Toward Teaching Environmental Ethics: Exploring Problems in the Language of Evolving Social Values

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Abstract

I explore the problems created by the natural and social science approaches to values in higher education, arguing that over time they will render moral language unintelligible. I illustrate these problems with an examination of the value implications of the *Yukon Wolf Conservation and Management Plan*. I suggest a way in which value education at the primary and secondary school levels could help prepare adults of the future for a kind of policy making that promotes the values stipulated in environmental law. I use the concept of environmental citizenship pioneered by Environment Canada coupled with training in traditional values in the context of a variety of fields in the arts, humanities, and the sciences.

Résumé

J'analyse les problèmes créés par les approches scientifiques naturelles et sociales aux valeurs de l'éducation supérieure, en alléguant qu'ils rendront le langage moral inintelligible avec le temps. J'illustre ces problèmes avec un examen des implications des valeurs véhiculées dans la politique de gestion du loup du Yukon. Je suggère comment l'éducation aux valeurs au primaire et au secondaire pourrait aider à préparer les adultes de demain à une formulation des politiques qui fait la promotion des valeurs énoncées dans la législation environnementale. J'utilise le concept d'écocivisme lancé par Environnement Canada jumelé à une formation aux valeurs traditionnelles dans le contexte d'une variété de champs dans les arts, les sciences humaines et les sciences.

There have been concerns about moral education in schools for thousands of years. Aristotle (n.d.) writes in his *Nicomachean Ethics* that "Sparta is practically the only state where the legislator has apparently paid much attention to the upbringing and daily pursuits of citizens. In most states such matters have been neglected, and each man lives as he likes, ruling his wife and children in the manner of the Cyclops" (bk. 10, chap. 9, 1180a25-30). He then adds that "although the best arrangement would be for the regulation of moral matters to be taken over and properly administered by the community, yet inasmuch as the community neglects them it is rightly considered the duty of each of us to help his own children and friends along the road to virtue" (bk. 10, chap. 9, 1180a25-30). Over the past 30 years, for example, in the United States, there has been a reluctance to permit the teaching of morality in primary and secondary schools, with a bow to the responsibility of parents. In recent years, however, there has been growing concern that, as in Aristotle's time, parental training may be uneven at best and absent at worst, requiring intervention in the schools if ethics is to be taught at all.

One serious difficulty has been an earlier effort called concept clarification, according to which the teacher avoids criticism about the values being taught simply by encouraging the pupils to make up their own values and ethics. This approach failed because opponents were able to argue, probably correctly, that it taught the relativity of moral values and ethics, promoting the idea that they were merely a matter of individual choice, independent of any generally accepted social and moral standards. This approach replaced the concern that teachers would present their personal moral views as the accepted standard with the concern that they would teach children that there were no commonly accepted standards at all (Bennett, 1980).

Another difficulty has been the anti-value and ethics training that students have been receiving in the natural and social sciences for more than a century. Science students are routinely taught that values are personal biases and that they should proceed scientifically in a value-free manner. In the social sciences, students are taught that values become objective by being converted into quantifiable economic values. These values so converted are said to be facts (how people collectively feel) that are free from the taint of normative ethics.

The combination of the neglect in primary and secondary schools and the anti-ethics training in the natural and social sciences has made it virtually impossible to carry out the moral dimensions of our environmental laws. In the United States and Canada, environmental laws typically include purpose statements that list values that are to be promoted by these

laws. For example, the Yukon Environment Act (Yukon Territory, 1991) in the first paragraph lists economic, aesthetic, cultural, and spiritual values (p. 9). From a social science perspective, the second, third, and fourth values, in common practice, collapse into the first as they are converted into weak economic values. In the natural sciences' perspective, they are ignored as personal biases on the grounds that scientists should not include value considerations in their work.

In this paper, I first explore the problems created by the natural and social science approaches in higher education, arguing that over time they will render moral language unintelligible. Second, I suggest a way in which value education at the primary and secondary school levels could help prepare adults of the future for a kind of policy making that promotes the values stipulated in environmental law. Here I use the concept of environmental citizenship pioneered by Environment Canada coupled with traditional value training in the context of a variety of fields in the arts, humanities, and the sciences.

The Problem in Environmental Policy

The scientific community has generally taken a very narrow and negative view of ethics and values in the 20th century. In accordance with the logical positivism of the early part of this century, most scientists are now trained to think of science as a value-free activity. They are taught that values are subjective, biased, emotional, even irrational and have no place in their professional work. It is this anti-value indoctrination that is the single most serious inhibition to the application of environmental ethics in public policy decision-making today. Because of this bias against values, it is more difficult for contemporary policy-makers to deal with the value aspects of environmental problems in this century than it would have been for their counterparts in the 19th century. With respect to our ability to deal with value issues in public policy, we have regressed rather than progressed.

