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Democratising Nature? The Political Morality of Wilderness Preservationists

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ABSTRACT: Deep ecological appeals for wilderness preservation commonly conjoin arguments for participatory land use decision-making with their central championing of natural areas protection. As an articulation of the normative meaning of participatory democracy, the discourse ethics advanced by Jürgen Habermas is employed to highlight the consistency and justifiability of this dual claim. I argue that Habermasian moral theory reveals a key tension between, on the one hand, an ethical commitment to wilderness preservation informed by deep ecological and bioregional principles that is oriented to a naturalistic value order and, on the other, the procedural norms of democratic participation. It is claimed that discourse ethics thereby raises critical philosophical and practical questions concerning the political legitimacy of deep ecology. In examining the progressive claims of environmental philosophers and wilderness activists embracing this perspective, I draw empirically upon Canadian arguments for natural areas protection and associated radical prescriptions for a democratisation of land use decision-making.

KEYWORDS: bioregionalism, deep ecology, democracy, discourse ethics, wilderness preservation.

1. INTRODUCTION

Is radical environmentalism, as expressed in deep ecological demands for wilderness preservation, compatible with democratic will-formation? Where, in other words, is the symmetry between arguments advanced by wilderness preservationists to protect large natural areas and their normally joint commitment to participatory decision-making? While of obvious theoretical interest to environmental philosophy, where it assumes relevance to recent debate on the democratic credentials of green political thought,[1] this question carries wide-ranging practical implications for the normative claims of the wilderness preservation movement in North America and Australasia.

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Equating environmentalism with the diverse philosophies and practices informing a concern with the protection of (natural and human) environmental quality, wilderness preservationists may be located at the biocentric or ecocentric end of the environmental movement. Lynton Caldwell has succinctly characterised the ethical challenge presented by environmentalism.

> The movement is life-centred, distinguished by a sense of moral imperative regarding human behaviour in relation to other life forms within the biosphere ... Environmentalist values are species-oriented and transgenerational, emphasising personal and social responsibility.[2]

With its emphasis on post material values and personal lifestyle choices, environmentalism shares similarities with other 'new social movements' – for example, feminism and the peace movement – that have emerged in advanced capitalist countries since the 1960s. Differing from established forms of the labour movement, these new protest groupings lack formal organisation and ideological unity, expressing diffuse concerns with quality of life, human rights, individual self-realisation and, of relevance here, participatory democracy. Ronald Inglehart has identified a 'silent revolution' or general long-term shift to the post material values among western publics, especially in the younger and more educated groups of the new middle classes. This, in part, accounts for their peculiarly *cultural* character, articulating issues traditionally excluded from mainstream political debate, and doing so through non-institutional modes of political action – typically unconventional means of collective protest.[3] My interest in this paper lies less in the organisational form of the wilderness preservation movement than in its general value orientation; in particular, the logical consistency and moral justifiability of its normative premises. By 'political morality' I thus refer to those key moral principles motivating green political action.

Insofar as we can identify a green theory of value anchoring radical environmentalism, it has been argued both by wilderness activists and environmental philosophers that wilderness preservation provides the strongest ethical basis for an ecologically enlightened relationship with non-human nature. This ecocentric position, it is claimed, draws its clearest inspiration from the contemporary experience of 'wild' nature in affluent post-frontier societies facing imminent destruction of remnant wilderness areas. In contrast to European countries, where existing left-radical political traditions have fashioned the green response to losses in environmental quality, the wilderness preservation movement in North America and Australasia is portrayed as the main impetus for a deep ecological position attributing moral considerability to non-human nature.[4] The ethical stance thereby adopted implies a fundamental opposition to the central tenets of industrial society: it challenges orthodox models of economic growth, the faith in a scientific or technological fix to current ecological problems, and the dominant instrumental mode of relating to nature in western

culture – that is, as a storehouse of resources. In this sense, deep ecology refers to those in the environmental movement who 'go deep in their argumentation patterns,' drawing on a distinctive philosophy of nature.[5]

This paper explores the tension between, on the one hand, a moral commitment to wilderness preservation, framed by deep ecological principles and bioregional political programmes, that is oriented to a natural attributes based value order (to use Goodin's terminology) and, on the other, the universal procedural norms of participatory democracy. As a representation of the normative meaning of democratic processes, I refer to the moral theoretical arguments of Jürgen Habermas. His emphasis on questions of justice creates a position for evaluating the claim made by environmental activists that wilderness preservation constitutes a common interest deserving of legal protection and administrative recognition in land use policy. In examining this claim to normative rightness, I will draw substantively upon western Canadian arguments for natural areas protection and associated prescriptions for a democratisation of land use decision-making. Firstly, though, I shall outline one moral perspective that isolates theoretically the normative force of democracy, understood on this abstract level as social consensus.

2. DISCOURSE ETHICS: A NORMATIVE FOUNDATION FOR DEMOCRATIC LEGITIMACY

Habermas introduces the principle of discourse or communicative ethics as a formal *procedure* where claims to normative rightness can be judged impartially ('redeemed discursively'). This procedure – practical discourse – is an argumentative enterprise where the validity of rightness claims is, in principle, determined by reasoned discussion. An important distinction arises between the social purchase and validity of normative claims: the factual prevalence of a norm does not establish its validity as such. Instead, a principle of universalisation rules that contested norms are justified only when all affected by them accept their consequences. Valid norms are thus limited to those that embody a common or *general* interest. The condition of intersubjective recognition is designed to guarantee true impartiality and egalitarian reciprocity in moral choices. From this requirement Habermas states the central principle of discourse ethics:

> Only those norms can claim to be valid that meet (or could meet) with the approval of all affected in their capacity as participants in a practical discourse.[6]

Discourse ethics employs a 'weak transcendental' argument to justify the ideal principle of discursive consensus-formation. This recalls a central claim of Habermas's wider theory of social action, which makes a key analytical distinction between strategic action oriented to success (effective influence) and communicative action oriented to consensus or mutual understanding. Practical

discourse, it is claimed, is always anticipated in everyday contexts of communicative action:

> Argumentation is a reflective form of communicative action and the structures of action oriented toward reaching understanding always already presuppose those very relationships of reciprocity and mutual recognition around which *all* moral ideas revolve in everyday life no less than in philosophical ethics.[7]

In other words, in social interaction where human beings must share meaning to seek understanding, the normative presuppositions of ideal communication are intuitively grasped. Practical discourse reconstructs the universal character of these moral intuitions in order to show how they assume consensus – i.e., that the condition for assertion of normative claims is their *potential* for rational justification.[8] For Habermas these 'universal pragmatic presuppositions' belong to the know-how of all competent social actors in the modern world, and this is their connection to practical discourse. Thus relations of symmetry and reciprocity presupposed in communicative action become expressed as fundamental moral principles of justice and solidarity. *Justice* postulates equal respect and equal rights for the individual, whereas *solidarity* concerns the well-being of the community to which the individual belongs. These are closely linked in discourse ethics: moral norms cannot protect one without the other.[9] Habermas therefore stresses the determination of general interests as a co-operative, public process.

