Ethic are too weak to serve as a basis for change in environmental attitudes because both are still firmly anthropocentric.

Further, practically all deep ecologists follow Fox in attributing moral significance to a wider sense of the Self than is usually found in Euro-progenic traditions. Deep ecologists hold that this non-anthropocentric Self can and does grow through experiential "identification" encounters with aspects of Creation, both human and non-human. Thus, for a deep ecologist, significant changes in the way Creation is viewed and treated cannot occur through more and more specialized axiological debates, but only through growth of the Self, growth which is a result of contact and exposure to the mosaic of Creation. This growth of Self, they argue, will lead away from anthropocentric actions and attitudes, and from weighty and convoluted axiological rule books, as more and more connections are realized and the growing Self begins regulating itSelf with love and care. However, as I shall show in the next chapter, determining exactly (and practically) what this growth towards a larger Self consists of is by no means certain, primarily because current notions of the Self remain nebulous.
4.0 THE CRITICISMS OF DEEP ECOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

Deep Ecology is in the rather unusual position of being criticized from virtually all sides of the philosophical and political spectrum. These criticisms typically pursue one of five claims: 1) that Deep Ecology is a threat to advanced civilization; 2) that the non-anthropocentric Self cannot exist because we must, by definition, perceive the world as humans; 3) that Deep Ecology is misanthropic and anti-human; 4) that Deep Ecology is actually another imperialistic Grand Theory trying to impose itself on the world; 5) that Deep Ecology is impractical because it makes no concrete recommendations for action. In this chapter, I will review each of these criticisms in sequence. While I will rebut the first four criticisms, I end the chapter by pointing out that the one true weakness of Deep Ecology, as it is currently formulated, is its lack of a well-thought out ethic. The goal of this chapter is to simultaneously defend Deep Ecology against the majority of its detractors and, nevertheless, argue that it still retains short-comings in its ability to provide concrete suggestions for how a person should lead a Deep Ecological life. In Chapter Five, I argue that this short-coming is resolvable by combining Deep Ecology with MacIntyre’s version of Aristotelianism.

4.2 Criticism One: Deep Ecology as a Threat To Advanced Civilization

Given, as we have seen, the rather diverse state of Deep Ecology theory, in general, and the murky waters of the critique of anthropocentrism, in particular, it should come as
no surprise that critiques of Deep Ecology and non-anthropocentrism are many and varied. Several of these arguments are rather unsophisticated, and a dangerous temptation can arise to dismiss them too cavalierly. The popular critique of Deep Ecology, for instance, now that the Cold War has ended and governments are looking for new “global threats” to justify both their existence and their large military budgets, is that deep ecologists are the new terrorist threat, mere anarchists (by which is actually meant nihilists) set on bombing us back to the Stone Age. In the United States, for example, several Earth First!ers have been harassed by local police, FBI and other government agencies. Former Earth First! leader Dave Forman was woken at three in morning and arrested at gun-point during a failed FBI sting operation. Further, reports come out of the Pacific Northwest that the para-military force set up by President Reagan to fight the cultivation of marijuana in the mid-1980’s has now been given free reign to interdict any “terrorist activity” it may run across in National Forests. And just what those “terrorists activities” are is not left merely to the imagination. Press releases from government and industry are full of allusions to bombs going off in the woods and sawmill workers being seriously harmed through the practice of “spiking” trees. What is never stated is that first, the only bomb to have gone off was one placed in the car of Earth First!/union workers, Judi Bari and Darryl Cherney, an action for which no one has ever been brought to trial, and second, that the tree spike which is responsible for harming the only mill worker to have ever been injured by “spiking,” George Alexander, was placed in the tree by a right-wing survivalist. In other

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24 Information for this paragraph comes from Foreman (1991), Manes (1990), and Scarce (1990).

25 It might be objected that this “popular critique” is insufficiently “philosophical” to be considered as a threat to my thesis. However, as MacIntyre has shown, the political is the philosophical: Quite often the most powerful philosophical positions are those which, to our modern eyes, cloak themselves in “non-philosophical” clothing.
parts of the world, on the other hand, as the case of Ken Saro-Wiwa shows, to be any sort of a radical environmentalist, deep ecologist or not, is to invite imprisonment, torture, and death.

It would be a mistake to dismiss either the power this critique popular has over the minds of the general public or the seriousness with which it is carried out. Any exposure to the history of the last half century provides convincing proof of the ruthlessness with which some pursue money and power at the expense of people’s lives and the ecological health of the planet (see, for instance, the works of Berry, 1977, 1981, 1983, 1990). Perhaps one of the most dangerous aspects of current environmental activism is the pervading belief amongst its members, built, in theory at least, on beliefs in non-violence and respect, that everyone is at bottom really a very nice person who can, after all, be reasoned with. This perversion of Gandhi’s non-violent praxis has led to an attitude which praises the neo-imperialist’s supposedly new, yet actually non-existent, environmental clothes and faithfully ignores their growing belts of skulls. This so-called “responsible” and “reasonable” attitude is dangerous because it continues to allow atrocities to be committed and diminishes the painful deaths of those like Chico Mendes and Ken Saro-Wewa who have given their lives in the effort to ensure some type of ecologically healthy and socially just world for all our children.

Yet, the continued growth and increasing strength of this non-critical attitude towards Deep Ecology is not wholly due to ignorance, mere foolishness, or even simple gullibility. It is due, rather, to three rather closely related phenomena. First, there has been an increasingly sophisticated use of the media by government and business to create the image that radical environmentalists, particularly Deep Ecological Earth Firster!s, are simply a new breed of terrorist (Stauber and Rampton, 1995). This tactic has been particularly effective because second, the vast number of people who could really have an
impact on both social justice and environmental degradation, people living in well-to-do, urban, and now mostly Euro-progenic cultures, have become so thoroughly acclimated to their technological “Progress” oriented culture that any suggestion that they may have to leave it is, quite literally, terrifying. During the course of my own work as an environmental educator, I have witnessed the remarkable fact that few of these urban dwellers know, for instance, how to light a fire or where their food comes from. Further, very few of these people even see any value in acquiring this kind of knowledge. And the desire which these individuals have to retain and protect their lifestyle is strengthened by a third factor: Government and business are not the only voices claiming that Deep Ecology is an extreme, unworkable answer to what is actually only a marginal issue; many, if not most, professional philosophers and social theorists argue along similar lines.

4.3 Criticism Two: The Non-existence of the Non-anthropocentric Self

The fact that Deep Ecology is challenged from positions as far apart philosophically as the extreme right and the neo-Marxist left is accounted for by the Deep Ecological focus on the anthropocentric critique. Virtually all other philosophical positions, ranging from the Habermasian belief in human emancipation through the creation of some Ideal Speech Situation to the widely held religious notion that the world is but a stage upon which we are actors whose performances will determine our other-worldly destinations, share the fundamental presupposition that the human condition is and can be the sole focus for philosophical inquiry into human beliefs and actions.26

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26 Another, rather bizarre, manifestation of this position is eco-feminism, which seems to hold that the anthropocentric critique can only be valid if it is done from a feminist point of view, e.g., as an andro-centric critique. Two problems with this eco-feminist position are immediately obvious. First, it is not at all obvious just who or what is andro-centric or gyno-centric. For example, where does a heavily “butch” lesbian fall on the spectrum? or a transvestite? or Margaret Thatcher? Second, despite eco-feminist rhetoric as to the privileged connection females have with Creation, it is not
This general anthropocentric presupposition typically manifests in a three-layered critique of Deep Ecology. First, it is usually argued that because we are humans we must, and can only, see the world through human consciousness. Thus, what deep ecologists call identification with other aspects of the Self is actually only a manifestation of anthropomorphism, which is simply labeled a dangerous and less sophisticated, because emotional and unscientific, form of anthropocentrism. The second prong of this criticism is, then, to deny the existence of the Deep Ecological Self; since no non-anthropocentric bonding can occur, no non-anthropocentric Self can emerge. The third stage of this criticism is to claim that since anthropocentrism must exist because of biological limits on epistemology, and since the Self cannot, therefore, exist, Deep Ecology is not actually "deep" at all but merely a shallow and selfish movement directed by the various passions of its adherents.

According to Fox, the first assertion of this critique, that we are all necessarily and always anthropocentric simply because we are human, fails "to distinguish between the weak, trivial, tautological sense of anthropocentrism and the strong, informative, substantive sense of the term. Such a criticism is weak in that it does not allow us to make any distinctions between statements (i.e., it suggests that all human statements are equally human statements); trivial in that it simply states the obvious; and tautological in that it is true by definition" (Fox, 1990, p. 20). Fox refutes this criticism by arguing that there are two types of anthropocentrism, weak and strong. Weak anthropocentrism is the epistemological fact that we do perceive Creation through human senses and with a human brain. Anthropocentrism is strong and dangerous when it fosters "unwarranted differential treatment of other beings on the basis of the fact that they are not human" (Fox, 1990, p. 20).

Clear that this connection is essentially a female one or that it even exists. Glendinning (1994) offers a very persuasive argument that females have become just as separated from Creation in urban or agricultural societies as males.
Further, this strong anthropocentrism has two forms: “In the aggressive sense it refers to acts of commission—that is, to overt acts of discrimination—whereas in the passive sense it refers to acts of omission—that is, to actions and decisions that “innocently” overlook certain beings or entities by virtue of the fact these beings or entities simply do not figure in one’s awareness” (Fox, 1990, p. 21).

While Fox has done an admirable job in providing a critique of what he calls “the anthropocentric fallacy,” he has, unfortunately, so far neglected to provide a similar investigation of anthropomorphism—a dangerous oversight in that this term popularly carries extremely negative connotations and can still be unfavorably associated with Fox’s “weak” sense of anthropocentrism, e.g., the anthropomorphism of Bambi. Although a thorough analysis of anthropomorphism must wait until Chapter Six, where it will be shown that at least one version of anthropomorphism is actually central to the health of all ecosophies, an initial investigation may usefully be accomplished here by borrowing the technique used by Fox to clarify the different meanings of anthropocentrism.

As with anthropocentrism, the term anthropomorphism can be understood in a weak, trivial, and tautological sense. What this definition hides, however, is the incredible complexity represented by the concept. To be sure, weak anthropomorphism is absurd in the context of, say, Disney’s 101 Dalmatians. But what are we to make of the autochthonic shaman who seems quite capable of understanding the emotions and thoughts of a wolf, jaguar, or cariboo? Can we so quickly deny the validity of John Seed’s identification with the rainforest when others who share the same continent, the Australian Aborigines, have for millennia claimed, and their continued existence offers support for the power of this claim, to understand and follow the instructions and dictates of Australian landforms (Stanner, 1979)? Admittedly, the strong anthropomorphic phenomena, the ability of non-human entities to adopt the morph of humanity to the extent that real and
substantial trans-species communication is possible, is difficult for Euro-centric peoples to understand, immersed as we are in millennia of Christian and scientific traditions which deny any link between humans and the rest of Creation. However, the mosaic of human cultures provides endless accounts and actual examples of strong anthropomorphic events, events that both science and Christianity have never been able to account for with any alternative explanatory model beyond simple derision and disbelief. Paradoxically, recent scientific evidence does lend credence to the notion that at least some animals, e.g., chimpanzees and various whales, do communicate, do possess complex social structures and do have emotions which are remarkably similar to the human (Goodall, 1990; Midgley, 1984; Griffin, 1984). Surely, such evidence at least suggests that some trans-species communication and understanding is possible. To anticipate Chapter Six, then, there does seem to be adequate evidence to suppose that at least some types of very deep and significant anthropomorphism are possible. Therefore, any criticism of Deep Ecology which is based on an argument that anthropomorphism is an impossibility must be viewed cautiously, if not completely rejected.

Since, as we have seen, it is at least theoretically possible for a non-anthropocentric and strong anthropomorphism to exist, the second plank of this criticism of Deep Ecology, that no Self can exist because a strong anthropomorphism and a valid non-anthropocentric attitude do not exist, is immediately called into question. Indeed, even the secondary supportive argument for this position, the ontological contention that no evidence for such a Self exists, is open to question. As with the critique of anthropomorphism, this claim rests almost completely on disregarding and ignoring firmly held beliefs in many autochthonic and several minority Euro-progenic cultures (Duerr, 1985). Further, such a position also denies the validity of a great body of work which has been done in the disciplines of
psychology and philosophy. Both the structural and the ontological grounds of the criticism of the existence of the Self must, then, be called into question. Finally, with both preceding planks having been called into question, the ultimate claim of this criticism, that Deep Ecology is not really deep at all but simply a reflection of the selfish desires of deep ecologists, appears quite shallow. Alternatively, of course, a deep ecologist could agree with this contention: S/he has always claimed validly on Selfish grounds.

4.4 Criticism Three: Deep Ecology as Misanthropic and Anti-human

Another criticism of Deep Ecology’s non-anthropocentric stand has been the claim that deep ecologists are merely misanthropes, individuals motivated by a deep dislike of all humanity. Much of the basis for this claim is the result of (purposeful?) misunderstandings of statements made by leading deep ecologists, particularly Dave Forman and other Earth First!ers, with regards to both aid to the developing world and the ideal global human population level (Foreman, 1991; Bookchin and Foreman, 1991). Although theoreticians from across the political and philosophical spectrum have leveled this charge against Deep Ecology, Murray Bookchin, the founder of the anarchistic Social Ecology movement, has been the most vocal in asserting that deep ecologists simply don’t like humans. Briefly, Bookchin accepts the theoretical validity of Deep Ecology’s non-anthropocentric stance. But he claims that it inevitably leads to a misanthropic position which he feels is reflected both in Foreman’s assertion that further aid to the developing world should be halted so that population levels there can return to a “natural,” sustainable

27 Even Christianity has produced arguments for the existence of something very similar to the Self, although this entity is usually labeled the Body of God. This panentheistic position, however, still differs from the Deep Ecological understanding of Creation because it always retains the central anthropocentric presupposition of Christianity, that only humans, constructed as they are in the image of God, have souls and can participate in salvation. See Fox (1988, 1991) and Berry (1988) for modern manifestations of this panentheist argument and Glacken (1967) for a classical treatment.
level, and in such Earth First! slogans as “Back to the Pleistocene!” which reflect a similar desire for drastic reductions in global human population levels. Further, Bookchin has asserted that such positions conceal both a racist and classist attitude because the individuals and groups who utter them, typically white and middle class, are precisely those who have the best chances of surviving such “die-back.” This criticism, then, accuses Deep Ecology of supporting misanthropy, in general, and a racist and classist misanthropy, in particular.

While several deep ecologists have tried to refute these charges (Eckersley, 1992) I would suggest that such efforts are doomed. A more theoretically productive response would be to accept that Deep Ecology can be seen in a racist and classist misanthropic light from within the anthropocentric Euro-progenic Enlightenment traditions, and then show how that Enlightenment approach is flawed through an exploration of the non-anthropocentric autochthonic roots of Deep Ecology. In other words, deep ecologists who ignore MacIntyre’s warnings as to untranslatability and attempt to defend themselves from the anthropocentric charges of a tradition rooted in anthropocentrism while limiting themselves to using the same anthropocentric techniques, concepts and language of that tradition, are both bound to fail and neglecting an opportunity to continue the development of their own position. There is at least prima facie evidence for the existence of such a new non-anthropocentric autochthonic social theory. From its beginnings, Deep Ecology has claimed that its concern with fostering diversity extends to the diversity of humans and their cultures (Naess, 1973). Further, Deep Ecology has always had autochthonic roots, and many deep ecologists have worked tirelessly with autochthonic groups to protect cultures and homelands (Devall and Sessions, 1985). What is needed now is for deep ecologists to explore and reveal what could be called autochthonic, Deep Ecological
“humanism” in an effort to clearly lay out the precepts by which deep ecologists are to relate to their human neighbors. This is the project I begin to take up in Chapter Six.

4.5 Criticism Four: Deep Ecology As a Grand Theory

The third criticism of Deep Ecology, usually leveled by individuals concerned with the future of the developing world, is that Deep Ecology is simply another imperial Grand Theory created by individuals in the developed world who want to impose it on the developing world so that they can assure the continued existence of a particular type of luxury item, large wilderness areas open to politically correct forms of tourism. Because Guha (1989) provides a particularly cogent version of this type of criticism I here introduce an extended quote from his seminal article in Environmental Ethics:

The emphasis on wilderness is positively harmful when applied to the Third World. If in the US the preservationist/utilitarian division is seen as mirroring the conflict between the “people” and “interests,” in countries such as India the situation is very nearly the reverse. Because India is a long settled and densely populated country in which agrarian populations have a finely balanced relationship with nature, the setting of wilderness areas has resulted in a direct transfer of resources from the poor to the rich. . . . The initial impetus for setting up parks for the tiger and other large mammals such as the rhinoceros and elephant came from two social groups, first, a class of ex-hunters turned conservationists belonging mostly to the declining Indian feudal elite and second, representatives of international agencies, such as the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN), seeking to transplant the American system of national parks onto Indian soil. In no case have the needs of the local population been taken into account, and as in many parts of Africa, the designated wildlands are managed primarily for the benefit of rich tourists. . . . in consequence, environmental problems that impinge far more directly on the lives of the poor—e.g., fuel, fodder, water shortages, soil erosion, and air and water pollution—have not been adequately addressed. Deep Ecology provides, perhaps unwittingly, a justification for the continuation of such narrow and inequitable conservation practices under a newly acquired radical guise. Increasingly, the international conservation elite is using the philosophical, moral, and scientific arguments used by deep ecologists in advancing their wilderness crusade. . . . Daniel Janzen argues that only biologists have the competence to decide how the tropical landscape should be used. As “the representatives of the natural world,” biologists are “in charge of the future of tropical ecology,” and. . . . “if
biologists want a tropics in which to biologize, they are going to have to buy it with care, energy, effort, strategy, tactics, time, and cash.

