

Denise Buckley, Ass 1, 1808370

First paper: This is a well presented overview of Naess' text, but you would do well to provide a critique/assessment of what he says.

2nd paper: You display knowledge of the concepts & claims put forth by Benson, and of some of the wider dimensions of the topics under discussion. Here, it would be beneficial to contextualise the content a little more in relation to Benson's chapter.

3rd paper: Your presentation of Attfield's claims is quite contradictory. I think a closer reading would help here, and try to make it clear whether you are presenting Attfield's views or Attfield's discussion of another author's views. I think this is where some confusion arises.

56%.

Overall, this is an assiduous piece of work.





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## **Postgraduate/Distance Learning Assignment Coversheet & Feedback Form**

[Please insert this coversheet as the first page of the assignment you are submitting]

|                                                                                                         |                                          |                                     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>For completion by the student:</b><br>Student Name: Denise Buckley                                   |                                          |                                     |
| Module code: HPPH7009                                                                                   | Student University<br>Number:<br>1808370 | Educational<br>support needs:<br>No |
| Module title: Environmental Philosophy                                                                  |                                          |                                     |
| Module tutor: Dr. Rebekah Humphreys                                                                     |                                          |                                     |
| Assignment title: Assignment 1: Annotated Bibliography                                                  |                                          |                                     |
| Assignment due date: 27 <sup>th</sup> August 2021.                                                      |                                          |                                     |
| I confirm that this is my original work and that I have adhered to the University policy on plagiarism. |                                          |                                     |
| Name .....Denise Buckley.....                                                                           |                                          |                                     |



**Assignment Mark**

|                                                       |  |
|-------------------------------------------------------|--|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Marker's Provisional mark             |  |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Marker's/Moderator's provisional mark |  |
| External Examiner mark (if relevant)                  |  |
| <b>Final Mark</b>                                     |  |

**NB. All marks are provisional until confirmed by the Final Examination Board**

**For completion by Marker 1:**

Comments:

Marker 1 signature:

Date:

**For completion by Marker 2 / Moderator:**

Comments:

Marker 2 / Moderator signature:

Date:

**External Examiner's comments (if relevant):**

External Examiner signature:

Date:



The 3 articles I chose for this annotated bibliography are as follows. The first from Arne Naess.

**Naess, 'The Shallow and the Deep Long Range Ecology Movement: A Summary', in *Inquiry*, 16, 1, 1973, pp. 95-100.**

Arne Naess a Professor emeritus at the University of Oslo, Norway asserts within his article published in 1973, the emergence of ecologists who mark a turning point in the scientific community. These ecologists claim two movements, Shallow Ecology and Deep Ecology, and are often seen as twisted and misused. Naess characterises the two Ecologies within this paper.

The Shallow Ecology movement according to Naess is the fight against pollution and depletion of resources with the objective of health and affluence for people in developed countries.

The second movement, Deep Ecology, Naess specifies within seven parts:

- (1) The man-in-environment picture is rejected for the total-field image. Naess gives an example of a relationship between two things A and B and that without either the relationship with A and B are no longer the same. This total-field model enables the man-in-environment to dissolve along with every thing in milieu "except when talking at a superficial or preliminary level of communication".
- (2) Naess argues for Biospherical egalitarianism (in principle as there is always some killing, exploitation or suppression in some form). An ecological field-worker has a deep seated respect for all forms and ways of life with equal rights to live and blossom for all. The anthropocentrism approach has detrimental effects on human quality of life as the master-slave role has ultimately contributed to the "alienation of man from himself".
- (3) Naess believes the principles of diversity and of symbiosis enhance the survival of life and that the so called struggle of life should instead be interpreted as an ability to exist and cooperate with all beings and relationships. He states the fight against military invasion as well as annihilation of seals, whales, all human tribes or cultures should be supported.
- (4) Naess argues that diversity in human ways of life is due intentionally or non-intentionally to exploitation within certain groups. He states that both the exploiter and the exploited live differently and that both are affected in their levels of self-realisation.
- (5) Naess states the fight against pollution and resource depletion but notes that attention can be focussed on one point with increased evil within the other point. Therefore an ethics of



responsibility for ecologists implies that they serve deep ecology and not shallow ecology and that all seven points are to be considered. Naess argues ecologists often serve masters that ignore wider aspects of ecological perspectives but if well planned they have the power to enhance ecological perspectives.