Iain Douglas-Hamilton (1975) provides a good example of this problem in his book *Among the Elephants*. Douglas-Hamilton was a graduate student from Oxford who went to Tanzania to study an ecological problem in a national park called Manyara. The problem was that the elephants were on the verge of destroying all of the trees in the park. The difficulties involved in finding a solution to this problem became clear to Douglas-Hamilton at his first meeting with the scientists of the Serengeti Research Institute. He writes:

> The scientists all felt that the research organization should not advise on policy, but should only suggest management techniques once a policy had

> been decided upon by the National Parks. They preferred to restrict their role to predictions of trends under whatever management option was chosen. This was an example of scientists not wanting to abandon their tidy objective world where all that mattered was facts and how they could be interpreted as trends, or paths of causation, or interacting systems. Scientifically there was no objective reason either for or against the shooting of the elephants that were doing the damage.
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> Here was an issue that could only be decided in relation to aesthetic, economic, or political considerations, in ecological terms the Seronera tree damage was insignificant. The very desire to preserve the animals was a subjective statement of faith in the animal's intrinsic worth. It was a feeling possessed by most of the scientists there, who regarded the wildebeest migration with the same awe that others feel for the Mona Lisa, but they would not admit this statement into their arguments because it could not be backed up by facts; the right and wrong of aesthetics being imponderables not open to scientific analysis. At the end of the meeting there was a consensus of opinion on only one fact, that there was an urgent need for research before taking any hasty action. (p. 77)

Douglas-Hamilton eventually did come up with some "value-free" facts that justified protecting the elephants. He undertook a study of the fossil remains of previous acacia tree forests and concluded first, that it was natural for the elephants to destroy the trees and second, that somehow the tree always came back cyclically. This conclusion, presented as a fact, satisfied his fellow scientists because they now had an appropriate scientific, factual reason not to shoot the elephants. It was only at this point, with a factual justification put in place, that value considerations, in this case aesthetic value, could be considered. To take into account the aesthetic preferences of tourists in the park, a nearby forest was purchased so that the elephants could spread their damage more thinly over a larger area. In addition, trees popular with tourists, in which cheetahs lay during the day, were wrapped in chicken wire to protect them from the elephants.

This example is characteristic of the way in which value considerations are officially avoided altogether. An unstated value preference for one element of a system over another (for example, a preference for elephants over trees) triggers a search for a scientific rationale in the form of a hypothesis or some quantifiable test results that can then be substituted as the reason for the decision, avoiding any charge of subjectivity or bias. Value considerations are then publicly introduced, if they are introduced at all, only in taking into account the arbitrary, subjective, emotional preferences of citizens (for example, those of the tourists in Manyara), which are tolerated if attending to them is easy and makes no difference (for example, putting chicken wire on a few trees). This substitution of "facts" for the values that actually determine a decision or policy, however, is not without its

costs and perils. In order to appear "value-free," decision-makers distort the decision-making process and in doing so make meaningful debate about the decision impossible by hiding the key value considerations behind irrelevant facts and hypotheses. If the reason for protecting the elephants in Manyara is their intrinsic value, then it should be debated. A debate about an arbitrarily introduced hypothesis about the cyclic destruction of trees by elephants is no debate at all. The result is policy and decision-making governed by value considerations that are never publicly admitted or subjected to critical examination.

To be sure, values are frequently introduced into the debate by hiring an environmental economist to do a cost-benefit analysis based on a survey of consumer preferences with regard to how much you are willing to pay to keep elephants or wolves and other such creatures alive. These economic values are considered to be objective, rather than subjective, because they are quantified. Nevertheless, they almost never cover the entire value dimension of an environmental problem, since many values do not convert well into economic terms. For example, the intrinsic value of elephants and other creatures usually are not taken into account when doing cost-benefit surveys. When an effort is made to do so, the result is frequently counterintuitive to those filling out the survey forms. As Holmes Rolston, III (1985) puts it:

> The respondent has no idea how to do any calculations; yet on the basis of his guesstimates, economists do metric calculations, overly refining what are really raw data. All this number crunching creates the illusion of mathematical exactitude covering up what were, to begin with, iffy replies in a cramped hypothetical context. (p. 37)

To counter the confusion produced by this kind of economic evaluation, environmental professionals and concerned citizens need to express their environmental values forcefully in other ways. Unfortunately, however, because most have come to think of values as subjective, biased, irrational expressions of emotion, they are increasingly reluctant to talk in value terms at all. Presentations about rain forest preservation, for example, are almost inevitably filled with beautiful pictures. Yet, when the speakers present reasons for preserving rain forests, the aesthetic value, the beauty of rain forests, is left unmentioned in favor of the claim that something as yet unnoticed in those systems might be a cure for cancer (or, in a more sophisticated version of this argument, AIDS). They present possible instrumental values in place of the intrinsic values that, in most cases, actually motivate them to be concerned about such ecosystems.