This frankly imperialistic manifesto highlights the multiple dangers of the preoccupation with wilderness preservation that is characteristic of Deep Ecology... (p.75-76)

Guha goes on to claim that another manifestation of this imperialism has been the “Orientalist” appropriation by Deep Ecology of selected eastern spiritual traditions: “Even an intensely political, pragmatic, and Christian influenced thinker such as Gandhi has been accorded a wholly undeserved place in the Deep Ecological pantheon. Thus, the Zen teacher Robert Aiken Roshi makes the strange claim that Gandhi’s thought was not human-centered and that he practiced an embryonic form of Deep Ecology which is "traditionally Eastern and is found with differing emphasis in Hinduism, Taoism and in the Theraveda and Mahayana Buddhism"’ (Guha, 1989, p.76). Further, “this reading of Eastern traditions is selective and does not bother to differentiate between alternate (and changing) religious and cultural traditions; as it stands, it does considerable violence to the historical record” (Guha, 1989, p. 77).

Guha then attempts to show how the German Green movement and the general Indian environmental movement are superior to Deep Ecology in that they recognize two issues which Guha feels are overlooked by Deep Ecology: First, by realizing that for many sectors of society environmental concerns are more a matter of survival than of enhancing their quality of life and second, by realizing that successful and justifiable environmentalism must address the redistribution of wealth and power. In conclusion, Guha states:

it is no accident that Star Wars technology and Deep Ecology both find their fullest expression in that leading sector of Western civilization, California... Deep Ecology runs parallel to the consumer society without seriously questioning its ecological and socio-political basis... A truly radical ecology in the American context ought to work toward a synthesis of the appropriate technology, alternate life-style, and peace movements. By making the (largely spurious) anthropocentric-biocentric distinction central to the debate, deep ecologists may have appropriated the moral high ground,
but they are at the same time doing a serious disservice to American and global environmentalism (Guha, 1989, pp. 79-83).

A Deep Ecological response to this criticism must be cautious. While Guha does have a potentially valid point with regards to the nationalism to be found within the American variant of Deep Ecology (see above p. 65), it must also be noted that the overall validity of his critique is dependent upon accepting a number of his assumptions with regards the entire Deep Ecology movement. For instance, Guha seems to assume 1) that the American form of Deep Ecology is focused solely on the creation of more national parks, 2) that such national parks are a peculiarly American phenomenon, and 3) that this focus has led to a wide acceptance of deep ecologists by American biologists and park officials, the WWF, and the IUCN. A reading of the literature, however, must call all of these assumptions into doubt. First, while it is true that the first officially labeled “national” park was Yellowstone National Park in the United States, which was established in 1872, even a shallow exposure to the history of parks and protected areas reveals that American National Parks are only the latest manifestations of a pan-cultural conservationist trend which has been active for thousands of years through the formation and recognition of sacred protected areas, other types of public parks, and royal hunting preserves. Indeed, India had protected areas, usually royal hunting preserves from which everybody but royalty and their guests were excluded, long before the European arrival in North America. The only real variant which the American government introduced was to officially recognize, though the use of the term “national,” that these protected areas were the property of all the citizens of the nation and not just an elite.

Second, Guha’s assumption that American Deep Ecology is solely or even primarily focused on the creation of more of these parks again must raise questions as to the depth of his exposure to American Deep Ecological literature. In my own rather extensive literature review of the movement, I have not found one deep ecologist
advocating the creation of more national parks. Indeed, virtually every deep ecologist I have read has argued for the destruction of the national park system in favor of a large network of wilderness areas which could include some forms of human communities as long as their activities were ecologically appropriate (see the various issues of *Wild Earth* (ISSN 1055-1166), the journal of The Cenozoic Society, for more information on this proposed network). This position should come as no surprise to anyone familiar with Deep Ecology's concern with creating space for the continuation or re-creation of autochthonic cultures.

What Guha seems to have done here is to conflate the notion of a park with that of a wilderness area, a conflation that is not appropriate with regards Deep Ecology. Guha's action also allows him to make the accusation that deep ecologists do not care about local people because they do not recognize the concerns of "poor and landless peasants, women, and tribals" when they advocate the creation of protected areas (Guha, 1989, p.81). Turning again to the literature, it quickly becomes obvious that most deep ecologists would argue that Guha is being rather simplistic in his identification of these groups as a united or homogeneous entity. In fact, tribals are often locked in conflict with peasants over the creation of the Deep Ecological type of wilderness areas, which they see as a way of protecting their homeland both from the ecologically destructive actions of peasant farmers and from becoming the humanly depopulated type of parks which are often advocated by biologists concerned with studying "nature." On a similar note, the wide diversity of opinions on wilderness and Deep Ecology generated by women must raise doubts about Guha's inclusion of this group with both/either peasants and tribals.

Right away then, we can see that Guha's third assumption, that deep ecologists are necessarily allies of a particular type of biologist, or indeed that "Deep Ecology runs parallel to the consumer economy," is not particularly valid. Further evidence for the
weakness of this assumption can be found in Guha’s assertion that Deep Ecology is not concerned with either the formation and adoption of appropriate technology or with the furthering of peace; that it is, in fact, linked in some way to ecologically and humanly dangerous “Star Wars technology” (Guha, 1989, p. 79). Again, when we turn to the literature we find that this assumption is only partly true. Deep ecologists are very concerned about appropriate technology and the spread of peace. However, and it is this which may have pushed the manifestly liberal Guha to make his assertions in this area, deep ecologists are very leery about categorically accepting all that has been called appropriate technology and all that has been advocated as peace. They note, for instance, that many forms of so-called appropriate technology, particularly those having to do with food production, and many peace initiatives, specifically certain types of “global education,” have had devastating effects both on tribal cultures and the rest of Creation (Bowers 1993a; 1993b). In general, however, the literature cannot help but indicate that deep ecologists are fundamentally for peace and appropriate technology, as long as the peace and the technology are applicable and appropriate for all of Creation.

A final word needs to be said with regards Guha’s assertion that Deep Ecology is now to be understood as a particularly American position, its corollary that this position must now be understood as being distinct from, say, that of the German Green Party, and his accusation that American Deep Ecology is guilty of an “Orientalist” appropriation of Eastern spiritualities. I have stated previously (see p. 65) that there is a concern that an Americanization of Deep Ecology may be occurring. Indeed, it is in part with the view of slowing or halting this trend that I undertake the work in Chapters Five and Six. However, in the interests of accuracy, it must also be noted both that some American deep ecologists have been and are exploring non-American roots as bases for ecosophies and that there are very strong theoretical, political, and activist links between many American deep ecologists
and their counterparts in other areas of the world—including the German Greens (Manes, 1990). It should further be noted that the structure of Deep Ecology would predict that there would be significant differences between these different types of Deep Ecology; according to Naess and Fox, what ultimately binds these groups is not an identical political platform but a common belief both in the Self and/or, potentially (recognizing Fox’s hesitations), in the very general Eight Point Platform. Guha, in fact, may be creating an American straw-horse through importing a liberal desire to understand an eclectic Deep Ecology as separate nationalistic movements necessarily divorced from one another. This same liberal tendency may very well be at the root of his “Orientalist” assertion, an assertion he makes with no supporting documentation and in the face of statements quite to the contrary by such individuals as the Dalai Lama (Badner, 1990).

In the end, it must be admitted that this “Third World” (to use Guha’s term) attempt to understand Deep Ecology as a new imperialism fails. Indeed, it supports much of Deep Ecology’s political theorizing through revealing the push within liberalism to see things only through an imperialistic, nationalist, and anthropocentric lens. Deep Ecology, on the other hand, insists that peasants and tribals are not united within nation states in a struggle against a brutish “Nature”; that protected wilderness areas do not need to be understood solely as de-humanized portions of the eco-system set aside only to serve the interests of elites; that groups of people within different nation-states and coming from different cultural backgrounds can, at some level, share similar positions.

Another type of imperialist charge against Deep Ecology has been put forth by Nietzschean postmodernists. These theoreticians are concerned with the power which Grand Theories (knowledge structures which are purported to be universally true in all areas and at all times) have to colonize and dominate our lives to the detriment of individual and cultural freedom. Their response to such Grand Theories has been to argue that they
do not, in fact, exist as objective truth; that they are mere, albeit strong, manifestations of socially constructed power. Derrida (Skinner, 1991), for instance, has claimed that all the world is a series of socially constructed texts which we must each interpret as we see fit, i.e., without the interference of imposed systems of “truth,” a process a postmodernist would call “deconstruction.” Foucault (1980, 1990), on the other hand, has been more cautious about what he feels constitutes texts and has reserved judgment on the ontological nature of bodies and power. Instead, Foucault has focused on proving that power and knowledge are indissolubly linked, an entity that he calls power/knowledge, and in the process of creating and controlling the world. To defeat this imperial force, Foucault suggests a focus on local, experiential reality as opposed to belief and conformity with a remote, supposedly superior truth. Deleuze (Hardt, 1993), to take a third example, has attempted the creation of a purely non-Hegelian, almost nihilistic, philosophy which denies commonly accepted theories of historicity and agency in favor of a notion that life is continually being destroyed and created as we experience it. Despite all these differences, and there are many many more of them in this philosophical fold known for its eclectic nature, what unifies most such postmodernists with regards to Deep Ecology is a suspicion that deep ecologists are busy participating in the construction of another Grand Theory, built around a supposedly objective understanding of ecology, which will be used to control people and destroy local cultures.

Again, a Deep Ecological response to this type of critique must be lukewarm. On the one hand, every deep ecologist would agree with a postmodern position which held that most of what is constituted as objective knowledge is, in reality, extremely subjective in its anthropocentric stance, e.g., the “knowledge” which purports to support the “truth” that only humans have a “sophisticated” form of communication called language. However, Deep Ecology must part company with those postmodern positions which hold that
everything, that every type of knowledge or theory of knowledge, is necessarily a human-spawned social creation which is essentially fictitious. For instance, it is very true that most people here in Saskatchewan participate in the continual re-creation of widely held "knowledge" about black bears which holds that these creatures are vicious, unpredictable killers of innocent human campers. Deep ecologists would side with postmodernists on the position that this "knowledge" can be deconstructed in such a way as to prove that its creation has been motivated by particular societal interests, say in making urban life more appealing then it actually is through a comparison with terrifying Nature. Further, deep ecologists would support a position, such as Foucault's, which would encourage people to develop their own local knowledge about particular local bears through actually getting out into the bush and interacting with them. However, deep ecologists would not agree with the postmodern position that all such knowledge is socially constructed: it is a fact that black bears are omnivores and that, under the right circumstance, say right before hibernation during a poor berry year, a particular bear might enjoy a meal of fatty urban human; it is a fact that extinction is forever; it is a fact that human activity obliterated the passenger pigeon and almost killed off the bison. Deep Ecology, then, differs from most Nietzschean postmodernist theory by making a distinction between humanly generated and anthropocentric Grand Theories, which they would agree can usually be deconstructed to show anthropocentric power at work, and a non-anthropocentric Grand Theory of Life which, though forever resistant to complete
comprehension, can and should guide our lives.\textsuperscript{28,29}

4.6 Criticism Five: Deep Ecology Lacks An Effective, Practical Ethic

The final type of criticism of Deep Ecology holds that it is simply impractical because, short of advocating some sort of “mystical” connection with Creation, Deep Ecology does not provide any concrete recommendations for action. Indeed, this so-called “mystical” element is often held to preclude the emergence of any such recommendations and to actually encourage the emergence of a new totalitarian, anti-intellectual “priesthood.” A fairly typical example of this criticism, though unusually virulent, is provided by Roseneau (1992), who claims that Deep Ecology is simply a close relation of what she calls “affirmative postmodernism.”

The "Deep Ecology" movement takes the environmental concerns of the affirmative postmodernists and adds a mystical religious dimension to the New Age incursions into the realm of natural science. . . . Inspired by Heidegger and ancient Chinese philosophy, "Deep Ecology" is anti-growth and holistic. . . . These anti-rationalist postmodern New Age movements are. . . anti-intellectual because intellectuals transmit the values of modern science and reason. . . . These New Age groups are not mobilized by issues that imply superior value systems (logocentric in character) such as racial justice, equal opportunity, and affirmative action. . . . As a result of the extreme openness, tolerance, and pluralism of affirmative postmodernism, so much is conceded that it risks not only losing its identity, but it may also lose the ability to defend itself against the charlatans (sects, New Age philosophy, mythology, and witchcraft) who would literally make social science little more than a carnival. (p. 150 - 181)

\textsuperscript{28} Foucault may be an exception to this state of general antagonism between Deep Ecology and Nietzschean postmodern theory because his focus on the local may very well provide possibilities for the creation of ecosophies. An investigation of Foucault’s attitudes towards non-human Creation and of the potential his thought has for Deep Ecology would be a fascinating and productive project.

\textsuperscript{29} Deep Ecology would have the same type of objection to the feminist version of the theory of social construction.
On Roseneau’s view, Deep Ecology is clearly the enemy of rationalism and, thus, is clearly incapable of providing rational guidance in today’s world. Other authors, such as Bramwell (1989), have refined this position and purport to show 1) that Deep Ecology is a theoretically incoherent hodgepodge of conflicting political and philosophical positions, 2) that all these positions do, however, share an anti-rational and anti-intellectual bias, 3) that this bias both leads deep ecologists to deny the validity of traditional science and social science and prevents them from proposing any concrete programs for action in ethics or the natural sciences and, 4) that the result of this lack of a practical and identifiable program for action will be, at best, a rampant individualism amidst the ruins of Euro-progenic intellectual culture or, at worst, a new uncritical fundamentalist “ecologism” reminiscent of the Catholic Church in Mediaeval Europe. As Bramwell states at the end of her seminal work, *Ecology in the 20th Century:*

> What after all today’s ecological movement is advocating is a return to primitivism [by which she means either Hobbesian individualism or superstitious obedience to a powerful priesthood], and the abandonment of treasure and knowledge to tribes and nations in foreign lands who pose no threat to us. Consciously or otherwise, this is a death wish. . . . For today’s ecologists, their hope of regeneration presupposes a return to primitivism, and thus, whether they wish to enunciate it or not, concomitant anarchy. . . .
> The father of the movement is an utter rejection of all that is, and for at least three millennia all that was. (Bramwell, 1989, p. 248)

Most aspects of this critique are fairly easy for Deep Ecology to absolutely refute. Any reading of the Deep Ecological literature, for instance, particularly those pieces written by Naess (1989), Fox (1990), Eckersley (1992), or Manes (1990), quickly reveals both that Deep Ecology is not categorically anti-rational or anti-intellectual and that academically minded deep ecologists have tried, with some success, to make sense out of the diversity of ecosophies. Indeed, Deep Ecology can be viewed as encouraging the growth of rational and intellectual understandings of issues, such as autochthonic philosophy, that have traditionally been ignored by Euro-progenic academics. An example of this is the
encouragement given by deep ecologists to further investigations into the fields of both Conservation Biology and Traditional Ecological Knowledge.

It is true, however, that academic Deep Ecology, at least, is opposed to those incestuous types of rationalism and intellectualism which spawn beliefs that Euro-progenic intellectual and rational achievements are “all that is, and for at least three millennia all that was” (Bramwell, 1989, p. 248). Yet, my experiences with popular manifestations of Deep Ecology, with Earth First!ers for instance, lead me to believe that the anti-rationalism and anti-intellectualism found there are not so much a part and parcel of Deep Ecology qua Deep Ecology as a manifestation of the general public disillusionment with the increasingly anti-human manifestations of rationality and intellectualism (see, as an example, the work of J. Ralston Saul, 1992, 1995).

Points three and four of Bramwell’s critique are harder for Deep Ecology to completely refute. Because deep ecologists believe that Creation is in extreme danger of being irreparably damaged, at least to the extent that the ecological conditions which keep most vertebrate species alive are in peril, they have spent the vast majority of their time and energy in critiquing the roles which traditional Euro-progenic rationality and intellectualism have played in supporting this destruction. The reasoning behind this focus has been best expressed in the various Earth First! exhortations to at least save what is left of damaged ecosystems, including their human inhabitants, before devoting time to repairing what has already been seriously injured (Manes, 1990; Foreman, 1991). It may be, though, since what Deep Ecology deems as being worthy of fighting for is traditionally devalued, ignored, or viewed with extreme paternalistic distaste by traditional Euro-progenic academics, that the entire Deep Ecology movement is perceived as engaging in dangerous nihilist or anti-Progress activities. Devall, for instance, has stated that “The movement grows as a resistance movement among the marginal regions of developing and developed
nations. . . . Many supporters of Deep Ecology find common cause with and support politically oppressed peoples in many Third World nations. Sometimes these are collectively called the fourth world, tribal peoples who are displaced by road building, dam building or agricultural development projects in Brazil, India or Mexico” (Devall, 1988, p.134). In a similar vein, Naess continues to insist that “One of the basic similarities between socialist attitudes and ecological attitudes in politics is stress on social justice and stress on social costs of technology. . . . The utopias of green societies point towards a kind of direct democracy with local control of the means of production” (Naess, 1989, p. 157-158). Since both the political left and the political right have traditionally seen tribals as embarrassing obstacles to progress, and since the left has, in recent years, joined the right in accepting the “fact” that governments and businesses are necessary structures within the “modern” culture, these Deep Ecological calls for direct democracy and alliances with the Fourth World can be seen, from the “Faith in Progress” point of view at least, as a nihilistic and anti-Progress argument for a return to “primitivism.”

