# ENVIRONMENTAL PHILOSOPHY

## CSPH7010

## LECTURE THREE

## ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS AND ANIMAL ETHICS: A TRIANGULAR AFFAIR?

### STUDY EXERCISES

1. What are the differences between the ethical foundations of the animal liberation movement and the ethical foundations of Aldo Leopold's land ethic?

2. How might the ideas and aims of animal liberationists and ecocentrists converge?

3. How might the ideas and aims of animal liberationists and ecocentrists converge with those of biocentrists?

4. Consider the example Midgley uses of a group of animals degrading a certain area or tract of land. What should we do in this situation? How might an ecocentrist respond? How might an animal liberationist respond?

5. Why might preservationism be self-defeating in practise?

6. '[T]here are reasons why people could plausibly claim that the only wise use of rain forests is virtually no use at all, at least for now' (Schmidtz, 1997, p.328).

   What reasons does Schmidtz give for claiming that the only wise use of rain forests is virtually no use at all? Can you think of any additional reasons?

7. With reference to one of the cases presented by Schmidtz, outline a wise use alternative to preservationism, and consider any conflicts of interest that might arise from the implementation of such an alternative.

8. In his review of Callicott's article 'Animal Liberation: A Triangular Affair' (1980), Steve Sapontzis considers the three following questions:

   - 'Is holism, as Callicott portrays it, an acceptable moral position?'
   - 'Is Leopold's principle an acceptable moral principle?'
   - 'Is animal liberation a 'life-loathing' morality?' (1984, p.114)

   With reference to Sapontzis' arguments, provide answers to these three questions.

9. Watch the following two video presentations at http://www.thinkingshop.com/AIP/environment/taylor-varner.htm:

- Presentation by Jane Goodall about her other community projects, which help people in African towns live side-by-side with animals.

- Presentation by the photo director for National Geographic, David Griffin, about how photography can help us understand the problems facing our world today.

Use these videos to help you to think about….

- the role of hunting in the quest for self-preservation.
- conflicts between humans and wildlife, and how they might be overcome in a way that takes into account the interests of animals, human individuals and communities, and the natural environment.
- whether various media can help us to understand the many issues surrounding conflicts of interests between humans and wildlife.
- the urgent need to find sustainable solutions to environmental problems.
- in what ways the concerns of humanists, sentientists, biocentrists and ecocentrists overlap at a pragmatic level.

**References**

- Callicott, J. Baird., 'Animal Liberation: A Triangular Affair', *Environmental Ethics*, Vol.2, Winter 1980, pp.311-38.
- Sapontzis, Steve, 'Predation', *Ethics and Animals*, Vol.5, Issue 2, 1984, pp.27-38.
- Diane Bower, 'Environmental Ethics@ AIP: Who counts: animals, plants, ecosystems?, at http://www.thinkingshop.com/AIP/environment/taylor-varner.htm. Accessed on 20.4.13.