The reluctance of environmentally concerned professionals and citizens to use the word *intrinsic value* is especially problematic because they are at

the same time more than willing to speak eloquently, but vaguely, about the so-called "rights" of nature—a form of intrinsic value, which, after much debate, is now considered theoretically unsupportable in technical environmental ethics literature. Concluding that such "rights" talk is a sign that environmentalists are attempting to find a way to value nature or parts of nature for its own sake, environmental ethicists have expended much effort in developing an appropriate theory of intrinsic value. This effort, however, has been met with curious reluctance to use the word. Both environmental professionals and ordinary citizens seem to want to value nature intrinsically, but are no longer willing to say so, since the traditional vocabulary for expressing this type of valuing is now considered quaint and old-fashioned and is on the verge of disappearing from ordinary language.

In George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1963) the totalitarian government of Big Brother was trying to develop a simplified language, called "Newspeak," in which a wide range of ethical and political concepts could not be expressed, so as to make it impossible for people to think certain kinds of thoughts. The situation that most environmentally concerned people find themselves in today is very similar to the state of linguistic dysfunction that Big Brother was trying to achieve. In the book, the project is enthusiastically described by Syme, a philologist working on the Newspeak dictionary:

> We're getting the language into final shape. . . . You think, I dare say, that our chief job is inventing new words. But not a bit! We're destroying words—scores of them , hundreds of them every day. We're cutting the language down to the bone. . . . (p. 23-24)

Using value language explicitly as an example, Syme continues:

> It's a beautiful thing, the destruction of words. Of course the great wastage is in the verbs and the adjectives, but there are hundreds of nouns that have to be gotten rid of as well. It isn't only synonyms. After all, what justification is there for a word which is simply the opposite of some other word? A word contains its opposite in its self. Take "good," for instance. If you have a word like "good," what need is there for a word like "bad"?" Ungood" will do just as well—better, because it's an exact opposite, which the other is not. Or again, if you want a stronger version of "good," what sense is there in having a whole string of vague useless words like "excellent" and "splendid" and all the rest of them? "Plusgood" covers the meaning, or "doubleplusgood" if you want something stronger still. Of course we use those forms already, but in the final version of Newspeak there'll be nothing else. In the end the whole notion of goodness and badness will be covered by only six words—in reality, only one. (p. 24)

In the appendix on Newspeak, Orwell (1963), speaking as himself, notes further that:

> Its vocabulary was so constructed as to give exact and often very subtle expression to every meaning that a Party member could properly wish to express, while excluding all other meanings and also the possibility of arriving at them by indirect methods. This was done partly by the invention of new words, but chiefly by eliminating undesirable words and by stripping such words as remained of unorthodox meanings, and so far as possible of all secondary meanings whatever. To give a simple example. The word free still existed in Newspeak, but it could only be used in such statements as "This dog is free from lice" or "This field is free from weeds." It could not be used in its old sense of "politically free" or "intellectually free," since political and intellectual freedom no longer existed even as concepts, and were therefore of necessity nameless. . . . Newspeak was designated not to extend but to diminish the range of thought, and this purpose was indirectly assisted by cutting the choice of words down to a minimum. (p. 132)

According to Orwell (1963), if someone had tried to translate Thomas Jefferson's "Declaration of Independence" into Newspeak, it would have been impossible to do so

> while keeping to the sense of the original. The nearest one could come to doing so would be to swallow the whole passage up in the singe word crimethink. A full translation could only be an ideological translation, whereby Jefferson's words would be changed into a panegyric on absolute government (p. 137).

Although the current confusion among policy-makers and ordinary citizens about values is not the result of a conscious project to rewrite language, a project comparable to Newspeak was unintentionally undertaken by a group of philosophers in the late 19th century, the utilitarian ethicists, and brought to fruition by two other groups of philosophers in the early 20th century: the pragmatists and the logical positivists. The general public is for the most part not familiar with the philosophical positions involved. Nevertheless, these positions have trickled down out of philosophical literature and now form the basis of a disturbingly new worldview: modern economics. This development is disturbing precisely because those who now see the world in this way are not aware that it is a philosophical perspective. Rather they believe that they are seeing the world in an aphilosophical, value-free factual manner.

The first of these positions, utilitarianism, is based on the idea that good can and should be defined as pleasure. The utilitarians, in endorsing this definition, turned ethical theory on its head by forgetting Aristotle's (n.d.) warning, made repeatedly in his *Nicomachean Ethics*, that good cannot be

defined as pleasure because it is obvious that people frequently take pleasure in bad things. This new definition, as it has trickled down, replaces societal standards of good or bad with arbitrary individual standards that can change dramatically, depending relativistically on how someone happens to feel at a given moment—just as Aristotle predicted.