What are the implications of this discourse theory for wilderness preservation politics? The immediate relevance is as a regulative idea that makes possible criticism of existing institutional arrangements for land use planning and management, insofar as these under-represent or exclude preservation interests. And there are *a priori* grounds for suggesting that natural areas protection is a generalisable interest. The moral priority given to wilderness preservation by environmentalists rests, minimally, on an anthropocentric life-support rationale. Natural (largely unmodified) ecosystems provide essential protective and waste-assimilative functions through the ecological processes that stabilise climate, regulate air and water cycles, recycle essential elements, absorb pollutants, and so on. The positive value attached to these processes has become all the more obvious in an era of global pollution and climate change. Similarly, the interconnected importance of protected areas in conserving genetic strains and wild species: both the World Commission and United Nations Conference on Environment and Development noted the accelerated depletion and extinction of species resulting from human activities, stressing the economic (commodity) values at stake as reason enough to justify the preservation of biological diversity *in situ*.[10]

In paying attention to the normative rightness of wilderness preservation, the translation from communicative ethics to the political realm is by no means straightforward. As formulated by Habermas, and also Karl-Otto Apel, dis-

course ethics does not imply a detailed model for the organisation of (land use) decision-making or the adjudication of environmental disputes over core values. Clearly, no realisable argumentation concerning practical conflicts interest can ever completely correspond to an ideal communication community; that is, a rationally-motivated dialogue under conditions of perfect transparency unlimited by time and space. Both institutional and non-institutional political actors are subject to strategic considerations of political power, where coercion may be at least as important a means of influence as discourse.[11] Strategic principles capture the obvious motives of instrumental effectiveness shaping the political behaviour of interest groups, whatever the constituency they purport to represent. Habermas makes clear that when only particular interests are at stake – perhaps in the majority of environmental cases where legal or administrative regulations are being questioned – conflicts of action can only be settled through bargaining and compromise. For a strategically settled compromise of interests, the more modest role for practical discourse is to unmask false claims to represent a general interest, thereby withdrawing legitimacy from the privileging of one party. However, procedures of compromise in environmental planning and management may be judged with criteria of fairness, even if an agreement on common interests is not possible. According to the precautionary principle, although the exact ecological benefits of wilderness preservation remain uncertain, as a matter of fairness to present and future generations the onus of proof is on those who would develop natural areas to demonstrate that their actions will not cause irreversible losses in environmental quality.[12]

Switching to the wider political system, communicative ethics nevertheless points to the progressive realisation of practical discourse embodied in the democratic constitutional state. This major historical step lies in the recognition of human rights as universal claims and the attendant commitment to their realisation:

> Participation and communication rights can be understood as the principle to have ... discourses of (moral) justification legally institutionalised. This class of traditional human rights demands that those communicative conditions which we necessarily presuppose to be fulfilled in moral-practical discourses must be rendered operational and realised as far as possible.[13]

An ideal communication community is thus seen as constitutive for the political legitimacy of democratic state forms: conditions of free and unconstrained communication are presumed to generate, in the eyes of the public, reasonable forms of public deliberation and fair bargaining processes. Apel refers to the anchoring of executive decision-making authority in an independent legislative and judiciary. Both have legitimatory functions: as a representation of popular will, the legislature contains a procedure (majority decisions) for the investigation and mediation of representable interests, while the judiciary approximates discursive procedures through universal legal principles.[14]

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It falls to what Habermas terms the *political public sphere* – the communicative network of voluntary associations and wider public debate, shaped by cultural institutions and the mass media – to scrutinise the state in the light of practical discourse.[15] The communicative potential of public interest groups in this respect is to further the regulative idea of unlimited public discussion on the justification of contested norms. For the wilderness preservation movement this would mean considering, in the arguments of their proponents, the possible claims of all those who could be affected by the protection of large natural areas. The generalisability of wilderness preservation as a land use prescription could thereby be enlarged (or possibly constricted). I adopt this standpoint to assess moral claims commonly made by preservation groups, while recognising that in practice these are intermixed with strategic considerations. Behind their support for participatory democracy is the expectation of radical environmentalists that, as the movement for wilderness preservation is reinforced by an increasing scope of public communication and participation, the ecological imperative for natural areas protection will become even more transparent. But I will show now that this outcome is by no means guaranteed by the support for rational procedural norms, and that this accounts for the tensions between core green concerns and democracy.

3. WILDERNESS VALUES: ANTHROPOCENTRISM AND DEEP ECOLOGY

From the standpoint of discourse ethics, morality refers to practical questions which can be decided with reasons: in other words, normative conflicts amenable to communicative agreement. This signals, according to its proponents, a narrow or 'weak' concept of moral theory. It is directed primarily to questions of *justification* of norms and actions, with no pretensions to generating the *content* of these norms or prescriptions for their *application*. For Habermas, this differentiation is a historical achievement of modern modes of life ('life worlds'), where previously taken-for-granted societal norms now require thematisation and justification. Although principles of practical reason should inform the application of norms, their relevance to a specific situation depends on particular cultural traditions and values, and the judgement of the participants involved:[16]

> …*moral questions,* which can in principle be decided in terms of criteria of *justice* or the universalisability of interests are now distinguished from *evaluative* questions, which fall into the general category of issues of the *good life* and are accessible to rational discussion only *within* the horizon of a concrete historical form of life or an individual lifestyle. The concrete ethical life of a naively habituated life world is characterised by the fusion of moral and evaluative issues. Only in a rationalised life

world do moral issues become independent of issues of the good life.[17]

The isolation of questions of justice is seen as an advance in practical rationality, but this limits the substantive contribution that communicative ethics can make to the moral discourse of wilderness preservation. An immediate objection concerns the restriction of the ethical domain encompassed by morally acting subjects to human relations. Egalitarian relations of reciprocity presupposed in communicative action, which give rise to the moral principles of justice and solidarity, cannot be directly carried over into the relation between humans and nature.[18] For some critics the principle of universalisation therefore misses a central ethical thrust of biocentric or ecocentric environmentalism which attaches intrinsic value to nature-in-itself:

> If ... part of what is involved in the disputes over our use of the environment is a fundamental disagreement about what should be our relationship to nature, then these conflicts could not even in principle be settled by an appeal to generalisable interests.[19]

Formally, the contrast is greatest between a thoroughly *anthropocentric* discourse ethics and attempts within environmental ethics at articulating a nonanthropocentric value theory. Bryan Norton's inclusive definition of anthropocentrism affords a more useful category for classifying environmental preservation rationales than the narrow equation of anthropocentric values with utilitarianism – the obligation to promote the greatest happiness for the greatest number. Norton accepts the general characterisation that anthropocentrism confers instrumental value on nonhuman life according to human ends, but offers a more precise distinction between 'strong' and 'weak' variants. Strong anthropocentrism restricts the value of nonhuman species and other natural entities to consumptive preferences: these demand values are typically expressed by market prices that quantify individual preferences, such as arguments for wilderness preservation based on the economic benefits of adventure tourism. Weak anthropocentrism countenances a broader range of human values; in particular, it assigns a qualitatively different *transformative value* to nonhuman nature. Transformative value refers to the alterability and ranking of preferences that follows from their discursive examination. Upon reflection and rationally-motivated agreement, 'considered' preferences are the hypothetical desires or needs that may override demand values, such as aesthetic or moral ideals attributed to the human experience of nature.[20] Norton makes reference to a similar argument by Mark Sagoff in the context of social regulation, where 'community-regarding' values expressed by citizens through the political process justify environmental protection and preservation. These include such shared values as well-being, health, and respect and reverence for nature: the rational basis of their public interest credentials rests on a claim to intersubjective agreement.[21]

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Neither Sagoff nor Norton make reference to communicative action theory but their arguments can be interpreted as bringing cultural valuations of nature, over and above consumer preferences, into the realm of intersubjective debate. This emphasis renders communicative ethics more relevant for wilderness preservation issues – as an articulation of weak anthropocentrism. It recognises that all valuation is necessarily human-based, where moral choices are not philosophically pre-given, but subject to argument and debate; and that this moral pluralism can only be guaranteed by democratic institutions, universal human rights and, as I will ultimately argue, healthy and diverse ecological systems.

Nonanthropocentrism stands distinct from an anthropocentric axiology in conferring 'intrinsic' or 'inherent' value on nonhuman lifeforms. A range of nonanthropocentric approaches have been offered as grounds for the moral standing of nonhuman natural entities or systems.[22] The first formulation of modern ecocentric ethics has been credited as one of the most influential for leading Canadian environmentalists, and is often cited by wilderness activists in British Columbia as informing their philosophical perspective. This is the normative commitment to ecological integrity that Aldo Leopold encapsulated in his well-known maxim:

> 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.[23]

Indebted to Darwin's evolutionary account of ethical phenomena and community ecology, this environmental ethic derives norms from an organic or holistic conception of ecological interests. Darwin portrayed the socio-biological evolution of ethics as expanding modes of co-operation between interdependent individuals. Leopold's seminal contribution was to enlarge the boundaries of the moral community to include animals, plans, waters and soils. This radical notion of ethical extension places human beings within a biotic community that accords both a 'right to continued existence' of its individual members and, more significantly, an intrinsic right to the compositional and functional integrity of ecosystemic processes. The value of the healthy biotic community takes precedence over individual organisms: this approach, conferring intrinsic value on natural ecosystems and the integrity of ecological processes, has had an obvious appeal for wilderness preservation advocates.[24]

If the influence of a Leopoldian environmental ethic is acknowledged by wilderness activists, rationalisations for preservation founded on intrinsic value arguments are more likely to refer to motifs of *deep ecology*. Deep ecological ideas share the process-orientation of a Leopoldian ethic, but this emerges as a metaphysical exposition and a logical difference from scientific ecology is maintained. The Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess introduced the term deep ecology in 1972 and his characterisation has shaped its subsequent articulation in western Canada by wilderness preservationists. Deep ecology is presented as

heralding a new philosophical and religious world view for human-environment relations. Naess clarifies the approach by contrast with the 'shallow ecology movement' – reform environmentalism concerned with pollution abatement and resource conservation but subscribing to an anthropocentric value theory and the 'dominant technological paradigm' of modern industrial society.[25] As a social movement, deep ecology envisages a shift in consciousness toward *ecosophy* – ecologically wise action and wisdom. Ecosophy represents a 'philosophical worldview or systems inspired by the conditions of life in the ecosphere'.[26] As a personal philosophical system, the details of an ecosophy are formulated by 'deep questioning', according to an individual's life-context and background. Yet all ecospheric attitudes and practices recognise a broad ontological system which posits no division between human and nonhuman realms. From this ontology are derived common intuitions of the intrinsic value of nonhuman nature.

Naess presents the term 'Self-realisation' as *his* logically ultimate norm or intuition, although others have interpreted this as a fundamental norm of deep ecology in general. This core normative statement is conceived as a developmental process and fundamental goal, relating to an expanding identification of the self with all life forms. For Naess, the norm appeals beyond the narrowly self-centred, isolated 'ego-realisation' of the modern Western self to a relational field-like conception of the self. The Australian philosopher Warwick Fox has related this idea to advances in transpersonal psychology, although Naess has led recognition of the *ecological* self, denoting identification with the total unfolding of life. Whereas the shallow ecological perspective retains an objective disengagement from nature, deep ecology stresses the integration of human individuals with the whole of nonhuman nature: 'Life is fundamentally one'. This ecocentric cosmology indicates the highest level of maturity or growth for the self.[27]

From the top norm of Self-realisation, which denotes a universal right to self-unfolding, Naess derives the correlative norm of 'ecological egalitarianism' – the intrinsic value of every life form. This gives rise to the image of a 'democracy of life forms' but for obvious reasons is presented as a principle or guideline rather than a practical norm for conduct. Even in wilderness, Naess explains, full (human) self-realisation implies the acceptance of hurting and killing among life forms. The basic intuition nevertheless remains the unity of life and the right to self-unfolding.[28] Bill Devall and George Sessions name this intuition 'biocentric equality':