- (6) The Deep ecology movement values complexity, not complication. Naess states the theory of ecosystems identifies between what is complicated (without Gestalt principles) and what is complex. Many interacting factors may work together to form unity, but ways of life in general show complexity which can colour the outlook for ecologists. Naess continues that such complexity creates thought that creates vast systems. He also states that applied to human beings, this principle encourages separation of work, not necessarily the breaking up of labour. This principle, favours actions where the whole person is active not just reactive and favours complex and integrated ways of living (combinations of the following: industrial and agricultural, intellectual and manual work, specialised and non-specialised jobs, urban and non-urban work including work in the city and work within nature).
- (7) Local autonomy and decentralization: Naess' emphasis for local autonomy includes efforts to strengthen local self-government and self-sufficiency. He suggests these efforts presuppose a step towards decentralisation and include pollution problems etc. However if factors can assist local autonomy there can be a reduction for example in energy consumption and the number of links in the decision chain along the way.

To sum up Naess is clear that the Deep Ecology movement is not derived from "ecology by logic or induction". The ecological worker has inspired the viewpoint of the Deep Ecology movement. Naess states that many of the formulations of the movement are quite vague and need more precision. Naess' second point states that the Deep Ecology movement is clear and normative and that there are a significant number of policy makers in government who accept the ecologists who "try to influence policy-making bodies largely through threats". Thirdly, Naess describes ecology as a limited science and philosophy as a form of debate on fundamentals with a subsection on political philosophy. An ecosophy contains ecological and philosophy wisdom which contains both norms and hypotheses concerning our universe's state of affairs. Naess' seven points listed for Deep Ecology provide "one unified framework for ecosophical system". To complete Naess' paper, the term ecologism is clarified as having various digressions from the Deep Ecology movement, mostly with a focus on pollution and depletion of resources but also a neglect on the differences that occur in different countries, which include developed and under-developed countries, with a "vague global approach". However as Naess states the global approach is of the utmost with concentration on regional differences to create and enhance policies that will enhance our future.

Could you assess some of these points?



**Benson, John, *Environmental Ethics: an introduction with readings* (London and NY: Routledge, 2000), ch.1, pp.9-29.**

#### Environments:

According to Benson and any standard dictionary, there is no such thing as an environment.

Environment is a relative term that means "surroundings". Benson gives an example of a cat within their surroundings and that this environment therefore is a set of resources, a two-sided relationship that contains other living beings and therefore the impact the individual has on their environment. Benson claims two aspects of this relationship to the environment are adaptation and familiarity. By adaptation Benson clarifies by which degree the environment is particularly equipped for flourishing as an organism depends on its environment for its needs. Familiarity is different as not only are the needs met but for example a cat has an area that it knows its way around.

Therefore a cat, Benson explains, is to a place not just a place with features. Benson asks the question "Where do environments end?" The answer can be very small or extend to the biosphere (many environments) and beyond.

#### Environmental Ethics:

Benson argues that ethics is concerned with subjects and objects of action, doers and things that are done towards. Traditionally this has been humans as subjects and objects of doings. Many accounts show development of progression from non-human animals, to living things in general then on to wholes such as populations, plants, ecosystems, lakes and mountains which each stage having more problems than the previous stage. This usually is where environmental ethics begins where concern for animals leave. However, Benson asks the question "Is it not more sensible to say that environmental ethics incorporates the ethics of animal concern?" Benson comes to the conclusion that "an environmentally informed ethic is one that takes full account of the fact that an individual organism, of whatever kind, is embedded in its environment, and gives full weight to this in deliberating about actions that are likely to affect the organism".