The second position, American pragmatism, as it has trickled down, is the source of the discomfort that most people today feel about intrinsic value terminology. The pragmatists were instrumentalists and focused their attention on use, instrumental value. Although pragmatists in many respects have made an important contribution to the history of philosophy, they became obsessively concerned with refuting a particular version of intrinsic value, specifically the view of G. E. Moore (1903) in his book *Principia Ethica*, which they then presented as a refutation of all forms of intrinsic value. (For an example of the pragmatist's attack continued in contemporary environmental ethics literature, see Norton, 1984, p. 131-148 and Norton, 1988). Moore conceived of intrinsic value as something that would be valuable, independent of all relationships with other things in the world. The pragmatists argued, perhaps rightly, against such a conception on epistemological grounds. There is, nevertheless, a more general conception of intrinsic value, according to which something is intrinsically valuable if it is judged to be good for its own sake and is therefore conceived of as an end, not merely as a means to an end. The pragmatists have argued that there is no need for such intrinsic value because they can account for everything in terms of instrumental value. The issue, however, is not simply whether they can do so, but rather it is appropriate to do so. The instrumental approach of pragmatism got its start in environmental policy-making, through the influence of Gifford Pinchott who founded the U.S. Forest Service during the time of Teddy Roosevelt, upon a narrow conception of use, which has been only slightly expanded into a conception of multiple use today. It is this narrow conception of all value as instrumental value that led Aldo Leopold, an employee of the forest service for much of his career, to call for a biotic right to exist for nature in "The Land Ethic" (Leopold, 1949).

The dangers involved in valuing nature in exclusively instrumental terms become apparent whenever park managers find that increased traffic is damaging the natural features that they are supposed to preserve. Believing that the (aesthetic) value of these objects is their use, they usually try to increase the value of their parks by increasing the number of visitors. These tourists "use" the aesthetic objects of the parks by exposing their sense organs to them, instrumentally triggering feelings of pleasure, which are

then held to be valuable for their own sake. When increased visitation begins to damage these parks, however, the managers are faced with a dilemma. On the one hand, if they stop visitation, then the aesthetic objects will no longer have any value, since their value is supposed to be derived only from the instrumental triggering of the feelings of pleasure in visitors. On the other hand, if they permit visitation to continue, they are then committing themselves to the aesthetic consumption of the principal elements of the parks. In art museums, where this instrumental conception of value has never taken hold, and art objects are still considered to be intrinsically valuable, objects that are being damaged are simply taken off display and replaced by copies. This option, unfortunately, is usually not available to park managers, who hold that all value is instrumental. As a result, they end up trying to find a way to muddle through by limiting visitation so as to permit as much instrumental value extraction as possible over the longest period of time. This instrumental value approach permits them to slow the consumption of the natural features of their parks, but does not stop it.

This narrow conception of value overlooks the fact that people frequently value natural objects even when they have no expectation that they will ever directly expose their sense organs to them for an instrumentally triggered jolt of pleasure. For example, even though few people the United States today plan to visit the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, there are huge amounts of support for protecting it. Most people are content to value it through photographs and pictures, through their imagination, by reading books about it, and by watching documentaries on public television. They do not engage in these activities to get feelings of pleasure. They do so because they value such places for their own sake and are glad that they are part of the world they live in, however far away these places may be from them and however unlikely it may be that they will ever personally visit them.

The third position, logical positivism, is based on the claim that only scientific statements have meaning. In accordance with this view, religious and ethical statements have no meaning at all because they are not scientifically verifiable. The positivists of the early 20th century argued that ethical and religious statements were simply arbitrary expressions of emotion. They held that meaningful discussion about values was impossible because they were simply feelings that people happened to have at particular moments. Differences in value perspectives were said to be at most differences in upbringing. Like utilitarianism before it, positivism reduces values to the arbitrary, subjective, irrational feelings of individuals independent of their social context. It is the low regard for value, that it is nothing but meaningless emotion, that is the basis for so-called value-free

policy and decision-making. By defining values as feelings, value studies can become factual studies about how people feel. Counting the numbers of people who feel one way or the other permits quantification, which is then presented as objective value information. This redefinition of value as feeling is the basis for the claim that economics is scientific, rather humanistic (see Friedman, 1953, which begins with the is/ought distinction, and immediately dismisses ought).

In addition to borrowing key elements of logical positivism, economics has also borrowed from utilitarianism and pragmatism. It has taken over the early utilitarian conception of the greatest good for the greatest number, defining *good* in terms of desires and cravings for consumer goods. So conceived, the primary question in economics becomes how much people are willing to pay in order to satisfy their cravings for consumption and product ownership, which instrumentally trigger feelings of pleasure. The focus of utilitarianism on instrumental value has been further strengthened by the simplified pragmatic value system, which reduces all value to use, defined in economic terms as consumption.

Economics is supposed to be the study of the rational choices of individuals made self-interestedly or selfishly on the margin—in the context of moderate scarcity. Because these choices are arbitrary, subjective, and emotional, they do not have to be defended. Each respondent in an economic survey simply introspects to see how he or she feels and reports to the economist on that feeling. These feelings are sorted and counted, and the largest number of similar cravings and desires is declared to be an "objective" public policy choice.