However, whatever the validity of the Deep Ecology argument for an immediate focus on preservation, and whatever the prejudices which lead Euro-progenic academics to the knee-jerk conclusion that Deep Ecology is advocating a return to “primitivism,” deep ecologists need to admit that they have so far neglected to devote much time or energy to creating a theoretically and practically grounded “ethic.” As a reading of any of the histories of radical ecology reveals, this lack of an ethics has sometimes led to both rank individual relativism and messianism (Foreman, 1991; Scarce, 1990).

Furthermore, deep ecologists must admit that this lack of a developed ethic may actually be only one part of a larger problem: Fox’s definition of Deep Ecology using the concept of the Self. While it is true, as we have seen, that Fox’s argument solves some of the issues surrounding Deep Ecology, such a heavy reliance on the Self as a sole definition
for Deep Ecology raises an even more fundamental problematic; the hermeneutical problem of understanding. An argument can be made, in other words, that the psychological language of the Self is simply too restrictive to offer deep ecologists a way of clearly delineating both what they believe in and what constitutes ecosophies. On MacIntyre's view, for instance—a view which, as we have seen, is even shared by many of his critics—a culture can only be understood through acquiring a hermeneutical understanding of its narrative genre, which is then used to understand the practical (and, for MacIntyre, moral) nature of its social institutions. From this point of view, attempting to define Deep Ecology, or any other tradition, solely or even primarily through the use of a psychological concept such as the Self is problematic because there are serious questions which must arise both about the ability of psychological language or narrative genre to fully carry a tradition and about the possibility of understanding social institutions purely from a psychological stance. Evidence to support this hesitation is available in failed attempts at just such an exercise (Skinner, 1975).

To illustrate this point using an ecological example, consider, again, the Amish. Wendell Berry (1977, 1981, 1983, 1990) has argued, very persuasively, that these individuals inhabit an ecologically sustainable culture based on a particular practice of farming, which is itself derived from their interpretation of a Christian's proper role in Creation. Other scholars who have studied the Amish agree with Berry's interpretation, pointing out that the Amish stress on practiced humility both separates them from most other Christian groups and encourages them to care deeply for the health of the land on which they live (Hostetler, 1980; Kraybill, 1989). Further, the Amish would also subscribe to several, if not all, of the eight points of the Platform for Deep Ecology (the Amish would probably hesitate to fully accept Point Four regarding a decrease in human population).
Despite all these arguments, Fox would not consider the Amish a Deep Ecological ecosophy because they most certainly do not believe in his version of the Deep Ecological Self. Further, the restricted nature of the psychologically-based narrative genre of the Self prevents a researcher from doing any substantive research on the Amish to uncover just how they might be considered to be related to Deep Ecology. On Fox’s view, membership in the Deep Ecological family is very much an all or nothing uni-dimensional affair: either a culture believes in the Self and is an ecosophy, or it does not and is completely incomprehensible as an ecosophy. Yet, even if a culture is an ecosophy on Fox’s definition, the restrictive nature of the narrative genre of the Self would effectively preclude its substantive investigation: how, for instance, could psychological language be used to do a thorough study of, say, Australian Aborigines or a !Kung band? In the end, then, it must be admitted that Fox’s definition of Deep Ecology fails to provide a fully useful way to investigate or understand Deep Ecology because the psychological nature of its narrative genre is simply too restrictive to fully explain the diversity of human practices.

4.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have reviewed and raised serious questions about the validity of some of the major criticisms of Deep Ecology. Many of these criticism are quite shallow and have resulted more from an inadequate exposure to the ecophilosophical literature than from any serious philosophical flaw within Deep Ecology. However, it is also clear that Deep Ecology has failed to fully investigate several issues, notably anthropomorphism and its connection to the notion of community. This failure has also meant that Deep Ecology so far lacks a well developed ethic. It should also be noted that there are several significant similarities between Deep Ecology (according to Naess’s numerous writings) and MacIntyre’s theory. Both ecosophies and traditions, for instance, are locally grounded
holistic communities which are linked hierarchically through shared elements of what MacIntyre would call their narrative genres. Further, both MacIntyre and deep ecologists would agree that morality must be understood as embodied social action, not merely conversation. Finally, however, Deep Ecology’s weakness is the exact converse of MacIntyre’s: While MacIntyre has a well-worked-out ethics, he lacks a solid grounding for his notion of community; while Deep Ecology has at least a moderately well worked out notion of what should, at least theoretically, constitute community—all human and non-human entities present in a particular locale—it lacks both a clear understanding of what its defining narrative genre should be and a concomitant, well-worked-out ethics. There are also other important differences between these two bodies of theory, notably the issue of anthropocentrism, which need to be solved before they can support each other. It is to the task of resolving these issues and melding MacIntyre and Deep Ecology that I turn in Chapter Five.
5. DEEP MACINTYRIAN ECOLOGY

5.1 Introduction

In Chapter One, I presented the specific problem this study seeks to solve: What and where is an educational system which would ensure the continued survival of the human species within Creation? My thesis is that such an education can be found within the various ecosophies which together constitute the philosophical orientation known as Deep Ecology. However, I also made it clear in the first chapter that the quest for this new education would, perforce, be epistemological because educational practices are embedded within particular cultural traditions, each of which uses a particular language. Thus, a corollary to my overall thesis is a claim that to understand a particular form of learning requires a fluency in the language within which that form of learning has been constructed and operates. One of my tasks, then, must be to uncover a language tradition within which an investigation of Deep Ecological education occur.

To begin this process, I devoted Chapter Two to an investigation of the philosophy of Alasdair MacIntyre. To briefly review, MacIntyre holds that the human experience needs to be understood as a mosaic of particular traditions each of which is constructed out of those particular, local practices that humans must successfully engage in in order to survive and flourish in that particular place. Further, MacIntyre makes a convincing argument that each such tradition carries with it a particular morality, where morality is understood in the classical Greek sense of manifested virtue. Each tradition also carries its
own educational process, the prime object of which is the perpetuation of the tradition through the continuing moral education of its members within its constitutive practices.

MacIntyre's position differs from that of the absolute relativist in two ways. First, MacIntyre argues that the community as a whole, continuously involved in all of its practices, determines what constitutes appropriate virtues. Second, MacIntyre demonstrates that rational discussion among communities (or within communities) requires the ability on the part of the disputing individuals to completely understand, and be comfortable within, the narrative genres of the traditions in question. Thus, MacIntyre argues that the current, chaotic state of moral discussion is the result of a catastrophe which destroyed these original moral traditions, and advocates returning to what he sees as the ideal form of these original communities, the Greek-type city-state. However, I finished Chapter Two with an examination of several critiques of MacIntyre which show that his position is inadequate because he failed to provide adequate solutions for problems with natural law theory, some forms of relativism, and anthropocentrism.

In Chapters Three and Four, I examined the philosophical position known as Deep Ecology. Again, I argued that Deep Ecology is generally coherent, particularly from the point of view of its categorical demand that the desires and needs of non-human aspects of Creation be included in any discussion concerning the morality of human actions. Further, I noted important similarities between Deep Ecology and MacIntyre's theory which suggest that both theories could offer support for one another. However, several weakness within Deep Ecology prevent it from becoming the powerful force for change it could be. One notable weakness is a lack of a clear ethic to guide human action, although there does seem to be an implicit argument with the Deep Ecology literature for a virtue-based morality. Another weakness is an absence of a clear notion of how communication among different members of the Deep Ecological community, both human and non-human, is
successfully achieved, the problem of anthropomorphism. I also noted that from an epistemological point of view, both these difficulties are a result of an over reliance on the psychological notion of the Deep Ecological Self as the definitional aspect of an ecosophy, which leads to a weak and problematic Deep Ecological narrative genre.

In this chapter I argue that Deep Ecology can be alternatively defined as a mosaic of Mythic stories about human existence. This understanding of Deep Ecology as narrative will clearly demonstrate its similarities with MacIntyre’s Aristotelianism and, thus, allow each to provide answers to the other’s problems. I begin the chapter by reviewing the needs of both Deep Ecology and MacIntyre’s Aristotelianism. I then provide an alternative definition of Deep Ecology from the point of view of Post-Historic Primitivism (PHP), a definition which focuses on the Mythic nature of the Eight Point Platform. I argue that this understanding of Deep Ecology, Deep Ecology(PhP), possesses an understanding of community that provides solutions both to MacIntyre’s problems and to the problems with a Self-centered Deep Ecology that I identified in Chapter Three. In Chapter Six, I demonstrate how MacIntyre’s virtue-based ethical system can be grafted onto Deep Ecology(PhP)’s notion of community to create a holistic, flexible, and coherent philosophical position embedded within a distinctive narrative genre. I argue that this new understanding of Deep Ecology offers the epistemological possibility for both rational evaluation of conflicting moral theories (MacIntyre’s goal) and an understanding of one viable type of non-anthropocentric ethic, Wild Virtue (the goal of Deep Ecology). Chapter Seven demonstrates how this narrative genre is hermetically accessible to Euro-progenic academics who search for an educational theory and practice of education which could foster ecologically sustainable communities.
5.2 The Theoretical Problems With MacIntyre and Deep Ecology

MacIntyre’s vision of a virtue-based morality rests on a particular notion of community. On the one hand, since virtues are integral parts of the practices which together form particular traditions, and since a tradition, by definition, is the sum total of all the practices necessary to fulfill the requirements of life in a particular place, MacIntyre’s ideal community must be numerically large enough and technologically diverse enough to provide for itself. On the other hand, since the coherency of a tradition is dependent upon a shared and deep understanding of that tradition’s narrative genre by all its members, and since there is a definite idea within MacIntyre’s writings that this immersion must be experiential, MacIntyre’s community must be small enough to allow for each individual member to be fully and personally immersed in it. So, on this definition, neither a prison nor a large nation-state, e.g., Canada, could be a community which produced a viable, that is to say temporally sustainable and self-replicating, tradition with a concomitant virtue-based morality. The former example may fulfill MacIntyre’s requirements with regards to immersion within a tradition’s language, but surely fails with regards to diversity of practices; the latter will certainly produce a full range of practices, yet will inevitably fail to ensure experiential immersion in one particular language because the area of the state and the size of its population will work to produce many quite distinct dialects or, indeed, separate narrative genres.

And, as we have seen in Chapter Two, even MacIntyre has difficulty using his own definition. Part of this problem can be attributed to semantic laziness. We like the notion of communities so we talk as if we lived in them; we speak of neighborhoods as communities, we talk of starting intentional communities, we talk of the community of nations. While it is important to note the desire for community life these types of
statements represent, an academically rigorous individual must be alert to the dangers raised by the sloppy usage of such an important term and demand semantic honesty.

The second, and more dangerous, part of the problem, the threat which is quite probably behind MacIntyre’s problematic use of the term “community” with regards to Scotland, has to do with MacIntyre’s lack of a coherent natural law theory, a lack which leads to his uncritical assumption that increasing technological sophistication can modify the definition of community. For instance, a MacIntyrian communitarian could hold that the practice of communication can become technologically advanced enough so that individuals spread over a wide area can experientially participate in what appears to be a regular “community” conversation: So, we have both Ross Perot encouraging participation in what he calls an “electronic town meeting” and other individuals claiming that the Internet will encourage the growth of a global village, or community, through encouraging and/or facilitating conversations between people from different cultures who are spatially separated by thousands of miles. Alternatively, this technological argument could hold that technological sophistication can modify or even eliminate some of the practices upon which traditions are built. Yet, Gary Nabhan (1982, 1989), for instance, has documented how the various technologies of well-drilling, water transportation and irrigation have completely changed the face of farming in the arid south-western United States; what was once a virtuous practice based on the necessity of sharing and conserving precious rain has become a sloppy, wasteful, and ecologically disastrous mechanized industry of food production.

It is this last technological possibility which most clearly lays out the magnitude of the technological challenge to MacIntyre’s original definition of community and his related ideas on morality. If technology can be used to replace the very way we experience and live within Creation, then questions must arise not only with regards to the centrality of
perception, practices, communities, and traditions in the human experience but also with regards to virtue morality, based as it is in immersion in community. Thus, if an Aristotelian-type, virtue-based ethics is to be a viable option in today’s world, it must be located within a social theory which clearly lays out how technology can either support communities, e.g., as an integral and supportive part of practices, or destroy them, e.g., by enabling or encouraging people to disassociate from one another and from their practices. It is just such a social theory which I will argue can be provided by a Post-Historic Primitive Deep Ecology.

But a Post-historic Primitive Deep Ecology does not just provide solutions to issues within MacIntyre’s position. As we saw in Chapter Three, Deep Ecology, in general, also faces some serious challenges. The most evident of these is Deep Ecology’s lack of a clear ethic to guide human actions. However, this lack of an ethic has been created because of a much more wide-ranging failure on the part of virtually all Deep Ecological theoreticians. While there has been much discussion within the literature on the importance of the Self and the importance of humans coming to the realization that we all live within “natural” communities, there has been almost no rigorous discussion of 1) how the notion of the Self is related to the Deep Ecological idea of “natural” Communities, 2) what these “natural” communities are and who and/or what can belong and, 3) how communication between community members occurs when community issues must be addressed.

As we saw in Chapter Three, some deep ecologists, following Fox, are worried that Deep Ecology defined as adherence to the Eight Point Platform is weak because it could allow for the existence of ecosophies which do not believe in the Self. Fox has argued, instead, that a particular philosophical position should be considered an ecosophy only if it incorporates the Deep Ecological notion of the Self. The problem with this strong focus on
the Self is that it is impractical in the sense that it fails to provide guidance for everyday life; it fails to provide a language or narrative genre with which to understand and construct our life stories within Creation. For instance, while Mathews’ (1991) development of “geometrodynamics” is a fascinating and academically worthwhile attempt to clarify the parameters and workings of the Deep Ecological Self, it is difficult see how 1) a non-academic could easily understand her theory or her language, and 2) how her theory or language could guide everyday actions.

Another group of deep ecologists, the post-historic primitives, begin to address some of these problems with Self-centered Deep Ecology through a redefinition of the role of the Eight Point Platform. The Post-Historic Primitive understanding of Deep Ecology is grounded in the realization that the primary characteristic of life on Earth is diversity and recognizes 1) that each of the eight points on the Platform is equally important, 2) that the Platform is outlining a complete, yet general, Deep Ecological way of life which will show diversity at the level of ecosophies because of the local and philosophical roots of each ecosophy, 3) that the Platform is describing a philosophy of community and, 4) that adherence to the spirit of the entire Platform is what should define an ecosophy as an ecosophy. In other words, post-historic primitives, instead of devoting their time and energy to the development of one highly complex theory of the Self, are attempting to re-create or un-cover complete and practical community-based narrative genres, and concomitant ethics, with which to guide their lives. In addition, post-historic primitives are aware that these narrative genres, if they are to avoid anthropocentrism, must be accessible to, and address the needs of, all members of the Deep Ecological community, both human and non-human. Thus, most of the post-historic primitive effort has so far been devoted to providing solutions to the questions of who constitutes communities and how communication between community members takes place. Yet, while this work has
resulted in some general ethical guidelines (see, for instance, Shepard, 1973, 1982, 1996; Glendinning, 1994; LaChapelle, 1988), a full post-historic primitive ethic awaits development. In the next section of this chapter, I will introduce Post-Historic Primitivism and summarize the results of its work on community composition, formation, and communication. In Chapter Six, I will demonstrate how MacIntyre’s understanding of virtue-based ethics could be incorporated to begin the construction of a general theory of Post-Historic Primitive ethics, something I will call Wild Virtue.

5.3 Post-historic Primitive Community: Anthropomorphic Communication

Perhaps the best place to begin an investigation of the Post-Historic Primitive position is with the term itself. Building on the work of Lynn White, Jr. (1967), Paul Shepard (1973, 1982, 1996) and Calvin Martin (1992) have constructed an argument for seeing History as a uni-directional and value-laden ideology which was developed and adopted by civilized, here meaning urban, peoples to set themselves off from surrounding autochthonic groups. History, according to Shepard and Martin, is typically fueled in its early forms by a belief in a sacred power that began the universe, created a Chosen People, and continues to work with these Chosen to bring about some Grand Event, usually perceived as something which will bring about the end of unilinear time. Because History does have a particular beginning, a particular end, and a particular mission, the Chosen usually understand themselves as having to work to actualize the plans of their God(dess) both against the clock and against all the other underprivileged (because not privy to the sacred plan) people on the planet (Martin, 1992, p. 63-66). History, however, does not need to retain its sacred roots to retain its power. In Euro-progenic cultures, for instance, a particular Historical interpretation of evolution has displaced the originally dominant Judeo-Christian notion of History. This evolutionary History, while nebulous about the
beginnings of life (or time), provides for a Chosen People, humanity in general and scientifically advanced humanity in particular, a wonderful mission, the never-ending pursuit of technological wonder, and a destination, absolute scientific knowledge of all that is. On the Post-Historic Primitive view, any and all urbanized cultures, whether Chinese, Hindu, or Aztec, have developed a History to explain and justify their imperialistic actions.