#### Environmental Problems:

Environmental problems can be seen as something that is undesirable and needs to be removed by whomever raises this question, according to Benson. These problems can be local or they can be extreme and other species are most certainly affected. Many threatening environmental changes, (unintentional changes, water, air, soil pollution, or intentional changes such as rerouting of rivers, forest clearances for agricultural purposes etc.) are brought about by human agency.



Benson also notes that changes not brought about by human's can also be seen as non-desirable and he gives the example of the destruction of the dinosaurs. He believes the relevant question is have changes brought harmful effects on humans or non-humans and whether or not humans can do something about the effects? Benson writes that environmental ethics, even though stimulated by crises, it is not concerned with what should be done in critical situations and he asks the question, therefore what is it concerned with?

#### The Range of Environmental Concern:

Benson is clear in stating that environmental ethics is concerned with the relationship between morally aware subjects and the objects within their environment. Many practitioners conceived environmental ethics as being concerned with the natural world. Therefore, nature or the natural world is often understood as "the world of living things other than human, and their non-living setting". As a result, environmental ethics ultimately is how we deal with the natural world and the duties we have in refraining from harm, protecting and actively promoting the good of this nature. Benson borrows Mary Midgley's list of things, besides normal adult human beings in which we have duties towards. The list contains the human sector, animal sector, inanimate sector, comprehensive (e.g. cities and the biosphere) and miscellaneous including oneself and God.

#### Independent V. Dependent Moral Status:

Many philosophers agree that we have duties towards animals, such as not treating them unfairly and that we have a duty to our fellow human beings not to treat them unfairly also. Benson states "treating animals cruelly may nourish a cruel disposition, and so is a failure of our duty to our fellow humans". This argument shows that animals enter the moral arena "on the back of human beings" and not on their own and he continues to say that when an action is taken by a human being, there is a whole array of other beings that are affected in some way. How these beings are affected determines whether this action was correct or incorrect. The next question is what determines independent moral status? According to Western viewpoints, humans are the only beings that have independent moral status, capable of experiencing pain and pleasure and aware of having a past and a future with a self-awareness/consciousness. Benson gives an example of a tree as only having moral significance as it contributes to the well-being of the sentient being. He carries on to state that we do have a duty to not only act correctly in relation to non-harming but that we have a duty to act where needed.

#### Shades of Green:



Benson writes about the Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess whose paper discusses shallow and deep ecology. A shallow perspective reduces concern for the environment to the concern of the interests of human beings. A deep perspective is committed on the other hand to "the equal right to live and blossom of all forms of life". Benson clarifies this approach into shades of green and names the light green approach as the shallow approach. This can be summarised as:

1. Environmental problems are changes in the environment brought about by human action or non-action but in short danger human well-being.
2. A human being has reason to act in ways that help avert the danger or harm.
3. Human well-being is tied up with other individual things, and therefore designed for safety and security of human beings.
4. Only human beings have independent moral status and therefore is all the protection that is required.

The deep green approach can be summarised as:

1. Problems are identified as anything that can pose danger within this field.
2. Action is required by humans much more extensively than those "recognised by traditional moralities".
3. All living things have independent status morally.

The Last Man:

The Australian environmentalist and philosopher Richard Routley wrote a paper asking the question "is there a need for a new, an environmental, ethic?" The answer is yes and Routley details the dominant Western ethic is one that human beings only have "independent moral status". This belief is often called "anthropocentrism" or as Routley states "human chauvinism".

"The liberal philosophy of the Western world holds that one should be able to do what he wishes, providing (1) that he does not harm others and (2) that he is not likely to harm himself irreparably."

(Routley and Routley 1980: 117)

Routley suggests that we move beyond human chauvinism and concede that other non-humans have moral status and that the preservation of plants and animals leads to all things going beyond independent status.

Resisting the Argument:

Could you explain  
the relevance in the context  
of Benson's work?



The Routley's believe that we need a new ethic as Western ethics is human-centred and therefore cannot provide grounds for condemning the actions of a last man.

Getting beyond Human Chauvinism:

Benson summarises Routley's theories as deep green with an explanation of the following:

Light green: the world of non-humans with no independent moral status and only matters in so far as what matters to human beings.