> [A]ll things in the biosphere have an equal right to live and blossom and to reach their own individual forms of unfolding and self-realisation within the larger self-realisation.[29]

Wilderness preservation assumes great importance as a manifestation of human restraint. The protection of large natural areas for their intrinsic value

becomes central to the type of consciousness change envisaged by deep ecologists. Holmes Rolston has presented a nonanthropocentric theory of value, identifying an intrinsic worth in wilderness. Individual organisms have an objective value arising from their genetic autonomy of self-maintenance but, in a deep ecological fashion, the most important values belong to the speciation process itself – acknowledging wilderness as a 'generating matrix' of life.[30] Other environmental philosophers have attempted to demonstrate an intrinsic value in wilderness and, though their theoretical efforts may be subsumed under the general label 'deep ecology', Naess has not endorsed moves to justify this norm through practical discourse.[31] Rather than expressing Self-realisation or intrinsic value in terms of formal argumentation, as normative terms morally binding on others, Naess refers to the former term as an overarching personal value and to the latter in a nontechnical everyday sense. Other self-professed deep ecologists have also eschewed moral discourse and any formal approaches claiming to generalise the normative application of intrinsic value. Instead, they issue 'invitations' to experience a more expansive sense of the self – the wider the identification of the addressee, the more she/he will be naturally inclined to undertake benevolent acts:

> [G]iven a deep enough understanding of the way things are, the response of being inclined to care for the unfolding of the world in all its aspects follows 'naturally' – not as a *logical* consequence but as a *psychological* consequence as an expression of the spontaneous unfolding (development, maturing) of the self.[32]

The validity of the intuition that all life is inherently valuable is defended, but with recourse to the position that, ultimately, this cannot be determined by discursive procedures. Indeed, Naess has consistently opposed attempts to universalise the ultimate premises of his ecosophy as *the* philosophical basis for radical environmentalism. On the contrary, different religions and metaphysical views are seen as strengthening the appeal of the deep ecology movement. Their fundamentals, if articulated, have at most 'limited comparability' in terms of cognitive contents. As long as they (intuitively) affirm the inherent worth of nonhuman nature, any incompatibility of other fundamental premises does not prevent agreement concerning priorities for significant changes in environmental policy and common practical efforts to improve ethical standards of human environmental interaction.[33]

Deep ecology nevertheless implies an incommensurability with dominant anthropocentric worldviews and this has important consequences for wilderness preservation rationales. From our Habermasian perspective, deep ecological reasons for natural areas protection lack a secure communicative basis: statements affirming an intrinsic moral sense of nature take this fact as ontologically given and/or, in some of the more pantheistic positions, as an 'act of faith' outside

practical discourse.[34] Habermas recognises immediate difficulties with such cosmological moral positions:

> [W]hile in our dealings with external nature we can indeed have feelings analogous to moral feelings, the *norm-conformative* attitude to this domain of external nature does not yield any problems susceptible of being worked up cognitively, that is, problems that could be stylised to questions of justice from the standpoint of normative validity.[35]

However deeply felt, wilderness activists in British Columbia expressing a deep ecology motivation concede the problem in constructing a normative position consistent with such a diffuse philosophy. For example, a founding director of Friends of Strathcona Park:

> Our argument is an awareness – a philosophical awareness that we do recognise that the world was not created for us, that we are a product of creation, and that we have to respect the creation. And that is very difficult (to communicate)... What I'm talking about is the values in life, *not* the values of economy and of jobs. These *are* the values of deep ecological existence, of spiritual values, of meaning.[36]

Other preservation group leaders have stressed the need to encourage an emerging spiritual consciousness from the ecological consciousness now apparent in public concern for natural areas protection.[37] But there is a marked incongruence between the personal attitudes of these wilderness activists and the arguments of their organisations. Not only are intuitive deep ecological feelings difficult to verbalise, they sit uncomfortably with both power-orientated strategies and the communicative demands of the public policy community. Self-realisation and ecological egalitarianism are ill-suited to discursive justification. Therefore, the generalisability of deep ecological values (the 'public interest') required by political decision-makers proves elusive. Not surprisingly then, it has been more expedient for preservation groups to justify wilderness allocation in instrumental terms, appealing to anthropocentric values.[38] Campaigns have usually appealed to scientific and economic benefits deriving from wilderness preservation.

The major, multi-issue wilderness groups in Western Canada have maintained a pragmatic stance in employing normative claims to wilderness preservation, utilising a wide range of anthropocentric arguments according to particular issues, and occasionally suggesting that an inherent value resides in wilderness. Behind their reluctance to formulate or articulate a deep ecological platform lies a preference for leaving philosophical issues to individual activists, while concentrating group resources on strategically effective arguments. From interviewing, undertaken in 1990/91 and 1994, it seems that most group directors hold beliefs akin to a deep ecology position. Alongside the key influence of

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Naess, several Canadian academics cited by these activists have contributed to the development of nonanthropocentric environmental philosophy. Among those closely associated with ideas of deep ecology are John Livingston, Neil Evernden, Stan Rowe and Alan Drengson.

Of the main provincial wilderness groups in British Columbia, the executive of the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society – British Columbia Chapter has made the clearest effort to define a collective philosophical stance in terms consistent with the principles of deep ecology. This is, in part, a reflection of the relatively high proportion of intellectuals actively involved with the organisation, both at the provincial and national level. The national executive has maintained the society's respectable public front, still prepared to mobilise preservation arguments appealing to instrumental values, but provincial directors emphasise a shift in worldview in the past decade:

> There's been a revamping of our mandate to make it less anthropocentric, even more biocentric of an approach, reflecting an evolution in consciousness within the group itself. A lot of us have been very deeply influenced by the deep ecology movement. I think we find that rather unique insofar as environmental groups are concerned. And we have within our ranks quite a few people who, as Canadians, are perceived as being at the forefront of deep ecology; for example, Stan Rowe, Ted Mosquin.[39]

As expressed by wilderness activists in British Columbia, deep ecology is perceived as being consistent with a progressive political philosophy. This sets some distance from the ideological polarisation commonly portrayed in American green politics between an idealistic deep ecology and social ecology – Murray Bookchin's influential notion of participatory ecological politics. Bookchin has led a trenchant critique of spiritual interpretations of deep ecology popular on the west coast – formulations associated, for example, with institutions like the Elmwood Institute in Berkeley and the radical wilderness group Earth First![40] Followers of social ecology have charged some deep ecologists in this region with issuing authoritarian prescriptions for political change, attributing this to the lack of any systematic historical and social analysis of ecological problems.[41] To be sure, the conservative currents of deep ecology articulated by some groups and individuals in the United States are at odds with the *particular* ecosophy of Arne Naess, who advocates a democratic-participatory politics and a structural analysis of the production and consumption patterns behind present ecological problems. More relevantly, leading wilderness activists in British Columbia expressing sympathy for deep ecology have close connections with social justice issues and organisations, notably aboriginal interest groups. Deep ecology is seen as requiring democratic institutional reform, in line with the radical political platform of the Green Party of British Columbia.