Seeing History as a particular ideology, argue Martin and Shepard, explains many of the actions of today’s “civilized” humans, Euro-progenic or not. Violence against those portions of Creation which are not a part or a product of the Chosen are understood as unimportant because it only has an impact on either non-important entities, because not part of the Chosen, e.g., non-domesticated plants, animals and landscapes, or not-so-important things, because not fully a part of the Chosen, e.g., “primitive” people who have not yet acquired “civilization,” or, in other words, a History. Because the Chosen are privy to the Great Plan, patently disastrous actions on their part, e.g., the exposure of hundreds of individuals to hazardous chemicals or industrial waste, are seen as sad (not tragic) but ultimately transient accidents, now safely and irrevocably in the past, which will never be repeated because the Chosen have learned from, and apologized for, them. What is exceptionally dangerous about this particular rationalization is the assumption of the Chosen, based on their perception that they are privy to the Great Plan, that their knowledge can be infallible and their mistakes excusable. Finally, the very high probability that the entire planet may be destroyed by the actions of the Chosen is unimportant because the missionary nature of the Final Solution, to know the entire universe absolutely, requires that we will leave here eventually anyway.

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30 See, for instance, the rationales that have excused such events as Love Canal, the Exxon Valdez accident, and numerous nuclear issues. The one theme which runs through all these rationales is that they are one-time accidents which won’t happen again because of improved technology.
The opposite of History, explain Martin and Shepard, is Myth. Because History has done such a thorough job of discrediting Myth, it is usually defined by “educated” people as a very unsophisticated type of ideology used either by “primitives,” children, or intellectually impoverished adults. Because Shepard is a recognized expert on the subject whose work I could not improve upon, I here introduce a rather lengthy quotation from his most recent work, The Others, which offers an alternative definition of Myth.

Unlike fairy tales (inventions of urban societies which require happy endings because their hearers are so distanced from their roots and awash in dismay and doubt), myths are intended to enlarge our sense of connections in a story of the cosmos—that is, of origins. They are simultaneously about the inner life of the individual and the gross forces of the world at large. As in other tales their characters often travel through landscapes, but myths are not set in abstract noplaces, nor merely in “a forest,” but at a unique mountain, lake, seashore, spring, or locale with its plant, animal, and spiritual inhabitants that echo in some way their own inner landscapes. Their events do not occur “once upon a time” but “in the beginning.” They do not ignore specific place and time but make it transcendent. . . . Fairy tales are addressed to personal growth, folktales to the social game, while myths have an inclusive sweep combined with unique reference, both exemplary and cosmological. . . . The protagonists are often people but also may be the sky, a huge snake, human genitals, fire, a giant bird, or any other aspect of the world. Monsters appear, things come once and vanish, some encounters happen inexplicably. Whims shake reality, tremors distort the universe, magic is common. Supernatural beings intervene, and animals play central or gratuitous roles. . . . Perhaps an even more prevalent theme is that of chance or “luck,” which is always out of personal control and yet always influenced by formalities and attitudes. The enigma of the myth is that luck is never truly fortuitous. We live in a world more complex than anyone can fully understand. . . . The broken shadow of structure teases the imagination of the listener, who has learned that no event is insignificant and none mean only what they at first seem. . . . The animals of a myth are avatars of cosmic skills who speak to one another and intermarry—an “as if” society sharing customs, a necessary fiction in the perception of the living stream as purposeful, sentient, communicative, and interdependent. . . . It has become fashionable to describe myths as though they were entirely about the psychic life of humans. . . . By contrast, the Navajos, for example, never overlooked a larger context for their coyote stories, a world in which people are surrounded by real coyotes that catch mice, scratch fleas, and defecate, coyotes which may symbolize aspects of the human psyche but never became such exclusive inhabitants of the personality that they disappeared from the whole community of life. . . . Myths may indeed illuminate unconscious processes, but the context in which that inner world came into being is ecological. (emphasis in original, Shepard, 1996, pp. 92-94)
On Shepard’s definition, then, Myth is quite different from History, particularly with reference to temporality, Great Plans, and the existence of a Chosen People. While this thesis is not long enough to provide an exhaustive study of these differences, the following pages will provide an investigation of how they differ in defining community, communication, and morality. What should be noted immediately, however, is their one commonality: both Myth and History must provide a cosmological explanation of existence. What the Post-Historic Primitive version of Deep Ecology is advocating, then, is a cultural return to Mythic, or “primitive,” ideologies which will, at the same time, retain memories of and explain our millennia-long immersion in History. It is important to note that post-historic primitives do insist that some accounting must given of our cultural infatuation with History. Post-Historic Primitivism is not calling for some impossible return to an original mythic culture: “post-historic” signifies that we must remain aware of and explain our journey through History. Thus, the Post-Historic Primitive position differs from the purely Mythic precisely in that it must account for History.

Post-historic primitives do not support a transformation of cultures based on either essentialist or structural arguments, e.g., humans are essentially manifestations of the Self or true ecosophies are systems which question deeply, because such transformations could still occur within History. What is significant about the Eight Point Platform, for a post-historic primitive, is that 1) it outlines just what type of guidance these new Myths must provide and 2) it provides a way for distinguishing and retrieving those parts of older Myths which have survived in various world Histories.

As Naess points out in his schematic (see above, p. 59), the Deep Ecology movement can be understood as a mosaic of specific ecosophies, each constructed from a wide variety of ultimate premises (Level One), which share a belief in the common Eight Point Platform (Level Two). Post-historic primitives would suggest that another level be
added to Naess’s schema, Level 1b, which recognized that while ecosophies are ultimately built on locally-derived norms and hypothesis, these local norms and hypothesis are usually, if not inevitably, related to certain Mythic remnants within larger philosophical positions, e.g., Buddhist, Taoist, atheist, etc. In this modified schematic, Level 1b represents locally generated ecosophies and Level 1 represents the philosophical positions to which the local ecosophies are related (e.g., P signifies the larger Protestant tradition, B signifies the Buddhist, C signifies the larger Confucian tradition). Level 2 still represents the Eight Point Platform which now, however, serves not only to bond the ecosophies together in the “deep, long range ecology movement,” but also to filter those aspects of other philosophical traditions (Histories) which fit with the Deep Ecological traditions (Myths), represented by the ecosophies (specific Myths), from those aspects which do not, represented by the unshaded areas (specific Histories) (see Figure 3). Level Three continues to represent the general guidelines generated by each ecosophy and Level Four the specific actions.

Figure 3 Post-historic Primitive Apron Diagram

(Modified from Naess, 1995, p. 71)
This Post-Historic Primitive understanding of Deep Ecology offers political and philosophical benefits for the study of the human experience. Politically, the Post-Historic Primitive vision of the role of the Eight Point Platform both discourages the tendency to try to develop and enforce a single version of Deep Ecology, e.g., a particular view of the Self, and allows individuals to see that their move to a deep ecological stance is not a leap to some new and foreign position but a re-valuation of previously suppressed elements of their own traditions. Both these political benefits are important. As we saw in Chapter Two, individuals have expressed concern about the potential for Deep Ecology to develop in imperialistic ways, on the one hand, and about the possibility that (an imperialistic) Deep Ecology would simply expropriate ideas from other cultures, on the other. On the Post-Historic Primitive view, both these dangers are avoided. Post-historic primitives are not saying that the Eight Point Platform is the Myth; rather, it represents the structure of all Myths and, as such, actually encourages the development of Mythic diversity. Further, many academics, both post-historic primitives and others, have done much work which shows how much of the content of Myths has survived within the world’s Historical cultures, usually in the form of literature (see, for instance, Graves, 1952, and Campbell, 1959). While accessing these Mythic fragments may be psychologically or academically uncomfortable for those of us raised and trained within Historic cultures, they are nevertheless there, so no necessity exists to explore other cultures for a deep ecological home.

Understanding Deep Ecology in this Post-Historic Primitive way also avoids all the pitfalls of other, more essentialist and/or structural definitions of the “deep, long-range environmental movement.” For instance, understanding the Eight Point Platform as a set of strict Mythic criteria would negate Fox’s concern that the platform is too general a definition for Deep Ecology and actually allow for a diversity of ecosophies which would
be lost under the imperialist Grand Theory of Self that Fox proposes. It is important to note that the post-historic primitive focus on the importance of Myth is not itself a Grand Theory. Post-historic primitives draw a distinction between Grand Theories, which are anthropocentric theories used to further domestication, and general ontological facts about Creation. For post-historic primitives, such an ontological fact is something whose existence is not determined by human perception or theory. For example, the “fact” that life, on this planet at least, needs some source of heat in order for life to survive is an ontological fact, while the “fact” that the Mona Lisa is beautiful is not. Post-historic primitives, following Shepard, argue that the human need to live in Myth, coded as it is into our DNA, is such an ontological fact, as opposed to the supposed choice to live in Myth or in History, which is not. They also point out that the call to re-inhabit Myth is not an attempt to increase uniformity through domestication but a demand for diversity, for evolutionary (understood in the Mythic sense) freedom for “wildness.” Using the Eight Point Platform would also avoid the problems Fox identifies with a definition of Deep Ecology which revolved around “deep questioning.” Understanding the eight points as Mythic guidelines would provide criteria to enable ecosophers to identify Mythic fragments on which to construct ecosophies from within their Historical traditions.

Philosophically, Deep Ecology (PhP) has the potential to offer both a concrete ethic and a new hermeneutical understanding of the human relationship with time and Creation. One way of establishing these benefits would be to develop them directly from Post-Historic Primitive Myths. Several theoreticians have already begun this work with admirable results (Le Guin, 1986; Snyder 1960, 1974, 1977, 1980, 1986, 1990). Another possibility, however, and the one I will focus on here, is 1) to see how Deep Ecology (PhP) can be related to other philosophical positions, in this case MacIntyre’s Aristotelianism, and 2), if this relationship can be proven to be workable, to see what of
MacIntyre’s philosophy could be grafted to Deep Ecology (PhP) to accelerate its growth in this area. Even the abbreviated introduction to Myth so far attempted in this chapter will allow the reader to realize that any full investigation of Mythic epistemology, usually called ethnopoetics, would run to multi-volume length, a task I cannot hope to accomplish in this thesis (see Rothenberg and Rothenberg, 1983, for such an introduction). What I must do here, however, in order to argue that Myth can be understood as the original moral state underpinning MacIntyre’s conception of virtue-based ethics, is to establish two points. First, I must establish that Mythic culture did exist and that it was virtue-based. Second, I must show that Myth can offer some explanation for History.  

The Deep Ecological focus on the importance of re-habilitating and re-inhabiting Myth immediately raises both an important similarity and an important difference between Deep Ecology and the philosophical position of MacIntyre. On the one hand, deep ecologists agree with MacIntyre about the centrality of normative genres in the formation and perpetuation of traditions. After all, Myths have been, and are, a common way for cultures to remember and pass on their traditions. On the other hand, from the Deep Ecological point of view, MacIntyre’s theory is flawed and cannot work precisely because he never departs from History, a mistake which leads to his mis-identification of the catastrophe which led to our current chaotic moral state.

Remember that MacIntyre diagnoses our current moral malaise as being the product of a catastrophe (the Enlightenment) which destroyed the original form (both theoretical and social) of morality and left those of us within the Euro-progenic cultures

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31 Please note, as well, that from now on in this thesis, when I use the terms Deep Ecology, Deep Ecological, or deep ecologist I will be referring to Deep Ecology (PhP) and those individuals involved with it.

32 As do other philosophers, as well. See, for instance Rorty (1979 and 1989).
with only unconnected fragments of the original moral structure with which to struggle. MacIntyre’s solution to this problem involves re-creating what he sees as the ultimate moral community, the Athenian city-state. This type of community is superior to what existed prior to it, what he calls the heroic societies, because it is only in these city-states that humans gained the ability to understand morality as being something which could develop within the boundaries of a community’s tradition. City-states are superior to later, and larger, political units because they were small enough that individuals were intimately connected to each other within the overarching, immediately apparent requirements of citizenship. We have already seen MacIntyre’s critique of these later, larger political units. What is important to note here is that on MacIntyre’s view, heroic societies were morally static because a person’s morality was manifested completely in their actions which were, in turn, totally determined by their unchanging and unchangeable social position. Further, given that MacIntyre is purporting to cover the complete history of Euro-progenetic morality, and given that he mentions no cultures which temporally precede the heroic, the reader is left with the notion that social life before the allegedly morally static Age of Heroes was morally bereft. Thus, MacIntyre is left with the city-state as his only option for the original, morally coherent society he seeks to discover.

The problem with MacIntyre’s theory is that it is trapped within a History—in this case, European History. The surest sign of this is that MacIntyre’s temporal horizon is delimited by the creation of the first European urban cultures, the Mycenean and Cretan city-states he believes constituted the Heroic Age, and beyond which, he implies, there was no morality. Deep ecologists, however, point out that both their own work, and the work of others, typically anthropologists and human geographers, denies the validity of this assumption. Pierre Clasters, for instance, in his seminal work, Society against the State, establishes in a definitive way both that societies can regulate themselves without the
structure of the state or urban culture and that this regulation takes the form of a virtue-based ethics (Clasters, 1989). In fact, on Clasters’ and the Deep Ecological point of view, it is the very emergence of the quadrivium which together constitute the origin for civilization, 1) a hierarchical social structure, 2) the state, 3) urban settlements, and 4) History, which first begins to destroy the original virtue-based morality which is found in these autochthonic societies (Shepard, 1973, 1982; Oelschlaeger, 1991).

The secret to understanding this seeming conundrum of a well organized, virtue-based society without a state lies in understanding how Myth serves to govern the people who live within it. First, as we have seen, Myth explains the workings of Creation in a particular place in a way which is at once all-inclusive, in the sense that all aspects of the place, be they plant, animal, physical or spiritual, are accounted for, and yet non-determinate, in the sense that “improbabilities are linked in a play of accident and irrational decisions like a game of chance” (Shepard, 1996, p. 93). Further, the entities in Myths are related to each other in a larger, interdependent community—related so closely, in fact, that shape-shifting is a common occurrence and a prevalent theme. Finally, Myths, while they refer to “In the beginning,” also make it clear that the Beginning was/is actually not so far away, that it is actually in some sense continually occurring and accessible to those who are prepared to devote the effort.

Yet, this structural analysis of Myth would not seem to be able to explain the power it has to morally govern a culture. A scientific Historian might say, for instance, that s/he now understood the structure of this particular type of narrative genre, but that s/he still couldn’t understand why people would choose to believe something so factually inaccurate and fluid. Even a straight-forward MacIntyrian response to this question which pointed out that the fluctuating definition of “fact” from culture to culture made this critique questionable would only duck the central issue: what accounts for the power of Myth?
Or, since this thesis is going to take the stand that Myth is superior to History, what accounts for the superiority of Myth over History?

The most academically rigorous response to these questions has been provided by Paul Shepard who has devoted his academic life to investigating the role of Myth in human ecology (Shepard, 1973, 1982, 1996). On Shepard’s view, the power of Myth is that Myth actually constructed the human being. Drawing on the fields of anthropology, ethnology, biology, semantics, and evolutionary theory, Shepard has constructed a very convincing argument to show, not only how human immersion in Creation created language, but how that process worked to develop the human genome. Humans, claim Shepard, emerged as a social omnivore who had given up acuity in hearing, taste, scent and, to a certain extent, sight, in favor of a developed capacity to use sound and to work with their hands. Whereas most other animals understand and communicate about Creation primarily through a direct experience of hearing, taste, and scent, humans developed communication systems almost completely dependent on symbols, usually vocal words but also including dance, music, and drawing. These symbols were originally direct representations of the specific elements of Creation which surrounded the user, e.g., a particular vocalization might have originally symbolized a particularly swift antelope and then have come to symbolize swiftness as such. This process was accelerated, continues Shepard, because humans were and remain highly social animals who needed to communicate with each other in order to meet the basic requirements for survival. So, while most animals communicate with each other directly using a variety of senses, a process which led to the development of a mosaic of different animal minds each composed of a rich diversity of instinctual responses to certain specific situations, humans, because they communicated amongst themselves using symbols, each of which was a
direct reflection of something in Creation, developed language and the concomitant ability to think about Creation in a less instinctual manner, at the level of Myth.

However, on Shepard's view, there is little value distinction between instinctual animal minds and Mythic minds; one is not necessarily superior to the other. First, as Shepard points out, since the ultimate value in Life is continued Life, anything which contributes to the continuation of Lifeforms (individually or at a species level) is inherently more valuable than that which diminishes the possibilities of survival. The corollary to this point is that all Life needs to take Life in order to survive, no matter whether that taken Life is animal or vegetable. So, argues Shepard, the basic level of communication in Creation is consumption, you are what you eat and you are always engaged in the grand conversation concerning the composition of the day's menu. On this view, both the instinctual animal mind and the mythic mind are equally modifications on the basic form of communication. Given that the instinctual mind in all its myriad forms has a far longer record of sustaining itself than the Mythic mind, caution must be exercised in assuming that Myth is a necessarily superior form of communication.