The transformation of these subjective individual preferences into an objective collective preference is controversial. Mark Sagoff (1988), in his book *The Economy of the Earth*, argues that identifying consumer preferences, what we want to satisfy our cravings and desires, with citizen preferences, what we want to achieve a good society, as if they are the same thing, involves a category mistake.

> Private and public preferences . . . belong to different logical categories. Public "preferences" involve not desires and wants but opinions or views. They state what a person believes is right for the community or group as a whole. These opinions or beliefs may be true or false, and we may meaningfully ask that person for the reasons that he or she holds them. But an analyst who asks how much citizens would pay to satisfy opinions that they advocate through political association commits a category mistake. The analyst asks of beliefs about objective facts a question that is appropriate only to subjective interests and desires. (p. 94)

As Sagoff notes, what one craves as a personal or consumer preference does not necessarily have anything to do with his or her preferences as a citizen. Although most consumers prefer fast food packaging, they might nevertheless vote to eliminate it in their community because of the need to reduce the amount of money spent on sanitary land fills or because space for land fills is no longer available. In such situations, citizens who vote to eliminate the packaging still prefer it as consumers while rejecting it as citizens. In such cases, the felt consumer preferences measured by the economists effectively have nothing to do with the reasoned citizen preferences that form the basis for the public policy.

The values involved in consumer preferences require no justification. When asked why someone prefers this or that, the answer need only be that that is how he or she feels. Citizen preferences, in contrast, are another matter. When asked why someone prefers this or citizen preference, he or she is expected to give reasons, state beliefs, present arguments. The difference between these two kinds of preferences also involve different conceptions of value. In terms of personal preferences, values are matters of feeling or emotion, as the positivists claimed. In terms of citizen preferences, however, values are social ideas that have evolved into their present form over time. These values are not a matter of personal preference. They are the values that reflect what we stand for as a society. They are dependent on a history of ideas, not personal preference. People hold these values in common because they are members of a particular society, not because they happen to feel this way or that at a given moment. Although these values can be changed, they usually change over long periods of time, and such change is not directly dependent on the conscious decisions of specific individuals at any particular moment.

When values are mentioned in environmental laws, they do not refer to the values generated by individual consumer preferences. Almost invariably they are social values that a given society holds in common as part of its heritage. Such societal values are regularly included in environmental laws in the United States, and have become increasingly prominent in the text of those laws in recent years. The Wilderness Act of 1964 (Public Law 88-577, 1964), for example, which is supposed "to assure than increasing population, accompanied by expanding settlement and growing mechanization, does not occupy and modify all areas within the United States and its possessions, includes four values in its definition of wilderness: scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value" (p. 890-891). The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (Public Law 91-190, 1970) states that its purpose is to impede "the profound influences of population growth,

high-density urbanization, industrial expansion, resource exploitation, and new and advancing technological expansion" (p. 852). The fourth specific aim of the law is to "preserve important historic, cultural, natural aspects of our natural heritage" (p. 852) Although the word value is not used, the reference is to historic, cultural, and natural values. Likewise, in the second aim of the law, the assurance that everyone will have "esthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings" (p. 852) refers to aesthetic and cultural value. Finally, the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (Public Law 93-205, 1973) states in the first sentence of the law that extinctions are being caused by "economic growth and development untempered by adequate concern and conservation" (p. 884) and states in the third sentence that endangered species are to be protected because they are "of esthetic, ecological, educational, historical, recreational, and scientific value to the Nation and its people" (p. 884). Note that the purpose of the Endangered Species Act is not directly to protect endangered species, but rather to protect and promote certain common values by means of protecting endangered species.

Noticeably missing from the list of values in the Endangered Species Act is economic value. This omission unambiguously demonstrates that Congress intended for the values listed in the law to inhibit or limit the promotion of economic value, a point only implicit in earlier environmental laws, where the central focal point is not quite so clearly the promotion of common values. There is, however, a large gap between Congress' intention and the reality of how this environmental law and the others are actually carried out. In practice, the common values listed are not promoted as a limit to the promotion of economic value. Rather they are translated into economic values and treated as if they are weak economic values, in this way ignoring the spirit and intent of these laws. This translation is usually carried out by economists who shadow price these values, turning aesthetic value, for example, into travel costs, how much tourists spend on gasoline, restaurants, hotels, and souvenirs. With such translations, environmental laws, which, as Sagoff (1988) has often noted, are ethical laws about common values, are subverted into economic laws, permitting the promotion of a kind of value that is not explicitly or implicitly included in the aims of those laws. Although this translation is undertaken as a matter of expediency, because no one has been trained to carry out these laws as they are written, it is probably illegal nonetheless, and, even if it is not for some technical reason, it cannot possibly produce results of the kind intended by Congress—for the common values listed in those laws, once transformed into weak economic values, fare poorly in cost-benefit analysis. They do poorly precisely because travel costs, for example, really have

nothing to do with what we mean when we say something is aesthetically beautiful or has intrinsic value. A value of one kind has simply been put in the place of a value of a completely different kind and used in policy and decision making as if it is identical.