Nevertheless, the central normative claim of deep ecology remains problematic; that is, the authority of a perspective that lacks deep argumentation concerning its own political morality. In a Canadian context, John Livingston

has argued that there exists no rational argument for conveying the inherent worth of nature, because this ultimately rests on experiential understanding of a state of being – the 'planetary biospheric self.' Indeed, Livingston envisages the abandonment of ethical concepts once this new 'natural' metaphysics is achieved.[42] Communicative ethics exposes both the irrationality (the 'performative contra-diction' of a moral argument for abandoning ethics) and potentially anti-democratic implications of such a recourse to a totalising worldview. By spurning normative justification, it undermines the claims to generalisability of calls for wilderness preservation. Aside from tactical considerations, this deep ecological intuition is one reason for the non-negotiability of preservationist demands. This creates a tension between, on the one hand, the anthropocentric arguments utilised to champion the general interest of natural areas protection, and on the other hand, a philosophical motivation rooted in a rejection of anthropocentric interests. Yet, insofar as deep ecology does not recognise the anthropocentric principles of justice and solidarity in its normative premises, it lacks democratic legitimacy.

4. BIOREGIONALISM: NATURAL RIGHTS AND COMMUNITY CONTROL

I shall now note specific political implications arising from the contrast between a communicative ethics offering a procedural notion of justice and an environ-mental ethics (or deep ecological normative premise) oriented to a concrete value order. These concern, in an empirical context, prescriptions for (Crown) land-use reform presented by wilderness preservationists in British Columbia, notably the question of community empowerment with respect to forest re-sources. The link to deep ecology, and its basic norm of self-realisation, is through the derivation of principles for self-determination of local communities – self-sufficiency, decentralisation, autonomy.[43] A form of direct democracy is implied by these norms, but to what extent can they be justified through moral argumentation?

The major Vancouver and Victoria-based wilderness groups have developed a decentralist, localist perspective influenced greatly by the 'bioregionalism' of the broad-based alternative movement. Natural areas preservation has served to unite the strategic agenda of urban environmentalists with the more radical concerns of revived 'back-to-the-land' communities in the Slocan Valley, the Cariboo, the Gulf Islands and Tofino. Rural preservation groups, such as the Valhalla Wilderness Society and the Friends of Clayoquot Sound, express this overlap most clearly. In embracing decentralist themes they reflect a wider subculture in the Pacific Northwest and coastal northern California, which has shaped the reception of deep ecology in North America: this is the continuing legacy of the hippie counterculture of the late sixties. Bioregionalism has roots

in this way of life, although it was first popularised by Peter Berg of the San Francisco Planet Drum Foundation in the mid-l970s.[44] Kirkpatrick Sale has offered a concise definition of 'bio-region' – 'a life territory, a place defined by its lifeforms, its topography and its biota, rather than by human dictates; a region governed by nature, not legislature'.[45] Despite the original involvement of ecologist Raymond Dasmann in giving the term scientific meaning, bioregionalism has primarily become a moral philosophy inviting acceptance of a Leopoldian land ethic. Humans are portrayed as participants in a biotic community, with a responsibility to become knowledgeable ecological citizens. The process of learning to 'live-in-place' and developing bioregional identity is termed 'reinhabitation'.[46]

In its prescription for the polity, bioregionalism draws on the communitarian values of co-operation and participation favoured by deep ecology. As with Canadian readings of deep ecology, though, this has involved a moral abstention. The political resolution of environmental problems is accomplished by the recognition of – and identification with – natural regions and processes, even if the demarcation of these is problematic. Bioregional political philosophy claims to derive from ecological laws its normative principles of decentralisation, complementarity and diversity. For wilderness in particular, Berg identifies a locus of ecological consciousness which will help transform environmentalism from a defensive preoccupation with protest toward pro-active institutional reform:

> My own feeling is that the greatest shared value for the necessary upcoming ecological era is wilderness. Because wilderness already embodies systems, designs, purposes that are workable, are demonstrably eco-energetic-efficient in terms of using energy and resources and so on.[47]

Bioregionalism may be subsumed under the broad notion of deep ecology articulated by wilderness activists in British Columbia, although it carries a more explicit naturalistic stance. This presumes a political theory that begins from the discoverable 'truths' of natural law in order to evaluate existing institutions and policies. Sale establishes the central principles of a 'bioregional paradigm' on this basis, which combines traditions of local natural wisdom with modern ecological knowledge. A more sophisticated expression of a communitarian perspective based on natural law has been presented by Michael M'Gonigle, a provincial environmentalist and professor in the Faculty of Law at the University of Victoria. For M'Gonigle, long-term social and ecological sustainability must ultimately be guided by the natural law of 'being-in-balance'. The 'natural self' or 'natural community' acknowledges the interrelatedness of all things in the biosphere, their spiritual unity and their intrinsic moral worth. Once again, natural laws are apprehended 'beyond rational thought' through personal experience of this balance. M'Gonigle endorses a bioregional programme of economic and political decentralisation. Local self-sustaining economies become a

precondition for rooting participatory democracy in territorial communities. Empowerment at this local level is claimed to be the major structural reform serving the functional requirements of ecological sustainability.[48]

Bioregional political theory has marked a significant evolution in legal rationales for wilderness preservation. In the first place, it has reduced the reliance of preservation groups on centralised environmental protection legislation as the focus for lobbying efforts. This still assumes great strategic significance, and the bioregional perspective accedes to the continuing importance of provincial and federal powers for natural areas protection, as traditionally recognised by the wider conservation community. During the mid-1980s there existed a strong lobby for US-type wilderness legislation in British Columbia, headed by the Federation of Mountain Clubs and the Outdoor Recreation Council. The recommendations of a provincial Wilderness Advisory Committee in 1985 shared this enthusiasm for formal legislation, although the provincial government chose not to establish a Wilderness Act. This contrasts with the strong statutory mandates for wilderness preservation in the United States.