Mid-green: Some species have moral status, regardless if they matter to human beings.

Deep green: Some or all of natural beings have moral status regardless if they matter to human beings. This is termed "biocentric" and the term "ecocentric" refers to all non-living components having moral status.

The Justification Problem:

Benson believes that many people will share Routley's viewpoint on the last man standing, noting that thinking has shifted towards an environmental direction and he agrees that it is necessary for human beings to treat the environment with value and esteem.

To Summarise:

It is best to think of the environment as some one's or some things. There is a distinction between the person's effect on the environment and the effect of the environment on the person and one that a person is dependent on for sustenance and familiarity. Environmental ethics is the study of our environment and everything that can be a part of it.

Philosophers have asked which human beings have a claim to be considered morally correct and that an ethical theory is human centred if it denies independent moral status.

How green an ethical theory is considered depends on how far moral status extends beyond humans. Deep green theories extend to all living things in general including rivers, forests and all species. The last man argument shows the need for a new ethics and that man's destruction of the natural world is wrong and that many humans these days would agree with this viewpoint. However, according to traditional Western ethics what the man does is not necessarily incorrect. More possible responses include the refusal to agree that there is anything wrong. Benson finally concludes that until there has been an assessment of the resources of traditional ethical thinking, it is reasonable to reserve judgement on new deep green principles.



Attfield, Robin, 'The Good of Trees', in *Environmental Ethics and Philosophy: Managing the Environment for Sustainable Development*, edited by O'Neill, Turner, Kerry, and Bateman (Cheltenham, UK, and Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar Pub., 2001).

Attfield organises his article into three sections. Section 1 details "the good of trees" as opposed to "the harm of trees" and also "the value of trees". He also adds to "the use of trees" which Attfield rejects in the first part after scrutinising the writings of Professors Hare and Feinberg who believe that trees are only good for satisfying human interests. Attfield suggests that even if trees do have needs they may have no value and are due no consideration on their own. In Section 2 Attfield examines grounds for preserving trees without finding any basis of value for trees beyond human interests. This results in a paradox that Attfield finds, trees have interests but are of no value which he explores in Section 3. Ultimately Attfield's purpose and focus for this article is a wish to contribute to "the philosophy of intrinsic value and to the philosophy of ecology" and focus on key topics such as "purpose", "interest", "capacities", "flourishing", "diversity", "good", "interests", "value" and "rights".

Section 1: Attfield explains a view held by many philosophers that the needs of trees and plants are reliant on the interests that humans hold and that only harm is possible if and when humans are frustrated. He argues that "harm always turns on the frustration of desires and good on their realisation" and that if we were "strict and consistent non-animists" we would not at all speak of either good or bad of "useless plants". He also believes that it is unfair to suppose that creatures that lack wants have a good of their own that has nothing to do with us. Attfield believes that not only can trees grow, they can blossom, decay, thrive, wither and be endangered and he argues that what thrives therefore has a good. He continues to say that those who talk of thriving must "ground their talk" in what appears to be childlike behaviour with beliefs that trees have feelings and purpose. Attfield certainly believes that we can show greater or lesser action towards the treatment of plants and trees by our actions and what he can see is that "desires or wants are the materials" that "interests are made of" and therefore "mindless creatures have no interest of their own". Attfield continues that the overall discussion regards rights and not interests. He claims that "as trees only have needs where human interests" are concerned for their growth or survival they have no requirements of their own. Attfield discusses Feinberg's viewpoint on the nature of flourishing. Feinberg describes flourishing as "a conscious act of disposition in the claim that "to flourish is to glory in the advancement of one's interests, in short to be happy"". Attfield holds the claim that it is not in the interest of plants to flourish and that they are unaware of their interests and even

Gr.  
But this is not Attfield's view, as you say (above)

This contradicts what you say (above).



creatures with consciousness can have unawareness regardless if they are flourishing or not. However, the exception to this Attfield details is the common garden experience regarding plants, hedges and weeds for example. They appear as flourishing and overgrown whilst causing difficulties for neighbours, drains etc., therefore there is good reason to cut back contrary to our interests. Attfield concludes Section 1 with the Aristotelian principle of the good life turns on the fulfilment of its nature and that this can be extended to include animals and this principle has been defended by Stephen Clark "who concludes that it harms creatures to "deprive them, whether they were man or beast"". Attfield explains what this part does not address is that trees have no value in their own right or to be shown consideration. In this second part Attfield discusses this by considering the viewpoint of preserving trees.

