Environment & Society Portal

**Multimedia Library Collection: Environmental Values (journal)**

# "Wildness as a Critical Border Concept: Nietzsche and the Debate on Wilderness Restoration"

Drenthen, Martin

Drenthen, Martin. "Wildness as a Critical Border Concept: Nietzsche and the Debate on Wilderness Restoration." *Environmental Values* 14, no. 3 (2005): 317–37. doi:10.3197/096327105774434459 .

How can environmental philosophy benefit from Friedrich Nietzsche's radical critique of morality? In this paper, it is argued that Nietzsche's account of nature provides us with a challenging diagnosis of the modern crisis in our relationship with nature. Moreover, his interpretation of wildness can elucidate our concern with the value of wilderness as a place of value beyond the sphere of human intervention. For Nietzsche, wild nature is a realm where moral valuations are out of order. In his work, however, we can discern a paradoxical moral concern with this wildness. Wildness is a critical moral concept that reminds us of the fact that our moral world of human meanings and goals ultimately rests on a much grander, all-encompassing natural world. Nietzsche's concept of wildness acknowledges the value of that which cannot be morally appropriated. Wild nature confronts us with the limits of human valuing. Wildness as a concept thus introduces the 'beyond' of culture into the cultural arena of values.
— Text from The White Horse Press website

All rights reserved. © 2005 The White Horse Press

**Download:**
PDF: https://www.environmentandsociety.org/sites/default/files/key_docs/ev_14no.3_drenthen_martin.pdf

**Related links:**

- Article on the official website
  http://www.erica.demon.co.uk/EV/EV1417.html
- The White Horse Press
  http://www.erica.demon.co.uk/

Environmental Values (journal) Collection, Multimedia Library, Environment & Society Portal
"Wildness as a Critical Border Concept: Nietzsche and the Debate on Wilderness Restoration"
**Source URL:** http://www.environmentandsociety.org/node/5940
**Print date:** 28 November 2026 15:25:31

**Websites linked in this text:**

- http://dx.doi.org/10.3197/096327105774434459
- http://www.erica.demon.co.uk/EV/EV1417.html

Environmental Values (journal) Collection, Multimedia Library, Environment & Society Portal
"Wildness as a Critical Border Concept: Nietzsche and the Debate on Wilderness Restoration"
**Source URL:** http://www.environmentandsociety.org/node/5940
**Print date:** 28 November 2026 15:25:31