Second, continues Shepard, it is not so very clear just how distinct the two types of mind are. First, of course, it is no longer academically honest to insist that humans are the only animals who use symbols to communicate. Almost all the social carnivores, for instance, are now known (to "civilized" people) to use symbols to communicate. Further, one could quite easily make the argument that any animal who can be made to react to, let us say, a Pavlovian experiment is, to some extent at least, reacting to a symbol. The second point which argues against a strong distinction being drawn between Mythic and instinctual mind is that Mythic mind comes into existence and can be supported only through very close, experiential existence with instinctive mind.
Myth, as we have seen, is grounded in and is formed by all the interactions which constitute a particular place. Given this intimate connection between Myth and place, defined as the sum total of all interactions, it makes little sense to attempt to clearly delimit just what Myth is as separate from instinct. Finally, Shepard has hypothesized that Myth-making is itself an instinctual process of ontogeny. Briefly, Shepard argues that the desire to understand Creation through Myth has been encoded into our DNA in such a way that we are biologically encouraged to attempt different types of cognitive effort, Myth-making, at different times in our lives. While this thesis does not provide enough space to completely investigate this idea of ontogeny, Shepard's argument certainly supports a cautious attitude with regards seeing Mythic and instinctual mind as two wholly separate phenomena.

In the interests of philosophical rigor, it is important to note that Shepard's understanding of Myth is not a result of applying "modern" or recently realized academic theories to previously mis-understood or non-understood "old" phenomena. This is not a case where understanding is actually the result of Historical or civilized "advances" in knowledge. In the first place, Shepard constructs much of his analysis using information and theories he gleans from long-established Myths. For instance, the tinge of evolutionary theory in Shepard's argument can be derived from the Myths of many cultures. On a similar note, his observations of animal and human behavior do not have as their sole source recent studies in ethnology or animal behavior. Rather, they are forms of common knowledge incorporated into the Myths of virtually all known autochthonic groups. What Shepard has accomplished, then, is not an "uncovering" of truth from an old source using Historically "advanced" techniques. Rather, he has built up an internally coherent body of theory from within Myth itself.
To sum up then, Shepard argues that a human individual living within Myth perceives him/herself as a member of a community of a particular place. Community membership is inclusive to all entities which together constitute that place. Further, each community member is accorded a role within the Myth which reflects the role they play in assuring the continued existence of the community. Myth also accords each of these individuals the ability to decide on whether or not to fulfill their community roles, a decision which often rests on the actions of other community members, to the extent that these others also continue to fulfill their community roles. Finally, these roles are specifically tied to different types of characters, e.g., the character of moose as a provider of Life. Myth, in other words, provides an understanding of all community members, human and non-human, as entities who posses both an inclination to act in certain ways, based on their character, and the ability to choose if they are going to follow these inclinations. Note how closely this resembles MacIntyre’s understanding of virtue-based ethics, since “character” is seen as being formed by the various practices of consumption.

Communication between community members occurs on two levels. First, of course, all entities continue to interact with one another on the everyday plains of subsistence: hunter and hunted, gatherer and gathered, consumer and consumed. This is a vital layer of communication because it is here that humans interact with Creation on a basic level and acquire the symbols which construct and continue to sustain their Myths. Communication between community members also occurs on the Mythic level. As we have seen, Myths often assign particular tasks to particular entities. Within most Mythic cultures, a significant portion of the responsibility for keeping the Myth alive, and by extension keeping Creation in good order, rests on humans. One aspect of this responsibility takes the form of ensuring that the Myth continues to be told and enacted in proper form and on some type of seasonal calendar; the Myth must continually be
embodied in everyday human life. Another side of this responsibility is that the concerns of non-human community members must be made public through their inclusion in, for instance, Mythic ceremonials. This public consultation with non-human community members is mythically possible for two reasons. First, as we have seen, human individuals living within myth are continuously interacting with non-human community members on an experiential level during everyday life. This interaction means both that these humans possess a very sensitive ability to detect meaning behind the actions of non-human community members and that humans are continuously receiving information in regards to the interests of non-human community members. Second, mythic rituals provide spaces for these non-human community members to speak. This is often accomplished through designated humans wearing costumes representing specific non-human entities and thus adopting, for the purposes of the ritual, the characters of these entities.

This last type of action, of course, raises the issue of anthropomorphism. It should be clear by this point in the discussion, however, that understanding the Mythic communication which takes place between humans and non-humans, or indeed between various types of non-humans, as some form of Walt Disney-like anthropomorphism, where trivial human characteristics are projected onto non-human entities who then become intelligible to humans, is extremely shallow. Rather, Myth holds that the communication which takes place between community members as a part of everyday life can be and is enhanced through the ability to shape-shift, an ability grounded in the Mythic understanding that "In the beginning" all entities were One. Adopting the morph of a different community member, however, as when a human dancer takes the morph of a prey-animal, does not mean that that entity becomes understandable solely on human terms (information for this section is drawn from Duerr, 1985, and Shepard, 1996).
Shape-shifting is a much more complex phenomenon whereby a certain middle ground is reached where some things become mutually intelligible to both morphs, e.g., to both the human and the animal within the dancer, but other things remain, perforce, a mystery because they are so much a part of the one morph as to be unintelligible to the other. From a MacIntyrian stance, shape-shifting can be understood as becoming somewhat familiar with the language and actions of a practice other than ones own, e.g., a human, whose primary practice is human hunting/gathering, tries to shape-shift into a bison, whose primary practice is bison-like grass grazing. On MacIntyre’s view, this type of understanding becomes increasingly difficult the more one’s original practice differs from that which one is trying to understand. In the end, particularly if the two practices in question are very different from each other, say the practice of war versus a Gandhian practice of community development, complete understanding of the new practice would be impossible unless the inquisitive person totally immersed themselves within it. This total immersion can be onerous, due to the effort involved in learning a new practice, and could quite possibly lead to a complete abdication of the individual’s position in the original practice. Similarly, in Myth it is held both that shape-shifting is more or less difficult according to the degree which the two shapes share characteristics, e.g., it is easier for a human to understand a wolf, because both are social carnivores, than it is for him/her to understand a rock. Further, shape-shifting for too long, or trying to understand too many of the secrets of the Other, can possibly lead to the shape-shifter losing the ability to re-acquire their original morph, e.g., the human can never become human again (Harner, 1982). One of the main reasons that this shape-shifting occurs primarily during ritual, in fact, is that ritual space is understood as being somehow located in such a way as to make shape shifting both easier and safer.
5.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have argued that redefining the eight-point platform as Mythic criteria provides Post-historic Primitive Deep Ecology with a way of identifying ecosophies which is not dependent on either a neutral structural argument, i.e. the deepness of questioning, or a potentially universalizing and imperialistic notion of the Self. Rather, the Post-historic Primitive interpretation of the Eight Point Platform offers an understanding of ecosophies which would allow local diversity linked through theoretical commonalties. Further, the Platform provides a method with which to build ecosophies upon those fragments of Myth which still exist within Historical traditions.

Further, the Deep Ecological understanding of the power of Myth shares many similarities with MacIntyre social theory: both posit that Creation must be understood as a mosaic of communities; both understand communities as being constructed out of practices; both argue that these practices and communities are formed by and perpetuated through the cosmological aspects of language, what MacIntyre calls a narrative genre; both, as we shall see in the next chapter, understand morality as being essentially virtue-based. Where the deep ecologist and MacIntyre differ is over the composition of the practices which form communities and over the identity of the individuals which compose practices. These differences are ultimately expressed in two very different notions of what constituted the original moral catastrophe. In the next chapter, I investigate these differences and show how they can be resolved to develop a virtue-based morality I call Wild Virtue.
6. WILD VIRTUE

6.1 Introduction

Following MacIntyre, Post-Historic Primitive Deep Ecology holds that education within practices is more important for a tradition’s continued survival than an independent educational practice. Further, since Deep Ecology identifies hunting and gathering as the central practices of any ecologically sustainable tradition, the argument follows that education within these practices must comprise the fundamental part of any ecologically sustainable education. Finally, again following MacIntyre, this Deep Ecological education must be seen as a moral, virtue-based education taking place within practices formed and supported by wild virtue. Chapter Six provides an initial investigation of the Deep Ecological understanding of the virtuous nature of the practices of hunting and gathering. In Chapter Seven, I examine two particular versions of Deep Ecological educational theory and practice, with a particular emphasis on how they educate individuals in wild virtue.

I begin this chapter by introducing the Deep Ecological conceptions of the original moral communities and of the catastrophe which destroyed these communities. Then, I move on to investigate what deep ecologists propose as a remedy to heal our fractured moral and social traditions, bioregionalism. I conclude the chapter with an exploration of wild virtue through an analysis of Richard Nelson’s (1991), *The Island Within* in which he describes his attempts to reincorporate himself into a Mythic world.
Deep Ecology's Original Moral Communities and the Great Moral Catastrophe

MacIntyre, as we have seen, hypothesizes that ideal moral communities are something like the Greek city-states and that the original moral catastrophe was the Enlightenment, which was brought about because the practices and traditions which had formed and sustained the city-states had grown too rigid during the Mediaeval period, due to the influence of Christianity, and were, thus, unable to provide rational explanations for the events of the Age of Discovery. MacIntyre's solution is to suggest that the older moral tradition can be re-acquired if we 1) move back into something resembling city-states, which could be modified in terms of size and comfort levels through the use of technology, and 2) replace the dysfunctional telos of earlier forms of virtue-based ethics with one which holds that "the good life for man is the life spent in seeking the good life for man" (MacIntyre 1984, p. 219). While this quest would almost certainly lead to different city-states developing different virtue-based ethics, MacIntyre argues 1) that this diversity is not necessarily philosophically wrong, 2) that all traditions would, in any case, be linked through their belief in a common telos, and 3) that if a tradition did begin to experience an epistemological crisis (because it no longer provided its adherents with a rational understanding of their world) then rational discussion between it and another tradition, such that the shortcomings of the tradition in crisis would be fixed, could be accomplished through some sort of hermeneutical process (MacIntyre, 1984).

Deep Ecology provides a very different interpretation of these events. Shepard, Martin, and Glendinning see the original human community as the autochthonic band, whose life was governed by the virtues which composed all the various characters associated with the practices of hunting, gathering, and the telling of the band's Myth. These original communities included non-human entities who participated fully in all its various constitutive practices. Further, the very language of the Mythic tradition was
formed by and grounded in the surrounding place. The moral catastrophe began with, and continues to be supported by, the phenomena of domestication, which these theoreticians argue can be defined as forms or technologies of control. While the specific reasons behind this transition to domestication remain vague, a philosophical investigation of the process leads to a conclusion that it was based on fear, fear that since Creation might no longer provide for its human inhabitants, these inhabitants would now have to control Creation and force it to provide the necessities of life on schedule (see, in particular, Martin, 1992). Because all food production through domestication is a process which inherently degrades the land (Shepard, 1973; 1982), and because processes of domestication lead to an addiction to control amongst humans (Shepard, 1982; Glendinning, 1994), this new, Neolithic way of life spawned imperialistic human communities which were forced through their internal logic to continually bring other peoples and other lands under their control. Since these types of action were at complete variance with the Mythic, communitarian ethic, these domesticators invented a new form of cosology, History, with which to justify their actions.

It should be noted here that post-historic primitive deep ecologists do draw a distinction between agriculture and what could be called “assisted” or “enhanced” hunting and gathering (Glendinning, 1994; Martin, 1992). Agriculture is what occurs when plants and animals are forced to perform certain functions at certain times, so that they are completely under the control of human. This process requires humans to possess a strong philosophy of, and will to, control. “Assisted” or “enhanced” gathering and hunting, on the other hand, say in the form of using dogs to help on the hunt or of utilizing some type of what have been called “door-yard” gardens to simplify gathering, can and does occur within Mythic cultures. So far, scholars have been unable to provide a definitive distinction between agriculture and assisted hunting and gathering; the difficulty may very well be that
the process of defining can itself be seen as a form of domestication to which gently modified forms of gathering and hunting would be immune (Glendinning, 1994).

This nebulous dividing line between agriculture and assisted gathering and hunting has also caused deep ecologists to sharpen their analysis of technology. Like Franklin (1990), deep ecologists believe in two types of technology, a "holistic" version which is formed by practice and provides for organic growth and virtuous morality, and a "prescriptive" version whose aim is to further the control of growth and of morality, a technology of domestication. Thus, post-historic primitives argue that technologies must not be understood as merely tools but as systems or ways of doing things which help form, and are governed by, the cosmological language of a community. It is possible, in other words, to speak of the technology of History and the technology of Myth. From a Deep Ecological position then, the adoption and use of holistic technologies can further the existence of communities while the adoption and use of prescriptive technologies leads to community destruction. This Deep Ecological distinction between technologies offers a solution to two of MacIntyre’s theoretical problems, the issue of choosing between traditions and the issue of appropriate technology. In fact, from the Deep Ecological point of view, these two problems of MacIntyre are related.

It will be remembered that Annas criticized MacIntyre for using two different theories of location. Using MacIntyre’s analyses of the supposed conflict between Scottish and English culture in the days of Hume, Annas argues that MacIntyre begins to use a theory of essential location as opposed to the theory of historical understanding he uses in other portions of his work (See Chapter Two). This is a problem, Annas continues, because the theory of historical understanding is much weaker than the theory of essential location. Annas demonstrates this weakness by showing how the Scottish culture of Hume actually differed very little from the English culture of the same period. As I have
previously noted in various places in this thesis, MacIntyre tries to cover up this problem with a very uncritical attitude towards the use of technology within communities; he seems to want to argue that any community can use any technology without any harm coming to the community’s identity. Thus, MacIntyre wants to argue that England and Scotland can be understood as political entities belonging to different and distinct traditions despite the fact that the local communities in what became England and Scotland used similar, if not common, technologies to band together and form the two nation-states.

A Deep Ecological interpretation of MacIntyre’s thought avoids this problem through its identification of two different types of technology. From the Deep Ecological view, Scottish and English communities remained within their distinct traditions as long as they continued to use the holistic technologies which were, in turn, grounded in those locales. However, once these communities came under the influence of, and began to utilize, prescriptive technologies, they began to move out of their local, Mythic traditions into History. By the time of Hume, then, the conflict between England and Scotland is between Histories and not between Mythic traditions. Thus, for a deep ecologist, Annas’s critique of MacIntyre is valid to the extent that MacIntyre, by not differentiating between technologies or realizing how the use of prescriptive technology destroys traditions, fails to realize that the Scotland and England he treats are no longer distinct traditions but closely related Histories. On the theoretical level, the Deep Ecological position is that Mythic traditions remain Mythic, and the theory of essential location remains in affect, as long as these communities use holistic technologies: once prescriptive technologies gain an ascendancy, however, Mythic traditions mutate into History, and the best that can be hoped for is some form of the theory of historical understanding.

In fact, the post-historic primitive position can be seen as superior to MacIntyre’s because it overcomes the weaknesses of his theory. I concluded Chapter Two by noting
that MacIntyre failed to fully refute the criticisms of Annas, Wallace, Hittinger, and other individuals concerned with improving the currently poor ecological state of the planet because, in remaining Euro- and urban-centric, he did not provide a solid defense against either anthropocentrism or relativism, nor did he account for the existence of evil. At the beginning of this chapter, I also noted that MacIntyre's theory is weak because it fails to thoroughly discuss the impact of technology on the practices within, and the size of, traditions. Events over the last 5000 years, and particularly over the last millennium, quite easily lead to the conclusion that this uncritical technophilia is another manifestation of MacIntyre's general urban- and Euro-centricity.

From the post-historic primitive point of view, these weaknesses invade MacIntyre's theory when he proposes that the general telos of all traditions is that "the good life for man is the search for the good life for man." As Wallace points out, if this is indeed the shared telos of all traditions, then one can very easily arrive at the conclusion that modern liberal democratic societies are those which most closely approach this goal, because it is these societies which have the political and social structure which best allows this quest to continue. A post-historic primitive, however, would point out that this telos is flawed because it carries all the presuppositions of History: first, the telos implies that humans have a poorer life now than at some time in the future; second, it implies that humans, and only humans, can bring this utopia about. The general post-historic primitive telos, on the other hand, a telos which would read something like "Always continue to live gracefully within Myth," would not be hampered by these problems. In the first place, such a telos would not immediately presume that things must change in order to improve. In fact, its presupposition would be that the Mythic state of existence is already the best state of existence. Conversely, however, such a telos would not preclude change, it would simply require that any change be compatible with the continued existence of the overall
cultural Myth. In fact, as any reading of Myths shows, and as Shepard notes (in the quotation provided in Chapter Five on p. 119), change, and often inexplicable and confusing change, is a common occurrence in Myth, but the change always occurs gracefully--within the context and rules of Myth, it never destroys it.

Since, as we have seen, Myth includes non-humans, the post-historic primitive telos would also assure that all entities within Creation would contribute to the particular mythic culture's affairs, thereby avoiding MacIntyre's anthropocentrism. Finally, the post-historic primitive telos would have the ability to allow diversity between Mythic cultures, to provide rational criteria for evaluations between mythic cultures, and provide at least a theoretical solution to the problem of evil. The encouragement of diversity, and the ability to understand and combat evil, can occur because post-historic primatives do not posit that there is only one valid Myth. Rather, the power of Myth is in its structure, which allows for, and encourages, local variation within general Mythic guidelines. Criteria for rational debate about the validity of Mythic cultures, either in isolation or in a state of conflict with other Mythic cultures, would focus on the extent to which the cultures in question followed these general Mythic guidelines. Evil would exist to the extent that these Mythic guidelines were broken, because breaking with Myth would be breaking with the ultimate telos, the telos which has, does, and always will support the diversity of life. So, an understanding of traditions as Myths would retain all the strengths of MacIntyre's general theory and, by substituting a Mythic telos for "the good life for man is the search for the good life for man," solve MacIntyre's Historical shortcomings.