Existing attempts to aid wilderness preservation efforts by means of environmental law nevertheless sit uncomfortably with the moral framework of bioregionalism. Not only do they endorse a centralised political/legal structure, they imply a formal procedure divorced from any unquestioned metaphysical or religious backing. This distinction must be emphasised. Modern legal procedures hold, according to Habermas, a moral-practical legitimacy arising from their principles of equity and impartiality, which distribute burdens of proof and set requirements for justification based on the provision of good reasons. To be sure, legal regulation necessarily limits moral discourse because of obvious practical constraints, unburdening political and administrative decision-making from continuous discussion. But moral justification is necessarily implied by the *procedures* of modern autonomous law, where normative conflicts are adjudicated in principle according to which of the competing interests lends itself to universalisation.[49] This idea of impartiality is violated by the *substantive* value premises of bioregionalism and deep ecology, which can be interpreted as reviving classical notions of 'natural right': that is, the full unfolding of natural entities as a source of moral value.[50]

Self-realisation in its full ecological context points beyond civil law to the legislation of natural law. As expressed by Ted Mosquin, Past President of the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, this implies a moralisation of law:

> A good legislated natural law would provide people with written codes to reaffirm a sense of right and wrong in our relations with the planet. Each written law would ensure that the norms of the ecosphere are valued and respected.[51]

The seminal statement on conferring legal rights to natural objects came from Christopher Stone, who argued that human guardians or trustees could represent the interest of non-human entities in avoiding injury. As a radical extension of

existing human rights, this nevertheless retained the individualistic bias of conventional law.[52] Mosquin envisages an even more ambitious ascription of legal rights to life-supporting ecological functions and processes. This stands remote from current reform efforts in Canadian environmental law, where lawyers have argued for a strengthening of citizen rights to a healthy environment. Lobbying has included attempts to enact an environmental bill of rights and establish an interpretation of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982) sympathetic to environmental litigation. Both remain firmly in the realm of anthropocentric value theory and formal law: the right to environmental protection and enhancement is promoted as a *public interest*.[53] A consistent natural rights approach would paradoxically undermine the justification of wilderness preservation as a generalisable interest, because the rationale for natural areas protection would be tied to a specific naturalistic value order. Without reference to formal legal procedures ensuring impartial assessment across *different* value orientations, there would be little scope for moral argumentation to vindicate a Wilderness Act among those not sharing a belief in the intrinsic value of non-human nature.

The radical decentralisation suggested by bioregionalism has led to wilderness activists supporting legal assertions of aboriginal title. As articulated by M'Gonigle, the natural law perspective holds a key role for native title in British Columbia. Political struggles for native self-government are the clearest concrete examples of Canadian attempts to establish natural territorial structures for local governance. The traditional cultural values of native societies are seen as bound up with ecological awareness and adaptation: they express a collective identity based on a continuing spiritual relationship to the land. North American environmentalists have long highlighted, often romantically, an aboriginal land wisdom symbolising a life-affirming respect for non-human nature.[54] As a contribution to environmental sustainability, the accumulation of local ecological knowledge by aboriginal cultures has also been identified as invaluable by a federal Standing Commission on Aboriginal Affairs and the World Commission on Environment and Development.[55] Provincial proponents of bioregionalism draw more far-reaching institutional lessons from native prescriptions for self-government. M'Gonigle describes the contours of a fundamentally new 'eco-constitution' rooted in the social power of territorial communities. In line with his naturalistic perspective, native title retains historical authority as the model for an alternative conception of sovereignty. Against the centralised top-down powers of Canada's existing liberal constitution, the ultimate source of eco-constitutional sovereignty is the naturally and culturally defined community.[56]

Appreciation of traditional aboriginal use in wilderness areas is reflected in the legal recognition given to collecting and hunting activities in Canadian national parks. This divergence from the American notion of wilderness as 'empty' land – save transitory human visitors – was expressed most forcefully by Justice Thomas Berger in the 1977 Report of the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline

Inquiry. Appointed in 1974 by the federal government to review the social, economic and environmental impacts of a proposed natural gas pipeline from the Alaskan and Canadian Arctic to southern metropolitan centres, Berger undertook numerous hearings throughout the western Arctic and Mackenzie Valley, recording testimonies to the traditional resource utilisation and land stewardship of native people. His proposal that aboriginal people should share management responsibilities with the Canadian Parks Service in national parks covering areas of aboriginal hunting and fishing was incorporated into national parks policy in 1979.[57]

Berger's idea of wilderness as (aboriginal) *homeland* has proved influential among provincial environmentalists. This includes those key American émigrés who have been pivotal to the philosophical and strategic orientation of wilderness organisations, such as the founding director of the Western Canada Wilderness Committee:

> My conception of wilderness certainly has changed. I slowly realised that what we were trying preserve was a network of natural ecosystems and in many of those humans are a part of it – human use in a low impact way ... aboriginal peoples that have modified the landscape somewhat but they've kept the essence of the natural system there, and that's what we want to preserve. So this purist idea that I maybe come to it to begin with was slowly replaced.[58]

While acknowledging these common concerns, the catalyst for recent alliances between native peoples and environmentalists has been the convergence of short-term strategic objectives, notably opposition to logging operations. For wilderness groups, the assertion of aboriginal title as a legal right has become a powerful challenge to the Crown-granted timber rights of resource companies. This has effectively enabled them to block or delay a number of logging operations throughout the province, on the grounds that these would prejudice title negotiations.

Struggles for native self-government have also inspired strategies by environmentalists for increasing local community participation in resource and environmental decision-making. According to M'Gonigle, community control of local resource management may be achieved by means of *local veto* in a new *third level* government.

> The foundation for third-level government would ultimately be the recognition of regional title held by the people who live in the natural region, the title being historically rooted in the native community which has lived in the area from time immemorial. This title recognition amounts to an acknowledgement by the dominant culture of the fact of historic aboriginal territory 'ownership' and the need to negotiate a sharing of this territory with non-native society.[59]

An eco-constitution would confer fundamental sovereignty on third level government from which jurisdictional rights are delegated up to other levels.

This would authorise state jurisdiction to serve the large collective public interest in policy fields transcending natural regions, while the sharing of local title-power with non-native citizens would also emanate from these broader social responsibilities. Nevertheless, bioregional decentralisation would be guaranteed constitutionally by awarding a political veto to third level government, allowing it in principle to block developments threatening regional ecological sustainability.