Concerning the Yukon, specifically, the Yukon Environment Act of 1991, there is both good news and bad news. The good news is that this act also lists a set of values to be promoted. According to the first sentence, four values are to be promoted: economic, cultural, aesthetic, and spiritual. The bad news is that, unlike the environmental laws in the United States, economic value is included in the list, and it is listed first.

Viewed in one way, the presence of economic value in the list may not matter, given that economic value, though omitted in the laws in the United States, still remains the principle value promoted, since the values listed laws in those laws, as just noted, are first converted into economic values whenever they are explicitly addressed. Nevertheless, the presence of economic value in the Yukon Environment Act (Yukon Territory, 1991) could be used to advantage in a way not possible in the United States if a practical way could be found to reduce the influence of economic value to merely one of four values to be promoted. If all four values could be emphasized equally, whenever it is appropriate to do so, then the other three—cultural, aesthetic, and spiritual value—would serve as a limit on economic value, much the way the values in the environmental laws in the United States were intended to function by Congress.

If, however, the practice followed in the United States continues to be the practice in the Yukon, and cultural, aesthetic, and spiritual value are routinely converted into economic value, then the Yukon Environment Act will gradually become more clearly an economic environmental law than the environmental laws of the United States, since economic value will not only be the first value promoted, but also the form in which all other values are conceived. Although three of the four values in the law will technically remain "non-economic" values, in practice, they will be treated as if they are (weak) economic values.

The dangers of this possibility can be seen in the *Yukon Wolf Conservation and Management Plan*. Although the plan includes a section on the intrinsic value of wolves, the section, titled "The Non-consumptive Use of Wolves," is written in such a way that the cultural, aesthetic, and spiritual values of wolves have already been explicitly converted into economic terminology (Yukon Wolf Management Team, 1992). The aim of this section is to "meet the demands of non-consumptive users," straightforward economic jargon (p. 6).

It is frequently said by critics of environmental ethics that they are forced to use economic terminology because environmental ethics is filled with unusable jargon, for example, the term *intrinsic value*. Such a criticism would have some validity if "non-consumptive use" was a workable substitute for "intrinsic value." To the contrary, however, to adequately flesh out the alternative phraseology, the title of the section should be expanded to read: "The Non-economic, Non-instrumental, Non-consumptive No-use of Wolves"—substituting *non-use* for *use* (rejecting the nonsensical claim of naive pragmatism that nothing is of value except when it is used), since the wolves are not actually being used. Surely, this negative jargon is not preferable to the reestablishment of the traditional value term, *intrinsic value*.

It would probably be appropriate to laugh at the cumbersome, awkward, and indeed incomprehensible manner in which simple, straightforward, traditional value terms, such as *intrinsic value*, have been displaced, if the long-term consequences of such substitutions were not so horrendous. Although they were probably not aware of it, the inventors of these "non-terms" have produced a terminological transformation that is quietly fulfilling the aims of the Newspeak project in Orwell's *Nineteen Eight-Four* (1963). Just as Newspeak reduces moral language to one word, *good*, with all other values covered by the word, *ungood*, environmental language has now been reduced to single terms, with all other possibilities covered indiscriminately by the same term modified by the prefix *non-*: economic and non-economic, instrumental and non-instrumental, consumptive and non-consumptive. In each case, the opposites vaguely cover an immense range of possibilities and offer no positive characterization of those possibilities. The common element of all non-economic things—for example, aesthetic value, scientific value, recreational value, etc.—is simply that they are *not* economic.

It is this aspect of the logic of economic terminology that makes it so difficult for environmental professionals to think positively in non-economic terms. If this kind of thinking is not challenged effectively, all non-economic terms will gradually lose their meaning, eventually eliminating the need for "non-words" all together. For example, if *aesthetic value* is defined as travel costs long enough, the need for translation will eventually become unnecessary as the economic definition replaces the non-economic definition. In the end, the term *non-economic* will become as superfluous as *non-use* already is today, and non-economic values will be nothing more than weak economic values that have lost their traditional meanings. At that point, the original meanings will be as untranslatable as value terms were supposed to become when eliminated by Newspeak in Orwell's *Nineteen Eight-Four* (1963).

Closely associated with the effort to simplify language and conceptual thought in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1963) was a parallel effort to destroy cultural heritage by distorting and rewriting history. The economic approach also relies heavily on such distortion so as to overcome and displace fundamental traditions, values, and beliefs. This kind of distortion, whether intentional or unintentional, can be found in the intrinsic value section of the Yukon Conservation and Management Plan (1992) where the authors write of the wish of Canadians to view and photograph wildlife and to preserve it as part of natural ecosystems as if it is a new phenomenon:

> This is a new attitude towards wildlife which recognizes and respects that animals have a right to exist, often called their "inherent" or "existence" values. (p. 6)

This statement turns the actual history of the matter on its head. As I have shown elsewhere, the "new" attitude is much older than the economic apparatus that is being used to explain it (Hargrove, 1989).