On a general level, the human transition to civilization (or History) caused two sets of problems from the Deep Ecological point of view. First, seven thousand years of self-justifying History can no longer hide the fact that domestication is a process which leads, irrevocably, to the ecological destruction of Creation. Typically, this destruction has
happened because the practice of agriculture has destroyed the land community, on the one hand, and because increasing and increasingly stratified human populations, located primarily in urban centers, produce levels of waste which are simply too great for the already weakened ecology of the surrounding area to handle, on the other. The second set of problems are social, and here deep ecologists agree closely with MacIntyre's social analysis.

Deep ecologists argue that the destruction of Myths and their replacement by various Histories was not total, that each History carries within it some elements of ancestral Myth (see p. 122). This happened for two reasons. First, if Shepard is correct, each of us carry within us a genetically encoded ontogeny which demands some form of Myth in our lives. Various eco-psychologists and other post-historic primitives have done work which demonstrates the existence of this desire in, for instance, children (Rozak, 1995). This genetic demand for Myth leads us to constantly attempt to reinsert Myth into our Histories.

The second reason that Myth has survived is because the grasp of History on humanity is never complete. Every culture has within it individuals who still lead, or remember leading, some type of Mythic life. Further, the desires of our ontogeny make these surviving fragments of myth too attractive to ignore. Witness the attention within the Euro-progenic cultures both for anything which smacks of Native American traditions and for various "back-to-the-land" movements; witness the popularity of arguments for defending wilderness areas based on the notion that such areas can and do provide civilized people opportunities for spiritual and aesthetic renewal. Yet, because surviving fragments of Myth are not embedded within an overall Mythic cosmology, because we are trained to believe, and to a large extent continue to believe, in the overall superiority of History, philosophical and social positions built on these surviving fragments of Myth remain
divided and incoherent. Further, according to post-historic primitive therapists and other eco-psychologists (Rozak, 1995; Swan, 1992), our inability to, thus far, re-construct and re-inhabit Myth combines with our genetic demand for Myth to create not only moral but mental and social dis-ease. Again, note the similarities between this understanding of the modern human condition and that proposed by MacIntyre; MacIntyre, too, claims that there is an inner drive to live within traditions which we all instinctively appeal to in our moral disagreements (MacIntyre, 1984).

The differences between the social theories of MacIntyre and Deep Ecology are reflected in differences in their respective proposed solutions to our currently chaotic moral and social situation. As we have see, MacIntyre proposes a return to the culture of city-states, where these political institutions are modified by technology in terms of size and the composition of practices. Deep Ecologists, on the hand, have devoted their efforts to something called bio-regionalism. On the Deep Ecological view, city-states are both too small and too anthropocentric to form the basis for a Mythic culture. Further, MacIntyre’s proposals to modify city-states through the use of technology run afoul of the post-historic primitive distinction between the two types of technologies; to post-historic primitive eyes, the prescriptive technology allowed by MacIntyre will only compound the problems of History.

6.3 Post-historic Primitive Bio-regionalism

The bio-regionalism advocated by post-historic primitives, best typified in the work of the Planet Drum Foundation and its director, Peter Berg, argues for a re-location of human cultures within local landscapes.33 Given the wide-ranging scope of the

33 For more information on the Planet Drum Foundation and the work of Peter Berg, see the Planet Drum Foundation’s publication, Raise The Stakes, available through the Planet Drum Foundation, Box 31251, San Francisco, CA. 94131
post-historic primitive critique of Historical culture, it should come as no surprise that the post-historic primitive bio-regional movement has several facets. The most detailed version of this bio-regional movement can be found in the Pacific Northwest of the North American continent, an area known in bio-regional circles as the Cascadia bio-region of Turtle Island. Here, for instance, work has already begun in such areas as: reconstructing language to make it more reflective of that land community (Snyder, 1990); creating a Mythic account of the Cascadian experience within History and its return to myth (Le Guin, 1986); creating a mythic economy based on “holistic” technologies (Aberley, 1994); identifying and re-habilitating wilderness areas (Grumbine, 1992); and creating post-historic primitive educational practices to further the re-inhabitation of the Myth that is Cascadia (Traina, and Darley-Hill (Eds.), 1995).

It should be noted that this Post-historic Primitive form of bio-regionalism differs from both earlier forms of late twentieth century North American bio-regionalism and from what could be called the bio-regionalism of the French Annales historians. Early forms of North American bio-regionalism, best presented by the work of Kirkpatrick Sale (1980), were too anthropocentric and historical for post-historic primitives. Sale, for instance, devotes much of his On Human Scale to providing what are essentially economic and political rationales for bio-regionalism. While his arguments are important, and many have been incorporated by post-historic primitive bio-regionalists, they lack a focus on the importance of the Mythic mind in supporting a non-anthropocentric re-inhabitation of the land.

Post-historic primitive bio-regionalists differ from the Annales historians in their focus on the ability the community has to determine, at least in part, its own nature. While post-historic primitives would agree with the Annales historians on the importance the basic geography of a place has on determining culture, witness the post-historic primitive
belief that language reflects locale, they are much more reluctant to be as deterministic as the Annales historians. Annales historians have claimed, for instance, that one could remove all the people from what is now France, replace them with a group of individuals drawn from anywhere else on the planet, and, after several hundreds of years, see the return of a recognizably French culture due to the influences of geography and climate (Skinner, 1991). A post-historic primitive response to this theory would point out first, that it is a mistake to think in terms of national states; second, that communities have some latitude in determining the direction of their evolution; and third, that the Annales historians' purely geographical forces fail to recognize the full power of the Mythic community.

Post-historic primitive bio-regionalism has made some important progress in re-inhabitation, particularly in Cascadia, and is now a growing national and international force. There are, however, at least two issues which it has so far failed to resolve. First, there is the question of what, exactly, constitutes a bio-region. Traditionally, the term referred to a belief that regions could both be distinguished from each other based on composition of their biological communities, which are, in turn, affected by such geographical factors as climate, elevation, isolation from other areas due to mountains or bodies of water, chemical composition of the soil, etc., and still be small enough to foster locally-driven and participatory regional cultures. Within bio-regionalist theory, in other words, each bio-region is supposed to foster a Mythic culture which is essentially self-supporting, at least in terms of basic needs. While this theory has worked in areas such as Cascadia, which is both fairly easy to define using the concept of biological communities and small enough to allow for easy communication between community members, other bio-regions have proven to be either extremely difficult to define in any explicit way and/or so large as to make fully participatory regional culture a practical, much
less theoretical, impossibility. Case in point: the Great Plains of North America. Due to space limitations, this thesis cannot attempt to address this problem of scale. It should be noted, however, that the focus of this thesis on community as something within, but not equivalent to, the surrounding bio-region offers one possible special solution. The work of Kemmis (1990) on the future of Missoula, Montana, deals explicitly with the role of communities within large bio-regions.

The other problem with post-historic primitive bio-regional theory, the problem that is addressed in this thesis, is that post-historic primitives have so far neglected to provide any theoretically rigorous discussion of post-historic primitive bio-regional ethics. I begin such a discussion in the next section of this chapter. What I have done in Chapter Five and thus far in Chapter Six is to argue that MacIntyre’s general theory of traditions is close enough to the post-historic primitive notion of a mosaic of bio-regional mythic culture to allow MacIntyre’s theory of virtue-based ethics to be used as a template for a post-historic primitive ethic. While I am not the first environmental theorist to see the possibilities of MacIntyre’s work for developing such an ecologically friendly ethic (see, for instance, Cheney, 1989), the work so far presented in this thesis is the first rigorous argument to establish that MacIntyre’s general theory of traditions is compatible with the post-historic primitive concept of the Mythic mind because both share identical conceptions of the role of practices, both share identical conceptions of the role of language, and both understand human actions as being the embodiment, either healthy or fragmented, of virtue-based ethics.

6.4 Wild Virtue

To avoid confusion, it is practical to begin this exploration of MacIntyrian post-historic primitive virtue by clearly laying out what makes it distinctive from other, unsuccessful attempts to apply virtue-based morality to ecological issues. In After Virtue,
MacIntyre identifies four separate conceptions of virtue: 1) virtue as a (usually short) set of rules; 2) virtue as a road to eudamonia, or the perfect life for humans; 3) virtue as a set of Aristotelian golden means; and 4) virtue as aspects of character formed by participation in practices. The first type of virtue, argues MacIntyre (1984), is simply an attempt on the part of post-Enlightenment Euro-progenic societies to lend credibility to a changing set of Christian moral rules through assigning them a linguistically powerful term. He shows how these “virtues” have changed through time as different rules have gained popularity, and then dismisses this notion of virtue as a corruption of the original concept. It is important to note, however, despite the validity of MacIntyre’s argument, that this remains the most popular conception of virtue, a conception that will have to be changed if other, more philosophically accurate types of virtue are to be adopted.

The original basis for seeing virtue as rules, MacIntyre continues, was the idea that the acquisition of virtues led to eudamonia, the ideal life for humans. Again, as concepts of eudamonia changed, so did many of the associated virtues. The difference between virtue as a road to eudamonia and virtue merely as rules, however, is that under the former conception some virtues must always be present in order to detect just what eudamonia is or might be. In other words, this position holds that while some virtues may change as different ideal lives are formulated, other virtues, particularly intellectual ones, must always be fixed in order to continue the search for the perfect life. A particular, and powerful, form of eudamoniian virtue was Aristotle’s idea of virtue as the Golden Mean. For Aristotle, the perfect life for humans was the life devoted to contemplation. Since contemplation can only be achieved with an open mind, and since the open mind can only truly be open if it is non-biased, then the perfect life must be one which occupies the middle ground between extremes, the life of the Golden Mean. For Aristotle, then, the
virtues were those aspects of character which ensured that a human would never act extremely, the vices represented those aspects of character which were extreme.

While MacIntyre has more sympathy with the latter two definitions of virtue than with the idea of virtue as mere free-floating rule, he still perceives a significant problem with these formulations. All concepts of virtue linked with a concept of eudamonia, including Aristotle's, are weak, he claims, because they depend for their validity on the validity of a telos, the eudamonia, whose own validity is difficult to establish without going beyond the established virtues for a moral rationale. Once this move to a different moral rationale has occurred, then the question of the validity of the virtue-based morality must itself be questioned. For example, if a virtue-based moral system which aims at a eudamonia conceived of as the perfect Christian life comes into conflict with a different virtue-based morality whose eudamonia is, for instance, the life of contemplation shorn of any form of supernaturalism, any decision about the superiority of one of the traditions over the other cannot be made on the basis of superiority of virtue, because each system of virtue is tied to its particular eudamonia. Typically, then, these conflicts are decided by appeal to non-virtue criteria, e.g., God will strike you down if you do not act like we do or, You are all a bunch of ignorant, superstitious and sub-human barbarians who have no claim to any respect from us. The problem with this move, MacIntyre argues, is that it immediately raises questions about the validity of virtue-based morality, when seen as non-rule driven and flexible aspects of character, with respect to either a morality of simple rule-following out of fear or a morality based on acquiring ever more power over others, to bring up just two other moral possibilities. And once that step is taken, it is difficult to see how moral conflict can be decided in any rational way that avoids appeal to either opinion or raw power, which is precisely the nature of our current moral and social malaise.
The solution to this problem, MacIntyre argues, is to see virtue as aspects of character formed by the practices which form traditions whose common telos is a non-determinate quest for the good life. Moral conflict between or within these traditions can be resolved by an evaluation of the ability of each tradition's virtues, whether practical or intellectual, to further this quest. This position is internally rational and coherent, MacIntyre argues, because it appeals, not to standards outside of a telos, but to the telos itself. Further, as we have seen, the problem that MacIntyre's telos had with its anthropocentric Historicity, natural law, and relativism can be solved by replacing it with the Deep Ecological telos "Always continue to live gracefully within Myth." Thus, from the Deep Ecological stance, any solution to our current moral confusion must first require a new understanding of moral positions as locally and historically constructed moral traditions, composed of practices which attempt to follow, with varying degrees of success, a common telos of living gracefully within Myth. Once this step has been taken, conflicts within and among these traditions can be resolved according to the degree to which 1) local systems of virtue-based ethics are embedded within local traditions, and 2) the degree to which the telos of the local tradition follows the general Mythical telos. The question now arises as to what constitutes this post-historic primitive Wild Virtue. What, in other words, constitutes those aspects of character which lead to and sustain a post-historic primitive life?

Investigations into this type of virtue may appear vague to individuals raised under the moral rules of History precisely because virtues of this type are not rules. Indeed, under the virtue-based understanding of morality and ethics, there can be no such thing as a "moral situation" which has a definitive solution. Particular responses to particular situations are precisely that, particular, dependent on all the myriad features which make up that particular space and time. The experiential nature of this virtue-based ethical system
raises another issue for an academic thesis: namely, that words can go only so far in defining and describing it. As Isaac Pennington once said of the Friends’ moral code, a moral code with a similar experiential nature, “The role of words is to point to where words cannot go.” Further, the diverse nature of the traditions that together compose the diversity of Mythic traditions in general, what a post-historic primitive would call Deep Ecology, also works to make generally accepted virtues a rarity. Finally, the Deep Ecological interpretation of virtue is “wild” because it accepts that the community within which virtues are developed comprises non-human entities. In other words, wild denotes the ability of every entity to determine at least some significant parts of themselves according to their own desires and inclinations. The opposite of wild is “domesticated,” the situation in which every action and characteristic of an entity is determined by its owner (see, also, p. 124).

One way to come to an understanding of wild virtue is to investigate and describe the type of character formed by two major practices of post-historic primitivism, Myth-telling and hunting and gathering. This investigation should make clear some of the virtues needed to possess a wild character. The sources I draw on for this work are derived from Mythic traditions of the northern boreal forest and the coastal forest of north-western Turtle Island, two bio-regions that I am familiar with through personal experience. This last point is an important one, as these personal experiences, following MacIntyre’s theory, allow me a greater understanding of the virtues of this mythic tradition than I would have, for instance, of the mythic traditions of Polynesia, an area I have never even seen.

Richard Nelson is an anthropologist who has done pioneering work amongst the Koyukon of north-central Alaska. What is important for the purposes of this thesis is that he has tried to ease himself into a Mythic tradition through applying what he learned from the Koyukon to his own life on the Pacific coast of Turtle Island. A record of his effort is
available in his *The Island Within* (1991), probably one of the best accounts, in terms of accuracy and honesty, of such an attempt to re-acquire Mythic mind.

As a true post-historic primitive, Nelson begins *The Island Within* by saying:

My hope is to acclaim the rewards of exploring the place in which a person lies rather than searching afar, of becoming fully involved with the near at hand, of nurturing a deeper and more committed relationship with home, and of protecting the natural community that sustains all who live there. . . . What makes a place special is the way it buries itself inside the heart, not whether it's flat or rugged, rich or austere, wet or arid, gentle or harsh, warm or cold, wild or tame. Every place, like every person, is elevated by the love and respect shown towards it, and by the way its bounty is received. . . . Perhaps this is what it means to find a home, a place that wholly engages the heart and mind. (Nelson, 1991, p. xi-xii)

Further, while seeking “perspective from some very old ideas, ideas which have guided the relationships between people and their natural surroundings through most of human history,” Nelson does not “[aspire] to adopt the feathers of another people but to bring certain principles that have guided them into my life as a citizen of North America” (Nelson, 1991, pp. xii-xiii). Nelson, in other words, fully agrees with two central post-historic primitive precepts: that mythic culture can ultimately be found only through particular experiences of particular people in particular places and that post-historic primitive mythic culture must, somehow, account for our experience with history, with how we became “citizens” of a “North America.”

The body of *The Island Within* describes Nelson’s personal transformations as he seeks to re-connect with his home, an island in south-eastern Alaska, over a period of one year. While Nelson describes many different activities he engages in, the book revolves around hunting and gathering. Nelson justifies his focus on these activities throughout the book by telling us that the most intimate link between place and person, indeed the link which keeps place alive, is sustenance. This focus on hunting and gathering transforms Nelson through encouraging the growth of at least four virtues: the virtue of immersion; the virtue of watchfulness; the virtue of respect; and, the virtue of Myth-telling.
The virtue of immersion manifests itself in a drive to know a place experientially, to immerse oneself in its rhythms and characters. It is that aspect of character which drives a person out of their seat, out of their human constructed and human controlled environment and into creation. It is the characteristic that enables the experiences which lead to the realization that

There is nothing in me that is not of the earth, no split instant of separateness, no particle that disunites me from the surroundings. I am no less than the earth itself. The rivers run through my veins, the winds blow in and out with my breath, the soil makes my flesh, the sun's heat smolders inside me. A sickness or injury that befalls the earth befalls me. A fouled molecule that runs through the earth runs through me. Where the earth is cleansed and nourished, its purity infuses me. The life of the earth is my own life. My eyes are the earth gazing at itself. (Nelson, 1991, p. 249)

To be sure, immersion in and of itself is not the only root of such a sense of connectedness, the practice of other virtues is also necessary. Yet anybody who has simply spent time within Creation knows that this simple immersion does encourage or lead to such a sense of connection. There is something important about just being in Creation to aid in feeling a part of it. This virtue highlights the fact that no amount of reading, no amount of thinking, and no amount of watching television shows about Creation can have the impact of immersion in that which gives us life.