While few of the recommendations for community control of resources coming from other wilderness activists are as fully thought out as this, they tend to share its general prescriptions. Their forest management campaigns have converged on calls for radical decentralisation of the existing forest tenure system, away from the corporate control exercised by a few major multinational companies. Alternative institutional forms suggested for local resources management commonly feature the notion of 'community forests' or watershed management boards. These challenge the very limited legal basis currently existing for community involvement. Principally concerned with the allocation of timber cutting rights, the provincial Forest Act provides no legal requirements or opportunities for sharing management authority with community representatives. Similarly, by the terms of the provincial Municipal Act, municipal councils and regional districts lack statutory powers to regulate resource development and protect environmental quality. This leaves them with little say in forest policy.[60] But calls for community control of forest resources have not yet met with wide public support, and are actively opposed by corporate forestry interests.

5. CONCLUSION

Habermasian moral theory helps locate a central tension in wilderness preservationist politics; that is, between a naturalistic perspective and the universalistic value orientation implicit in its appeals for democratic decision-making. While my observation in this geographical context – that deep ecology has been intuitively presumed by many advocates – may not be representative of other streams of the deep ecology movement, commentators have noted more generally the neglect of political-practical guidelines within deep ecology.[61] It has been argued in response that, as a philosophy, deep ecology is excused from the responsibility of developing a political strategy or that, as long as it supports democratic political means, there is no need to prescribe any definite kind of governmental form.[62] Similarly, wilderness advocates are not normally obliged to present detailed moral arguments in defence of their prescriptions for extending natural areas protection. But without public justification of their intrinsic value premises, the more radical preservationist arguments embracing eco-sovereignty lack democratic legitimacy. If deep ecology is characterised by

deep argumentation, such *reasoning* needs to include a critical examination of the social and political implications of its central ethical imperative.

Discourse ethics rejects the notion that any moral philosophy holds a privileged access to particular moral truths, preferring instead to clarify a *procedure* for the questioning and justification of normative validity claims. It claims to encourage forms of moral self-determination governed by critical but abstract principles of justice and solidarity – the content of moral choices is up to individuals in specific social contexts drawing selectively upon cultural traditions. While this opposes a naturalistic philosophy, it offers a more consistent democratic grounding of progressive environmental politics. Thus, to take the key democratic principle of popular sovereignty; discourse ethics views the sovereignty of the people as comprising the essential conditions enabling processes of free and open public deliberation – a notion which I would argue is more appropriate to highly complex and interdependent societies than the location of sovereignty within a biophysically and culturally defined local community.[63] Critics have objected that such universal ideas render a communicative moral theory remote from the competing perspectives of actual political actors. Yet it is the existence of democratic rules and principles – equal respect and rights for the individual, protection of minorities and, as I will shortly highlight, collective rights to environmental quality – that protects increasingly diverse forms of cultural and moral identification.[64] Deep ecology is of course one legitimate source of moral self-determination and ethical self-realisation, but its claims to rightness in the public sphere can only be justified through argumentation. This is why it needs to clarify a rationally defensible political morality.

As a theory of political legitimacy, discourse ethics could reinforce the rational grounding for environmentalists demanding the open justification of policy decisions and the extension of public participation in administrative decision-making. John Dryzek has developed most clearly the connections between the communicative rationality of politics and ecological problem-solving. To the degree that political institutions approximate the principles of free discourse among equals, it is possible to talk of 'discursive democracy'. Not only would the communicative rationality of decisions be enhanced in principle by the reciprocal recognition of public interests, so too he claims would their *ecological* rationality. In the first place, the human life-support capacity of natural systems is better placed to be recognised and defended as a generalisable interest when political and policy institutions are structured along discursive line. And secondly, Dryzek argues, non-exclusive processes of public communication are conducive to solving complex ecological problems inasmuch as they spread the cognitive burden of decision-making among the co-operative efforts of many individuals. This point supports his prescriptions for radical decentralisation of decision-making, whereby regular deliberations are possible that have immediate and identifiable weight within local communities.[65]

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While the freedom to participate in public decision-making may help foster ecologically responsible attitudes and behaviour, this falls short of the guarantees sought by preservationists. Indeed, the communicative moral perspective characterising discourse ethics may seem ultimately incompatible with biocentric wilderness values. The substantive ethical maxims of deep ecology contain no moral grounds for *intersubjective* validity, because valid norms – and consequent duties of interaction – can only be recognised and agreed upon by subjects capable of speech and action. Normative statements, in other words, can only be tested in rationally-motivated human deliberation.[66] Habermas concedes that, insofar as certain sentient creatures are drawn into social interactions, humans have a 'quasi-moral responsibility' toward animals based on a shared potential for harm. But that moral justification is not possible for the preservation of plants and general biodiversity, because duties of interaction are inapplicable. Instead, he suggests, there are good ethical and aesthetic reasons that could be marshalled in favour of natural areas protection – cultural reasons related to historical continuity and psychological health at a time when humans are modifying the environment on a global scale.[67]

However, I would argue that a stronger ethical justification for wilderness preservation is possible – one that is more than the expression of particular (Western) cultural preferences. For ultimately intersubjective discourse presupposes ecological as well as linguistic standards. As Dryzek remarks, the biosphere makes possible and maintains a physical environment fit for human moral agents. Healthy ecological systems are a general material precondition for any linguistic communication – discursive and otherwise.[68] Although logical consistency demands that any moral theory restrict the notions of right and duty to human interactions, these ecological conditions of existence prioritise human responsibility to nature within discourse ethics. Furthermore, they give moral authority to stronger global measures to protect environmental quality – including biodiversity, because current human activities are ecologically unsustainable. International environmental decision-making must also have democratic legitimacy, though: the co-ordination of efforts for natural areas protection must command widespread support within and between societies. As at a national level, the contribution here of discourse ethics is in showing why international environmental rights must, first of all, be democratic ones.

NOTES

[1] See, for example, Goodin 1992, pp. 124-31; Saward 1993 and Westra 1993.
[2] Caldwell 1990, pp. 85-6.
[3] Giddens 1994, pp. 198-228; Habermas 1987, pp. 392-6; Inglehart 1977. A review of the New Social Movements perspective is provided in Dalton and Kuelcher 1990.
[4] Hay and Haward 1988.

[5] Naess 1995, p. 149; Roman 1989.

[6] Habermas 1990, p. 66.

[7] Ibid., p. 130; Habermas 1992b, pp. 115-6.