The interest in preserving natural systems in an undisturbed state was fully formed by the middle of the 19th century. It arose out of a complex interplay of developments in landscape painting, landscape gardening, nature poetry, and natural history science. The wish to take pictures of natural landscapes is a product of four centuries of representational experimentation in art culminating in luminism in North America. The interest in preserving species was directly related to three centuries of biological classification activities and arose specifically out of concern about species extinction after the discovery of extinct mammoths in North America and dinosaurs in Europe at the beginning of the 19th century.

James Bradbury expressed concern about the possible extinction of the buffalo on the Upper Missouri in his account of his journeys up the river, published in 1812 (Hargrove, 1989). The concern was not originally formulated in terms of a right to exist, but rather in terms of intrinsic value, by people who came to value animals and landscapes for their own sake. The idea that such things might have rights did not come into fashion until after public policy specialists and well-educated citizens, influenced by the pragmatists' attack on intrinsic value, had lost their ability to think in terms of it. Inherent value in the statement is simply a synonym for intrinsic value, used by some philosophers when they realized that intrinsic value was no longer an acceptable term. Existence value is an economic term, invented by economists to replace rights and intrinsic value language, which treats the desire to preserve species and natural systems as if it is an ahistorical, subjective, arbitrary preference of 20th century non-consump-

tive economic consumers (assuming, of course, that a non-consumptive consumer is not an oxymoron).

To the contrary, the economist's so-called existence value is a product of a particular type of thinking—representation thinking—that is the most basic kind of thought in the modern period. In science, it produced an emphasis on models that facilitated theoretical developments in physics and chemistry. In philosophy, it promoted questions about the relationship of sensation and objects in the external world that produced the problem of existence of the external world and such philosophical movements as German idealism, solipsism, and in this century phenomenology. In art, it produced the representational experiment that led to the appreciation of artistic, but realistic, representations of actual places, to the appreciation of nature photography, and finally, through this painting and photography, the appreciation of natural places undisturbed and the desire that they continue to exist. The so-called "new" attitude toward nature can be accounted for in terms the existence value terminology of economics only if these centuries of cultural heritage—the "old"—are ignored and treated as if they never happened.

The Role of Primary and Secondary School Education

If environmental policy and decision making is to be improved in the Yukon (and elsewhere) it must be transformed into something beyond the simplified economic approach currently in use. As a first step, environmental professionals and concerned citizens have to begin treating the Yukon's cultural, aesthetic, and spiritual values positively as the equals of economic value (since they are listed as equals in the Yukon Environment Act, 1991). The practice of translating them into weak economic values for the purpose of cost-benefit analysis has to be discontinued, for this practice collapses all of the values that are supposed to be promoted into one. Changing this practice will not be easy, for it means rediscovering the cultural heritage that made the 20th century an environmental century and reinventing the value terminology that was pointlessly abandoned at the end of the 19th century. It is a task that will require a massive research effort on the part of scientists and humanists and a massive educational effort at all levels from primary school to adult education that is sensitive to the cultural traditions and values of both Euro-Canadians and First Nation peoples (since, as I interpret it, aesthetic value in the Yukon Environment Act seems to refer to a Euro-Canadian heritage and cultural and spiritual values to a First Nation Heritage). If the values that the Yukon Environment Act is supposed to promote cannot be articulated in their own

right, and the cultural history that produced environmental thought continues to be forgotten, then that law cannot be carried out as it was written.

The primary and secondary schools can play a role in this effort by reintroducing traditional value education into the curriculum. As I have suggested elsewhere (Hargrove, 1996), the most direct way is to teach children about the history of ideas that produced our contemporary values in terms of a Euro-Canadian heritage: the history of landscape gardening, landscape painting and photography, nature poetry and prose, and natural history science. The values that arose out of these fields are already known to the children, but they are not able to articulate them verbally. For example, most people can take a well-composed photograph of a natural landscape with a camera, and even those who can't can usually tell whether someone else has done a good job taking such a picture. The standards for such skills and such judgments are the principles of landscape painting and photography in the 19th century, which are themselves the product of centuries of developments in techniques beginning with experiments in perspective in the late Middle Ages. Currently, people know more than they can say. By teaching this material, rather than relying on the current process of cultural osmosis, children as future adults can learn how to articulate aesthetic and other value judgments. If ultimately they are unable to articulate these values, they will continue to rely on economic value translation in policy as we do today.

With regard to social values within the First Nation heritage, I have no special expertise and recommend that assistance be sought from First Nation educators. The attempt to teach First Nation cultural and spiritual values can easily go astray through simplifications that lead to misunderstandings. For this reason, and perhaps others, there may be some reluctance to provide these kinds of materials. It may be possible to minimize such problems by focusing simply on what First Nation peoples would like for others to know about their values for the purposes of properly applying the Yukon Environment Act (Yukon Territory, 1991).