The virtue of watchfulness is that which builds on immersion to create the full sense of connection. This watchfulness is not a simple scientific curiosity, nor is it simple aesthetic enjoyment. Rather, it is the characteristic of always being fully aware of what is happening around you. It is the characteristic of never assuming that you know everything that there is to know, and therefore always keeping the senses open and engaged. Hunting and gathering foster, or even demand, the exercise of this virtue because the animals and plants we eat lead their own unpredictable lives, they are not always on the same shelf at the local Safeway. Watchfullness is a particularly difficult virtue for a person raised in Euro-progenic culture to acquire. Our lives have been spent in human created
environments where uniformity and "knowledge" run rampant: we "know" where something will always be; we "know" that something will always act in a particular way; we "know" that life is predictable; and we "know" that if something is really important to "know" that it is someone else's responsibility to tell us in a loud enough manner so that we won't miss it. The virtue of watchfulness, on the other hand, holds that events and entities in Creation are always in a state of flux and that it is our responsibility to see and match our lives to this growth. It is the virtue which makes us aware and open to the "knowledge that comes more through the body than through the mind" (Nelson, 1991, p. 94).

The virtue of respect is closely allied to both the above virtues. It is that aspect of character which always demands that we realize that we are not at the center of things, that our needs and desires are not all that count. It is that aspect of character which always reminds us that there are forces and entities in Creation greater than us, towards which we should show humility. This humility is not a species of humble servility; we are, after all, a powerful force as well. Rather, it is a sense that we will never know everything, that if we overstep certain bounds there will be consequences. The virtue of respect means that we are endlessly grateful to all the aspects of Creation for providing us with the means to stay alive. Hunting and gathering fosters this virtue both because this way of getting food leaves us constantly aware that we are dependent upon others for life, as opposed to dependent upon sanitized and readily available super-market food, and because the actual experience of dealing death drives home the point, in a very experiential way, that others, whether animal or vegetable, must perish at our hands so that we may live.

The virtue of Myth-telling is the characteristic of passing on the knowledge of these other virtues. Teaching through Myth is different from traditional Euro-progenic teaching because it recognizes the ultimate superiority of non-human teachers. As Nelson says,
"I've undertaken a course of study, with the island as my teacher" (Nelson, 1991, p. 11). And when Nelson relates what he has learned to us, he is careful to note that "These are not my stories.... I have recorded my experiences, not as a teacher, certainly not as a thinker, but as a learner who loves his subject as deeply as he loves life itself" (Nelson, 1991, pp. xii-xiii). The practices of hunting and gathering, exposing the individual to whims and vagaries of Creation, cannot help but foster such an understanding of who the real teachers within Creation are.

All these virtues, and many more, are tied together; one cannot exist in isolation from the other. As we have seen, what links them all is the practice of hunting and gathering, the experience of being immersed in the dietary conversation that is Creation. But immersion, while important, is not the sole virtue. Anyone who has spent time with sport hunters knows that simply being in Creation with the aim of killing something will not, in and of itself, foster a post-historic primitive ethic. With our technology, with our high-powered rifles and compound bows, with our game management techniques, we have domesticated hunting, much as we have domesticated gathering through agriculture. The sport hunting of today is as far from the post-historic primitive hunt as raising beef cattle on feedlots, no matter what the rhetoric of "sportsmanship." This is an important fact to realize. Too often, the sport hunter tries to justify his/her actions using post-historic primitive rationales, rationales that are rarely manifested in the field. And, just as often, post-historic primitives are confronted with accusations which, although they may apply to sport hunters, do not apply to the practice of subsistence hunting and gathering. To be successful and persuade the public of their case, post-historic primitives must insure that their opposition to sport hunting is seen as being of the same nature as their opposition to agriculture, an opposition to the anthropocentric domestication of Creation.
6.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have shown how the substitution of the post-historic primitive telos, “Always continue to live gracefully within Myth,” for MacIntyre’s telos that “The good life for man is the search for the good life for man” solves many of the problems with MacIntyre’s theory. Further, this substitution of telos allows post-historic primitives access to a well-developed moral theory with which to begin construction of a post-historic primitive ethic. I concluded this chapter with a brief sketch of what I take be some central virtues of this ethic: the virtues of immersion, watchfulness, respect, and Myth-telling. I also showed how these virtues are tied to the central practice of post-historic primitivism, hunting and gathering.

Of course, there are still many questions which must be answered about post-historic primitivism—namely, its specific relationships with MacIntyre’s theory, Deep Ecology, the original mythic cultures, and the nature of the post-historic primitive ethic. For instance: is there a post-historic primitive vision of the Self? If so, what is it? What are all the different post-historic primitive ecosophies? Given the link of language to place, and given the fact that so much of the planet’s surface is now inhabited by immigrants who speak imported languages, what can post-historic primitive theory offer to facilitate the development of local languages and, thus, traditions? What would a rigorous examination of the post-historic primitive concept of evil reveal? What is the relationship between various post-historic primitive ecosophies and the remaining autochthonic cultures? What can post-historic primitive theory do to help break down the existing theoretical monoliths of “Western Culture” and “Aboriginal Culture”? All these questions, and many others, offer exciting new fields for investigation. I turn now to a brief examination of another, equally important series of questions: is there a general
post-historic primitive theory of education? If so, what is it? And, are there any examples of such an educational system already in existence?
7. POST-HISTORIC PRIMITIVE, DEEP ECOLOGICAL EDUCATION

7.1 Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to propose a theory and practice of education which would foster ecologically sustainable communities. In previous chapters, I have argued that the overall theoretical basis for such an education is Deep Ecology, where Deep Ecology is understood as a type of MacIntyrian tradition. In this chapter, I analyze two extant forms of education, Rediscovery and David Orr’s Ecological Literacy, and argue that they are both examples of the type of educational theory and practice which is derivable from Deep Ecology. The goal of this chapter is two-fold. First, I will show how these two existing theories of education are grounded in the overall tradition of Deep Ecology. Second, this chapter raises issues for further investigation in Deep Ecological education.

In Chapter Two, I argued, following MacIntyre, that particular educational systems need to be understood as being grounded in particular traditions. I demonstrated that these traditions are themselves carried by particular narrative genres and by instruction in virtues which are specific to the practices which compose the traditions. I established that the successful search for an ecologically sustainable educational system must be hermeneutical, in the sense that this educational system could only be located within an ecologically sustainable tradition which, in turn, could be understood only by acquiring a thorough familiarity with its narrative genre. Thus, the search for any educational system is, perforce, a hermeneutical quest. I ended Chapter Two by noting that MacIntyre’s theory
of traditions, while solid in its understanding of the relationship between language, virtue, and sociology, was theoretically weak in terms of natural law theory and anthropocentrism.

In Chapters Three, Four, Five, and Six I argued that MacIntyre's idea of what constituted traditions could be modified by replacing its anthropocentric natural law theory with the natural law theory of post-historic primitive Deep Ecology. This substitution retains all the strengths of MacIntyre's theory, while offering solutions to his theories theoretical problems through redefining what constitutes ideal moral communities. These post-historic primitive communities are composed of human and non-human entities, located in particular bio-regions, who share a Mythic narrative genre. Anthropological evidence suggests that such Mythic cultures are ecologically sustainable.

So, any search for a theory and practice of education which would lead to ecologically sustainable communities must be, at a fundamental level, a search for a specific theory and practice of education located within a specific bio-regional community. Furthermore, such a search would become hermeneutical through a necessary immersion in that community’s narrative genre and constituent practices. Following MacIntyre, much of the content of this educational system would involve learning the virtues of the tradition’s constitutive practices.

In a later section of this chapter, I will analyze one such bio-regional system of education, Rediscovery. However, because mythic communities all revolve around the central practice of hunting and gathering, and because there are certain virtues, as I argued in Chapter Six, which are shared by all the myriad local practices of hunting and gathering, it should be possible to sketch out at least a general Deep Ecological theory of education. As we shall see, a task of this general theory of education must be to provide a theoretical method for moving Euro-progenic cultures, and other cultures within the grip of History,
into post-historic primitive ecosophies. Therefore, the next section of this chapter investigates one such general theory of education, that of David Orr (1992).

7.2 A General Deep Ecological Theory of Education

The best initial attempt to develop a general Deep Ecological theory of education can be found in David Orr’s (1992), *Ecological Literacy*. Orr developed and refined much of his theory during the many years he was the director of the Meadow Creek Project, an institute devoted to developing a sustainable culture for the Ozark bio-region of the mid-western United States. Orr sums up the challenge to Historical cultures by quoting Leopold: “The problem is how to bring about a striving for harmony with land among a people many of whom have forgotten there is such a thing as land” (Orr, 1992, p.141). Orr refines Leopold’s thought by noting that “Above all else [this] is a crisis of spirit and spiritual resources” (Orr, 1992, p. 4). Orr suggests that to solve this problem we must move towards sustainability, a move he defines as “the task of finding alternatives to the practices that got us in trouble in the first place; it is necessary to rethink agriculture, shelter, energy use, urban design, transportation, economics, community patterns, resource use, forestry, the importance of wilderness, and our central values” (Orr, 1992, p. 24). We must, in short, not think of sustainability as a technological problem, the attitude Orr claims is prevalent in virtually all work currently done on sustainability, but as a cultural transformation.

Orr reveals his post-historic primitive inclinations when he notes that ecological sustainability is rooted as much in past practices, folkways, and traditions as in the creation of new knowledge. . . . Traditional knowledge, as economist Richard Norgard puts it, ‘is location specific and only arrived at through unique coevolution between specific social and ecological systems. Traditional knowledge is rooted in local culture. . . . Knowledge is not separated from the multiple tasks of living well in a specific place over a long period of time. The crises of sustainability has occurred only when and where this union between knowledge, livelihood, and living has
broken down and knowledge is used for the single purpose of increasing productivity. (Orr, 1992, p. 32)

Thus, according to Orr, a move to a post-historic primitive, Deep Ecological culture requires:

a patient and systematic effort to restore and preserve traditional knowledge of the land and its functions. This is knowledge of specific places and their particular traits of soils, micro-climate, wildlife, and vegetation, as well as the history and cultural practices that work in each particular setting. Sustainability will not come primarily from homogenized top-down approaches but from the careful adaptation of people to particular places. This is as much a process of rediscovery as it is of research. (Orr, 1992, pp.32-33)

Orr proposes that the following nine guidelines, originally developed by John and Nancy Todd for the New Alchemy Institute, should serve to guide our efforts.

1. The living world is the matrix for all design
2. Design should follow the laws of life
3. Biological equity must determine design
4. Design must reflect bioregionality
5. Projects should be based on renewable energy resources
6. Design should integrate living systems
7. Design should be co-evolutionary
8. Building and design should heal the planet
9. Design should follow a sacred ecology. (Orr, 1992, p. 33)

It is immediately obvious how closely related these guidelines are to a MacIntyrian and post-historic primitive interpretation of The Eight Point Platform for Deep Ecology. Myth, understood as the narrative genre of a tradition formed by the complete community of a particular place, also provides similar practical (yet also distinctly moral) guidance in the virtuous performance of all a tradition’s practices.

While Orr goes on to deal with a number of sustainability issues in this book, his main concern as an educator at Oberlin College is to provide a theory of education which will foster the growth of ecologically sustainable communities. This theory is most clearly laid out in Chapter Nine, “Education and Sustainability: An Approach.” Briefly, Orr claims that such a theory must have four planks. First, the theory will present “an
uncompromising commitment to life and its preservation. . . a commitment. . . to health, harmony, balance, wholeness, and diversity as these qualities apply to both human and natural systems” (Orr, 1992, p. 133). Orr is not advocating that we all cease to exist because of some type of commitment which would prevent us from acquiring the food we need to live; nor, I believe, is he denying the moral justification of any entity killing another entity which threatened its life: as, for instance, a moose might kill a hunting wolf or a human might kill an attacking bear. Rather, Orr’s “commitment to life” is very similar to what I called the virtue of respect in Chapter Six. Under this interpretation, this aspect of Orr’s theory demands an attitude which both denies supremacy to any single entity’s point of view, in the case of humans to anthropocentrism, and encourages a critical reflection of one’s actions within the framework of one’s Mythic tradition. This orientation is the same as the one which drove home some of the lessons Richard Nelson learned from the Koyukon:

Hunters who had lost their luck said they looked back at how they had treated the animal, hoping to learn what they had done to offend it, which of the many rules in their code of behavior they might have broken. . . . The men I hunted with said that whenever they did something not covered by a traditional rule, they kept track of how their luck was affected afterward. (Nelson, 1991, p. 11-12)

The second point of Orr’s educational theory is that individuals must come “to understand the world of nature and to develop competence in thinking about natural systems” (Orr, 1992, p. 134). While Orr notes that in our current culture, divorced as it is from Creation, even an increase in technical knowledge about non-human aspects of Creation would be an improvement, still he is not, ultimately or simply suggesting a stronger focus on the traditional Euro-progenic sciences. Rather, Orr insists that this increased understanding of Creation must occur in relationship to his first theoretical point: it must, in other words, be an increase in knowledge motivated and guided by a commitment to care for Creation. On Orr’s view, this could occur through an increased
focus on a particular type of ecology, best typified by the work of such individuals as Donald Worster, Marshall Sahlins, Robert Heilbrunner, Eugene Odum, Johan Galtung, and Henry David Thoreau. In moral language, this aspect of Orr’s educational theory can be seen as encouraging the development of the virtue of watchfulness, the virtue of being aware of, and being inquisitive about, everything which is happening around you. Further, Orr’s theory, by stressing the need for individuals “to understand the world of nature and . . . natural systems,” also provides the beginning of a rationale for seeing hunting and gathering as a central post-historic primitive practice.

The third central point of Orr’s theory is that “education for sustainability will . . . connect disciplines as well as disparate parts of the personality” (Orr, 1992, p.137). As Orr sees it, this focus aims towards two interconnected goals: “First, it aims toward the establishment of a community of life that include future generations, male and female, all races and nations, and the natural world. . . . A second aim . . . is personal wholeness and transcendence” (Orr, 1992, p.138). This aspect of Orr’s theory is related to both the virtue of myth-telling and the virtue of immersion as outlined in Chapter Six. Further, this is the aspect of Orr’s educational theory which will have the most drastic affect on the physical structure of current forms of education. Fulfilling this goal of community building can only occur if we 1) get out of our age-segregated classrooms, 2) get out of classrooms altogether, and 3) begin to openly acknowledge and study how all of what we see now as separate and disconnected disciplines are actually connected through Myth as practices which together construct community and tradition.

The virtue of myth-telling is also elated to Orr’s fourth theoretical point, that “education for sustainability must. . . include an awareness of the tragic in human affairs” (Orr, 1992, p. 139). Myth would enable us to realize and work with the knowledge, on the one hand, that our recent conduct has resulted in a situation where “the odds against human
survival are perhaps longer than most of us would like to admit" (Orr, 1992, p. 139), and, on the other, that our new, post-historic primitive cultures "might do well to reflect the rhythms of life itself, moving between sobriety and mirth, wisdom and foolishness, work and play, sacred and profane, awareness of limits and limitless hope, suffering and celebration" (Orr, 1992, p.139).

Orr uses this theory of education to provide suggestions in the area of Euro-progenic post-historic primitive curricula and to provide a new theory of pedagogy. Orr’s theory of pedagogy focuses on the central role that “place” should hold as primary instructor. Briefly, Orr argues that education should occur using a pedagogy whereby small groups of learners engage with and learn from all the natural systems which together constitute a particular locale. If, as I have suggested in previous chapters, these systems are seen as MacIntyrian practices which include humans, i.e., the various local systems which provide shelter, food, and energy, this theory of pedagogy can then be seen to be identical to MacIntyre’s idea that the primary education of any tradition takes place within that tradition’s practices. The practice of educating itself occurs after and within the context of education as immersion in a tradition’s constitutive practices. On Orr’s view, this practice of education is part and parcel of continued studies in his version of ecology; as familiarity and exposure with local systems grows, curiosity will naturally develop about larger systems, both macro, e.g., weather systems, and micro, e.g., all the fascinating and diverse characteristics of a single species.

To sum up, Orr offers a good initial attempt at defining a general post-historic primitive theory of education. Further, he demonstrates that it is possible to at least begin discussions about ecologically sustainable theories of education. However, future work

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34 Orr’s suggested curriculum is too extensive to replicate here, interested individuals can find it in Chapter Seven of *Ecological Literacy*. **163**
could be done using a framework which recognized the role of virtues more openly. At best, such future work would also do more to highlight the central importance both of the general experience of hunting and gathering and of the development of the virtue of immersion in post-historic primitive education. While the importance of the activity and the virtue are derivable from Orr's current theory, their importance to post-historic primitive theory, in general, argues for their more overt recognition in any post-historic primitive theory of education. Further, while Orr's theory remains valuable as a general theory of Deep Ecological education, crucial information about education which would foster ecologically sustainable communities can only come from local, bio-regionally grounded theories and practices of education. It is to one example of such theory and practice that I now turn.