[8] For a clarification of this point see Ingram 1993, pp. 295-8.

[9] Habermas 1989/1990 and 1996, pp. 98-9.

[10] World Commission on Environment and Development 1987, p. 166, United Nations 1993, pp. 230-2.

[11] Apel 1990, Pross 1986.

[12] Habermas 1993, pp. 176-7; O'Riordan and Jordan 1995, p. 196.

[13] Habermas 1989, p. 153; Habermas 1996, pp. 263-5.

[14] Apel 1990, pp. 49-52.

[15] Habermas 1992a, Habermas 1996, pp. 329-87.

[16] Habermas 1993, pp. 13-14, 35-9.

[17] Habermas 1990, p. 178.

[18] Habermas 1982, p. 248.

[19] Moon 1983, p.187. See also Eckersley 1992, pp. 106-17.

[20] Norton 1987, pp. 6-20, 221-39. Of course, *aesthetic* notions of wilderness, being the most dependent on subjective preferences and cultural context, are less likely than *moral* preferences to receive universal support. I thank an anonymous referee for highlighting this distinction.

[21] See Sagoff 1988, pp. 1-23.

[22] A comprehensive review is offered by Nash, 1989.

[23] Leopold 1966, p. 224. For clarification Nash 1989, pp. 63-73.

[24] Callicott 1987. For a more recent presentation of a holistic ethic based on the primacy of ecosystem integrity see Westra 1994.

[25] The seminal statement is Naess 1973, expanded in Naess 1989a.

[26] Naess 1989a, p. 38; Drengson 1990.

[27] Naess 1989a, p. 84-6; Naess 1989b; Drengson 1986.

[28] Naess 1989a, pp. 167-77.

[29] Devall and Sessions 1985, p. 67.

[30] Rolston 1988, pp. 216-30.

[31] For example, Simonsen 1981. It should be noted that some philosophers have developed an ecocentric ethic at odds with the holistic perspective of deep ecology. For example, Paul Taylor offers a nonanthropocentric rationale for wilderness preservation based on the inherent worth of each living thing. Preservation is supported by the principled requirements of 'distributive' and 'restitutive' justice toward wild communities of *individual* plants and animals. See Taylor 1986, pp. 99-168, 191-2, 305-6.

[32] Fox 1990, p. 247. Also Naess 1989a, pp. 85-6.

[33] Naess 1992; McLaughlin 1995, p. 27. I acknowledge, therefore, that Naess is by no means representative of all deep ecological positions, even if his way of thinking has proved influential in this regional context.

[34] For example, Erazim Kohak's eloquent 'personalist' thesis, Kohak 1984, pp. 179-218.

[35] Habermas 1982, pp. 248-9.

[36] Interview: Dr. Marlene Smith. Director, Friends of Strathcona Park, Errington, British Columbia, August 1990.

[37] Interview: Paul George. Founding director, Western Canada Wilderness Committee, Vancouver, British Columbia, September 1994.

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[38] Searle 1986. More generally see Lehmann 1981, and Devall and Sessions 1985, pp. 110-29.

[39] Interview: Rick Searle. Chair, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society – British Columbia Chapter. Victoria, British Columbia, March 1991.

[40] Bookchin 1986, Merchant 1990.

[41] Bradford 1989, Elkins 1989/90. However, for an attempted *rapprochement* between deep ecology and social ecology see Chase 1991.

[42] Livingston 1981, pp. 97-117, and 1986.

[43] Naess 1989a, pp. 142-6, 204-6.

[44] Plant l990, Zuckerman 1989, pp. 50-53. For a brief overview see Parsons 1985.

[45] Sale 1985, pp. 41-51 at 43.

[46] Berg and Dasmann 1977, Berg 1991.

[47] Berg, 1990, p.25; Sale 1985, pp. 52-66, 89-110.

[48] M'Gonigle 1986 and 1989/90. For locally-based bioregional mapping strategies see Aberley 1993 and 1994.

[49] Habermas 1988. On the relationship between moral norms and law see Habermas 1996, pp. 104-18.

[50] Hinchman and Hinchman 1989, M'Gonigle 1986, pp. 288-94.

[51] Mosquin 1991, p. 46. See also Rowe's parallel argument for an 'ecocentric law', Rowe 1990, pp. 111-28.

[52] Stone 1972. For a critique see Elder 1989.

[53] See, for example, Muldoon 1988 and Andrews 1987.

[54] Callicott 1989, Booth and Jacobs, 1990.

[55] Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs 1990, pp. 16-17; World Commission on Environment and Development 1987, pp. 114-6.

[56] M'Gonigle 1992.

[57] Berger 1977 and 1989.

[58] Interview: Paul George. Founding director, Western Canada Wilderness Committee, Vancouver, British Columbia, August 1990 and September 1994.

[59] M'Gonigle 1989/90, p. 90.

[60] Fletcher and M'Gonigle 1991, M'Gonigle and Parfitt 1994, Cooperman 1996. Interview: Mark Haddock. Staff Counsel, Sierra Legal Defence Fund. Vancouver, British Columbia, March 1991.

[61] For example, Sylvan 1985, pp. 14-15.

[62] Respectively, Gottlieb 1995, p. 43 and Naess 1995, pp. 147-8.

[63] On a procedural notion of sovereignty, Habermas 1994, pp. 9-10; Habermas 1996, pp. 463-90.

[64] Habermas 1993, pp. 90-1. For the criticism of practical irrelevance see Honneth and Joas 1988, pp. 152-67.

[65] Dryzek 1987 and 1990a.

[66] Against the critics of neo-Kantian ethics, I would argue that correct valuing presupposes rationality and is necessarily human-based. In addition, the communicative notion of rationality endorsed by Habermas by no means excludes affective moral feelings such as care, respect and sympathy, even if discourse ethics remains focused on generalisable interests. For relevant criticisms see Johnson 1991, pp. 60-74, and Plumwood 1993, pp. 165-71.

[67] Habermas 1993, pp. 105-11. On the notion that wilderness preservation is, in a broad sense, always cultural preservation see Passmore 1995, pp. 17-22.

[68] Dryzek 1990b, Eckersley 1995, pp. 24-25. With his recent presentation of a discourse theory of law, *Between Facts and Norms* (1996), Habermas indeed introduces basic rights to ecologically-secure living conditions as essential to the exercise of civil rights in modern democratic states, pp. 123, 445-6. For a brief commentary see Alexy 1994, pp. 230-1.

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