Section 2: Attfield clarifies that preserving trees are of course grounds for preserving animals and areas within the wild. The preserving of trees certainly is associated with human interests for the reason of scientific research and gaining a wider association for medicine, agriculture and recreation. This preservation of plants and habitats tilts the balance of advantage in the name of preservation for animal interests. It is agreed according to Attfield that sentient creatures are enjoyable for human pleasure and that "delight and pleasure are usually fostered" by the diversity of experiences of sounds, shapes, species etc. Therefore this leads to a question is this what makes diversity enjoyable and if so is this as a result of the range of desirable activities in which it produces? Attfield states that this may sound anthropocentric to some but clarifies that the theory does take into account the experiences of non-human species. He continues with an experiment where we can imagine a world where no conscious experience exists and whether this world would be any worse if it became the norm. Attfield <sup>claims (?)</sup> describes this experiment may be impossible to imagine unless we imagine how this came about and by what agency. Attfield continues to question "what is at stake is whether diversity is *intrinsically* desirable" in whatever form.

Routley's "last man" example is mentioned as to whether it would do any harm or destroy any intrinsic value and Attfield questions whether the world, through the last man's act would "be any the poorer". As a result, according to Attfield there does not seem to be any purpose in choosing a more diverse world to a less diverse world (diversity is not intrinsically required) unless of course the objects are of someone else's experience. As a result Attfield states that it is the incorrectness of vandalism that accounts for the wiping out of species and that we must continue to search for what is of value that is lost when plants or animals are destroyed. It is Aquinas that mentions the attitude of God "who in the case of every other species except man... cares nothing for the benefit of the individual but does watch over the species as a whole". And Jonathan Glover who argues



that "all life is sacred". Attfield agrees that almost all living creatures should be preserved including their habitats and continues to state that "nor is there anything intrinsically amiss in losses to diversity", relating to the extinction of species. Therefore, as Attfield clarifies what has no intrinsic value cannot have rights and what does have rights must therefore be valuable in its own right. Trees and plants lack rights but are needed by human beings "even though we should literally starve and suffocate without them".

Section 3: The Value and Rights of Trees: The argument of this paper brings forth a paradox that trees have needs but no intrinsic value or rights. Trees have interests but no obligation to protect those interests within themselves. Attfield's consideration includes if trees, like human beings, have the capacity for nutrition, growth, respiration and self-protection, then can we really disregard them? Attfield introduces Leopold's "land ethic" which incorporates the whole biotic community within the "land" and that all individuals are a member of a community of individual parts which includes soil, water, plants and animals. Continuing the intrinsic value argument, Attfield asks us to take into account any refusal of taking interests into account. Attfield is not clear as to what grounds justification would be but notes two points: (1) that trees are not sentient and therefore have different interests and (2) that trees are not agents because they lack purpose and if so, why? Throughout, Attfield grants that the "differences in potential between different species are of the very greatest importance" and it is still worthy to note that it causes distress, to some, at the awareness of destruction of a living tree, so, the issue of trees having intrinsic value remains open for Attfield.

✓ Attfield concludes that almost all life deserves respect even if it has an underlying human interest and that things that have interests have some value in their own right. Also if trees have good which is not necessarily our good, the trees constitute a good and if they have their own forms of ✓ flourishing, they are therefore of value. And to the question do trees have rights? Attfield agrees that trees have rights as many trees seem to be valuable in their own right. Attfield concludes his paper with a quote from Genesis I that "all creation is good: be that it may" living creatures it seems do characteristically have a value in their own right.