7.3 Rediscovery

Rediscovery is an educational program which first started on the Queen Charlotte Islands, or Haida Gwaii, in 1978. Since that date, more than ten new Rediscovery programs have been initiated in countries around the world. Since its inception, the goal of Rediscovery has been to facilitate the re-integration of communities into their local surroundings. These programs have had remarkable success both in revitalizing specific traditional autochthonic communities and in facilitating the growth of autochthonic values into main stream culture (Henly, 1989). More and more environmental education facilities, for example, are now using Rediscovery activities and the Rediscovery philosophy in their own programs.

Since Rediscovery is built around the beliefs both that each community's connection to their locale varies and that local Rediscovery programs must build on these unique bonds, a requirement for Rediscovery International to help set up an educational
program is extensive local community involvement in the process. Rediscovery International has also laid out fourteen general theoretical guidelines which they feel are shared by all Rediscovery initiatives. Rediscovery International has published a book which outlines this general model and provides examples of helpful activities (Henly, 1989). I will first investigate the fourteen guidelines and then describe a few of the activities and demonstrate how they support the general Rediscovery model.

1) Homeland, Heartland,

This guideline stresses what I have called the virtue of immersion: “In keeping with native traditions, contact with the land is the most important aspect of Rediscovery. All benefits and personal accomplishments are ultimately linked to this relationship. . . . On Rediscovery, the wilderness is homeland, not frontier.” (Henly, 1989, p.28). To facilitate the growth of this relationship, all Rediscovery programs are situated in or adjacent to areas which have not been affected by urban, agricultural, and industrial activities. Further, the vast majority of Rediscovery activities are focused on building up this relationship through increasing sensory awareness and demonstrating our human links to place in terms of energy, shelter and cultural roots.

2) Living from the land.

All Rediscovery programs attempt to acquire as much of their food as possible through hunting, gathering, and tending small gardens. Further, Rediscovery participants are expected and encouraged to participate in these processes. In Henley’s words, “In a world where so many urban youth have never seen the animal that fills their milk carton or the space between their Big Mac buns, it is a revelation for them to be involved directly in that most ancient human pursuit--food procurement” (Henly, 1989, p. 30). On the post-historic primitive view, of course, involvement in such activities is fundamental to fostering ecologically sustainable communities.
3) Extended Family

Each Rediscovery program is structured around groups of between eleven and sixteen people. Further, each such group will include individuals ranging in age from very young to quite old. The idea behind this group composition is to replicate, as closely as possible, the traditional family group. Rediscovery leaders feel that this group size and composition provides the best learning environment.

4) Elders.

Elders are always incorporated into Rediscovery groups. Rediscovery leaders have found that the presence of these elders serves two valuable purposes. First, they pass on valuable traditional knowledge, knowledge that has often never been recorded and which is available in no other form. Second, and perhaps more importantly, elders tend to diffuse tension between adolescent Rediscovery participants and older, sometimes middle-aged Rediscovery guides. Henley hypothesizes that this tension is natural and that elders can diffuse it because they are seen by both groups as being impartial and important sources of authority.

5) Cultural Context

Elders are always consulted about local Rediscovery programs to insure that activities take place at culturally appropriate times and places. As Henley states, "Every Rediscovery site reflects a distinct culture with its unique architecture, customs, traditions, language, skills, and spiritual focus. The settings and the facilities become powerful statements of the world view of the inhabitants" (Henley, 1989, p. 34).

6) Authenticity

Each Rediscovery program is based on a local autochthonic culture. The philosophy behind this guideline is that such cultures often provide the most appropriate
and most successful guidelines for ecologically sustainable human activity. Rediscovery leaders realize that:

for immigrant cultures, such as the European descendants in North America, a rediscovery of their ancient traditions would be more difficult, having had a comparatively short history on this continent and without the same connection to place. Yet the Rediscovery approach has universal applications. Youth everywhere need to spend time outside under the open sky, to discover more about themselves, their fellow humans, and the non-humans with whom they share this planet. Cultural authenticity is a guiding principle in Rediscovery camps but not their sole reason for being. (Henly, 1989, p. 35)

Further, all Rediscovery programs accept individuals regardless of their ethnicity, creeds, or gender.

7) Cross-Cultural Understanding

This guideline is directly related to the previous one. Rediscovery leaders realize that cross-cultural tensions can arise, not only between individuals who are racially different, but between individuals from different autochthonic cultures. Indeed, some of the trickiest cross-cultural situations experienced by Rediscovery staff have arisen at Four Corners Rediscovery in the American South-west, between individuals of Pueblo, Ute, and Navajo cultural backgrounds. In attempts to diffuse hostility between such traditional enemies, Rediscovery leaders have stressed the need for individuals to see each other as inhabitants of the same place who need to try and understand and work with each other. Such attempts also involve the re-exploration of each tradition to show that while animosity did exist, it was often not as wide-spread or as fierce as Euro-progenic Historians, bent on portraying autochthonic cultures as barbaric and bloodthirsty, have suggested.

8) Flexible Schedule

Keeping in line with the immersion guidelines noted above, and with the notions both that locale is the primary teacher and that individuals learn best when they choose the time and place of their education, Rediscovery programs are very flexible in terms of what
is accomplished when. Since Rediscovery programs are typically around two weeks in length, this flexibility is both long-term, in the sense that activities and expeditions can and do take place on days other than originally scheduled, and short-term, e.g., what was scheduled to occur at two o-clock takes place at four. As the Rediscovery program has realized, the success of post-historic primitive education lies in:

knowing when to let go of the schedule. If a leader has planned a nature activity, but can’t get the group’s interest because they are too busy swimming and playing in the river, then the leader might put on his or her bathing suit and join them in the water. If the expedition group is aiming for a certain destination and is delayed due to berry picking and fossil hunting, then a closer spot becomes the destination. Ultimately the schedule of activities is adaptable, flexible, at times non-existent, at other times non-stop. (Henly, 1989, p. 38).

It is important to note that this flexibility is not completely anthropocentric. Rather, it is found in a program which is grounded in the notion that place is the primary teacher. Thus, care is always taken in Rediscovery programs to ensure that participants are aware of the demands of safety.

9) Sharing, Speaking out.

Realizing that “Nature acts as a catalyst for self-expression,” (p. 39) a significant aspect of all Rediscovery programs is to encourage individuals to speak out and share their thoughts and emotions with others. Since the corollary to speaking out is the ability to listen, Rediscovery also fosters the development of listening skills. Given its post-historic primitive bent, it should come as no surprise that Rediscovery encourages the development of both these skills in relation to both human and non-human others.

10) Personal Achievement

While Rediscovery literature does not make explicit reference to Shepard’s theory of ontogeny, there seems to be an implicit acceptance of its existence. This acceptance leads to a focus on personal achievement in the sense of moving through an individual’s
personal ontogeny. The achievement of these stages is marked with ceremony in which all members of the group participate.

11) Leadership skills

This guideline is related to the previous one. As individuals proceed through their ontogeny and acquire new skills and attitudes they are encouraged to participate in leadership roles. It is important to realize, however, that the achievement of a leadership role is not seen as goal in the same way as it is in Euro-progenic societies. Individuals within the Rediscovery program see leadership as a heavy responsibility which, while it is not to be avoided, it is to be approached with caution.

12) Healthy living

Rediscovery leaders realize that our immersion in Euro-progenic cultures has led to and is facilitated by the use of mind- and soul-numbing substances. A move to autochthonic culture, then, must included a move away from the use of such substances in order to allow the mind and soul to participate fully in Creation. Thus, all Rediscovery programs forbid the use of such substances. Further, Rediscovery also realizes that our modern diet, while touted as being nutritionally sound, is often composed of foods which are detrimental to our health, such as sugars and domesticated meats with additives, brought to us from far away through the use of polluting technologies. Thus, Rediscovery programs try to provide participants with food which is locally grown and additive free. They also try to use foods that Rediscovery participants can find for themselves.

13) Further Education

Since Rediscovery is grounded in the notion that humans live in constantly evolving and mysterious world, there is an emphasis within the program on the idea that learning is something which must continue throughout life. The Rediscovery program does encourage individuals to participate in traditional Euro-progenic education, but insists
that type of learning must always be seen within the context of learning to live in place.

14) Follow-Up

Rediscovery leaders realize that the life-time learning they support in the previous guideline will require some type of long-term structure. To this end, various individuals are attempting to set up Rediscovery programs that will be open to, and pertinent for, adults.

Rediscovery staff have developed over one hundred activities which they feel support their type of education. Many of these activities involve role-playing and are designed to foster the growth of the senses. Several others are role-playing scenarios where individuals enact cultural experiences. While there is not, of course, sufficient room in this thesis to investigate all these activities, there are three which I believe best typify the Rediscovery experience. The first of these is called “A day in the life of the village.” This activity often takes place near the beginning of the Rediscovery experience but after individuals have already gained certain basic wilderness and small-group social skills. In this activity, each individual is assigned a particular role in a village of the local autochthonic culture. Such roles might include hunter, gatherer, several specific types of chief, shaman, slave, etc. Attempts are made to make this role-play as authentic as possible using implements and structures from the representative period. If more than one group is participating in the Rediscovery program, several different cultural groups are set up and the groups are encouraged to interact with each other, e.g., in trade or conflict. Individuals are encouraged to totally submerse themselves in their roles for at least a day to get a feel for what life in such cultures was like. What often happens, however, is that the role-playing becomes real life to the extent that attitudes and social conventions discovered and enacted during the activity re-appear through-out the Rediscovery experience.
This activity often results in several positive benefits. First, of course, participants often discover that the descriptions of tribal life found in Historic accounts are questionable. Second, particularly if there are two or more cultures which are being represented, individuals gain some understanding of difficult inter-cultural relationships can be and how misunderstandings about different cultures can arise. Finally, participants gain a better feel for what life was really like in the represented autochthonic cultures than they would from merely reading, watching a video or even talking to someone else who had had the experience. Almost inevitably, individuals come away from this activity with a more positive attitude about autochthonic culture and what such cultures can offer us in terms of our relationship with each other and with the rest of Creation.

The second activity which I want to focus on is the Expedition. The goal of this activity is to expose individuals to travel across the landscape as it was done by autochthonic cultures: in small family groups which moved carefully and quietly through Creation “like a fish through the water or bird through the air, leaving no sign of their passing” (Henly, 1989, p. 205). After a period of training in the necessary travel skills, participants are placed in groups of between five and six individuals. The groups then decides what its route will be, although the exact itinerary is left flexible. The Expedition often serves as the context for another Rediscovery activity, the Solo. At some point during the Expedition, individuals are encouraged to spend twenty-four hours alone at a spot of their choosing. While there are some spiritual overtones to this activity, Rediscovery leaders are careful to point out that this is not a “vision quest,” which they view as a specific spiritual exercise to be conducted within the parameters of a specific tradition. Rather, the goal of the solo is to provide participants with an opportunity to both build self-confidence and bond with Creation on a private level. Solos are not demanded of participants and individuals are always allowed to return to the Expedition base camp if
they so desire. Typically, however, solos are completed and individuals see them as one of the most important experiences of the entire Rediscovery program.

Expeditions can also serve as the context for another Rediscovery activity, the Rabbit Roast. As we have seen, one of the Rediscovery guidelines is to expose participants to actual practice of hunting and gathering. The Expedition provides a situation where training in hunting and gathering can take place within a small group situation, thereby assuring a high degree of individual participation. Typically, the Rabbit Roast takes place over an entire day during which participants are responsible for hunting and gathering enough food for an evening feast. Again, this activity tends to be a significant one for Rediscovery participants.

To sum up, the Expedition offers a context for the realization of many Rediscovery goals. It fosters practices of small-group bonding, hunting and gathering, communing with Creation, low-impact travel, and personal achievement, as well as point out the benefits of living within a flexible schedule.

As a theory and practice of post-historic primitive education, Rediscovery offers several improvements on Orr’s work. First, whereas Orr’s theory remains quite general, Rediscovery programs are very grounded in local place and culture. Second, Rediscovery explicitly recognizes several post-historic primitive imperatives which Orr’s theory tends to gloss over, such as the importance of hunting and gathering and the importance of learning how to live in small groups. Finally, Rediscovery’s extensive use of role-playing implicitly recognizes something overlooked by Orr: that individuals learn much more through immersion then they can ever hope to through watching videos or reading books. Orr’s theory remains important for Rediscovery, however, because it offers, despite its shortcomings, a much more rigorous academic treatment of post-historic primitive educational theory and practice.
7.4 Conclusion

In this thesis, I have argued that the human experience must be understood as being composed of a mosaic of traditions each of which is composed of locally determined practices and is carried by a particular narrative genre. Further, I have argued that the post-historic primitive interpretation of Deep Ecology provides a natural law theory which enables an evaluation of these various traditions from the point-of-view of long-term ecological sustainability. Briefly, this natural law theory holds that one tradition is superior to another to the extent that it includes all locally present entities, whether human or non-human, as active participants within its practices and its narrative genre. The vital importance of this theory of traditions is that it offers a route through our tradition's current, environmentally disastrous, epistemological crises.

Thus, the theory of traditions has several implications for the quest for an educational theory and practice which would foster ecological sustainability. First, the theory of traditions holds that education within traditions occurs on two levels. On the primary level, education is a process which occurs within practices as a type of apprenticeship leading to the formation within the individual of the specific aspects of character, or virtues, necessary for participating in that practice. The second level of education is education as a specific practice. Traditions may or may not possess this type of education, which can be interpreted as learning for the sake of learning. From the point of view of post-historic primitivism, it is the health of the first type of education which determines the overall health of the tradition, for if a tradition's practices disintegrate the tradition itself disappears. Further, the existence of a practice of education within a tradition is unimportant for a tradition's health as long as that practice does not displace the primary level of education.
The second implication of the theory of traditions is that specific examples of educational theory and practice can only occur and have relevance within specific traditions. Any attempt to develop a theory of education outside of a specific tradition, say on the level of a family of traditions, e.g., the Christian family of traditions, will only result in a very general theory whose imposition on a specific tradition as “education” will lead to the displacement of the first level of education by the second and, thus, lead to the disintegration of that specific tradition. This is not to claim that the development of such general theory is necessarily bad or unimportant; such theory building might, for instance, serve as a way of identifying families of traditions. The implication is, rather, that caution must exercised in the application of such general theory.

The third implication of the theory of traditions for the investigation of educational theory and practice, is that such investigation must, perforce, be hermeneutical. In other words, since the primary level of education within a practice is that which occurs within practices, and since practices occur within and can only be understood within the narrative genre of the tradition, any attempt to understand a tradition’s educational practices necessitates a thorough grounding in that tradition’s narrative genre. Further, understanding the theory of traditions from a post-historic primitive, Deep Ecological position that narrative genre is a locally derived version of the general conversation of consumption in the form of Myth, holds that the hermeneutic process should not be focused on merely learning a tradition’s human language. Rather, the post-historic primitive understanding of the nature of narrative genres demands that an investigator must submerge him or herself within the local Myth; that is, the investigator must become part of the practices of the tradition they are investigating and interact on a regular level with all of the tradition’s human and non-human participants.
This post-historic primitive theory provides important illumination in the quest for an educational theory and practice which would foster ecologically sustainable communities. First, it allows the investigator to understand traditional Euro-progenic educational theory and practice as an example of a situation where a tradition’s secondary form of education, a specific practice of education, has become dominant to the determinant of primary education within practices. Empirical evidence for this theoretical belief can be found both in the numerous studies which establish the widening gap between existing forms of Euro-progenic education and what is euphemistically called “real life” and in the now common tendency to identify this practice of education as education and dismiss practice-specific education as something of lesser importance, e.g., apprenticeships, summer camp experiences, or a marginalized “outdoor education.”

Second, the post-historic primitive theory of traditions allows the investigator to see that the quest for an ecologically sustainable theory and practice of education, while it can rely somewhat on a general theory such as Orr’s, must fundamentally be a process more akin to the Rediscovery program, a program which will get learners out of the classroom and build on experience and learning within locally derived practices. Further, given the current Euro-progenic position within History, any development of an ecologically sustainable education will involve the concomitant re-acquisition and re-inhabitation of Mythic traditions and their constituent practices; the development, in other words, not of an educational theory and practice, but of a mosaic of tradition-specific educational theories and practices. The task, then, of the post-historic primitive, Deep Ecological educator is no less than the re-creation and re-inhabitation of locally specific Myth cultures. This task, of course, is enormous and such an individual would do well to take the advice of Dave Foremen in a recent editorial in the journal “Wild Earth” that one should take the long, two-hundred-year perspective if one is to avoid burnout and a concomitant sense of
hopelessness. There is also, of course, much to do to occupy these two hundred years. Post-historic primitive educators need to begin now to learn to immerse themselves in what remains of local autochthonic cultures so their millennia of knowledge is not lost. These educators must continue the work on existing general post-historic primitive, Deep Ecological theories of education, such as Orr’s and Rediscovery’s, both to clarify a wide range of theoretical issues and to defend these theories at educational conferences and in educational institutions. To insure the continued existence of both post-historic primitive “classrooms” and the primary post-historic primitive “teacher,” post-historic primitive educators must work to preserve what is left of wilderness areas and to re-habilitate other areas which have felt the impact of History. A truly post-historic primitive way of doing this would involve the creation of mosaic of tradition-specific educational experiences which would begin to foster the growth of wild virtue within participants, virtue which would make the accomplishment of the above tasks, and many more, a moral imperative.

NAMASTE!

EARTH FIRST!
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