It may be possible and appropriate to attend to the value perspectives of minority groups within the Yukon and Canada. To the degree that these values represent the values of other countries and cultures, it might be best to treat such perspectives comparatively. There is some danger in the comparative approach. It can send a message to children that values are arbitrary and relative. However, it can also be an opportunity to show that values are not written in stone, that they have histories, that they could have evolved differently, and that they could change in the future and to teach respect for the values of other cultures and societies.

By focusing on the history of traditionally evolved social value, the kinds of debates that have hobbled value training efforts in the past, particularly, ethical relativism, can likely be avoided. The earlier value approaches were objectionable in large part because they were seen as a rejection of traditional value (Bennett, 1980). Furthermore, by teaching values as traditional, as Sagoff notes, children are largely being taught who they are as a society (Sagoff, 1988). Controversy can also be minimized by overtly tying the value training to the values that are supposed to be promoted in environmental and other laws. In this way, the training becomes training in citizenship, as well as ethical or moral training. This relationship can be found in Aristotle's ethics, where he argues that the same factors needed to make a moral person also produce a good citizen. Ethics is from the standpoint of the individual; politics from the standpoint of the group or society.

Presenting this training in terms of environmental citizenship has a number of advantages. First, Environment Canada has done a lot of work in this area and it is easily accessible on the World Wide Web (for example, http://www.ns.ec.gc.ca/udo/primer1.html). Further, the idea has been picked up by the United Nations Environment Programme (see http://www.ourplanet.com/imgversn/85/barcena.html). Environmental citizenship is similar to stewardship but unlike stewardship is not an element of the Judaic, Islamic, and Christian traditions. Because these religious connections could be a problem crossculturally, it might be better to use the term *stewardship* within those religious traditions in which they have a natural place and use the more neutral term *citizenship* in public education, where many children may be from other religious traditions.

Second, environmental citizenship can be associated with Leopold's notion of "plain member and citizen," as he discusses it in his essay, "The Land Ethic" (1949): ". . . a land ethics changes the role of Homo sapiens from conqueror of the land-community to plain member and citizen of it. It implies respect for its fellow-members, and also respect for the community as such" (p. 220). The essay can be used to present a scientific, primarily ecological, sense of community. It can also be used crossculturally as a lead in to respect both in the Western and indigenous senses (that is, comparing, but not confusing them, or presenting one as the other).

Third, *citizen* can be contrasted with *consumer*, to show children the difference between democratic decision and policy and personal economic preference. As Sagoff has shown, the confusion of citizen preferences and consumer preferences rests on a category mistake (Sagoff, 1988). Clarifying the differences can help children to understand that what they want for

personal use as a consumer of products and what is best for them as part of a community of citizens may not always be identical. Sagoff (1988) writes that:

> The choice comes down to this: not what ideals we shall serve, because we know these—freedom, integrity, justice, intelligence, power—but what we shall mean by them. And this question is answered in our symbols. The paradigm, the symbol, if you will, of freedom has been the wilderness, a deer, a bear, an eagle, a rapid river. It could be a washing machine, a coffee percolator, a breakfast food. (p. 145)

Because I have no expertise as an elementary school teacher, as a high school teacher, or as a primary or secondary school teacher educator, it would be presumptuous of me to suggest the way in which my suggestions should be carried out. My own experience as a university teacher has been that there is seldom one best way, that various ways work well with different students. It seems reasonable to conclude that such would be the case at the primary and secondary school levels as well. Whatever approach is taken, however, it should involve, I would hope, the opportunity for children to use value language. If children cannot become comfortable talking about values as children, they will not be able to do so when they become adults either. Judging by the kinds of problems that have arisen in environmental ethics professional literature, emphasis should also be given to distinguishing between values and valuing that are personal preference (sometimes called personal taste) and values and valuing that represent broader social perspectives. The former are values that people create or make up individually, which may be arbitrary, and may merely reflect how they happen to feel. The latter, however, are more substantial and should be taught as the framework within which such arbitrary personal preferences are made.

Finally, there should be a strong emphasis on the difference between valuing things for human use and valuing them for their own sake. These two kinds of valuing, instrumental valuing and intrinsic valuing, distinguish between prudence and ethics, between egoism and altruism. To be sure, many types of values can be taught, for example, as Rolston notes, market or economic value, life support value, recreational value, scientific value, genetic diversity value, aesthetic value, cultural symbolization value, historical value, character building value, therapeutic value, religious value, and intrinsic natural value, as well as different levels of value, market price, individual preference value, individual good value, social preference value, social good value, organismic value, and ecosytemic value (Rolston, 1985). When attending to such values, however, the link between personal and social val-

ues and the values that are to be promoted in the Yukon Environment Act (Yukon Terriroty, 1991) and other environmental laws should never be forgotten, maintaining the link between ethics and citizenship.

Notes on Contributor

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