

Environmental ethics

Ethics

- a set of rules on how one **should** behave in relation to one's neighbor
 - **good / bad?**
 - **should / should not** behave in any situation?
-
- situation, when there is necessary **to decide** → **the ethics** helps here
 - indicates by **which behavior** we get the optimal result



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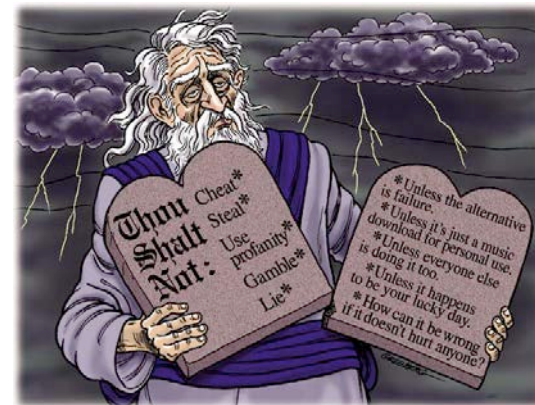


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Morality - an area of human behavior observable in terms of ethical values (distinguishing between good and bad, etc.)

- ethics conceives the consequences of moral behavior

An Issue – it depends solely on our decision whether will behave according to what we have intellectually defined as good!

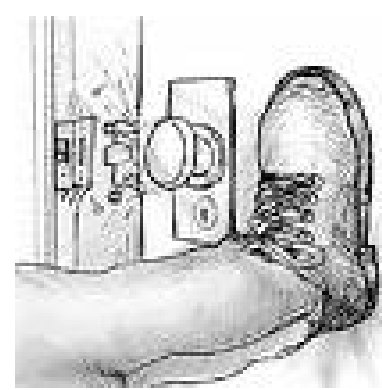


The worlds of facts and values

- ethics deals with the world of **values** (should be)
- science deals with the world of **facts** (is)

The world of facts - descriptive

- the car is blue, I kicked the door, $a_g = 9.83 \text{ m/s}^2$, etc.)





Can you suggest a **NORMATIVE sentence by using words "kick" and "door"? I.e. a sentence talking about values.**

The worlds of facts and values

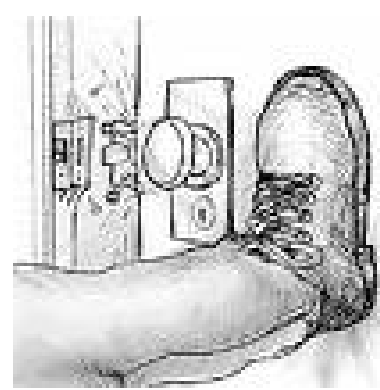
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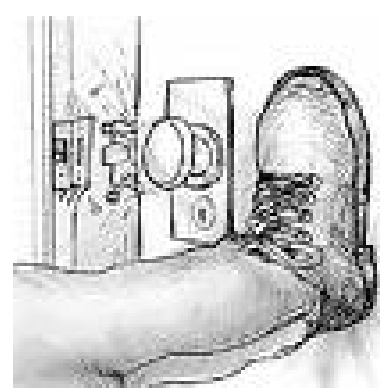
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- questions such as "should I do it" or "how we must not behave"
- value - the concept of the desired; what we value



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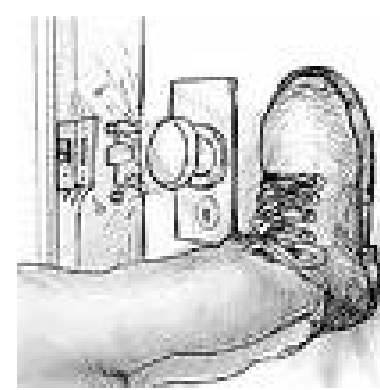
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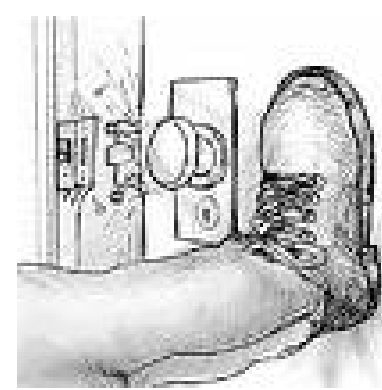
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- **Authority** (dogma) - eg Bible, King, parents ...
- **Conventions** - eg laws, traditions ...

But how to decide if there is no authority?

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- **The Golden Rule:**

"Do not do to others what you do not want them to do to you"

- **Categorical imperative** (Immanuel Kant) –

"Act so that the pattern of your behavior may become a general law"



Do we need an Ethics?

- it was not needed for a certain period of a history



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Tribal (traditional) society

- the question of values/truth was not addressed - **everything was clear**
- ethics as a search for answers to questions of correctness → unnecessary
- what the shaman said, that was right
 - a completely different style of thinking than we know today
- why didn't they ask for the correctness?



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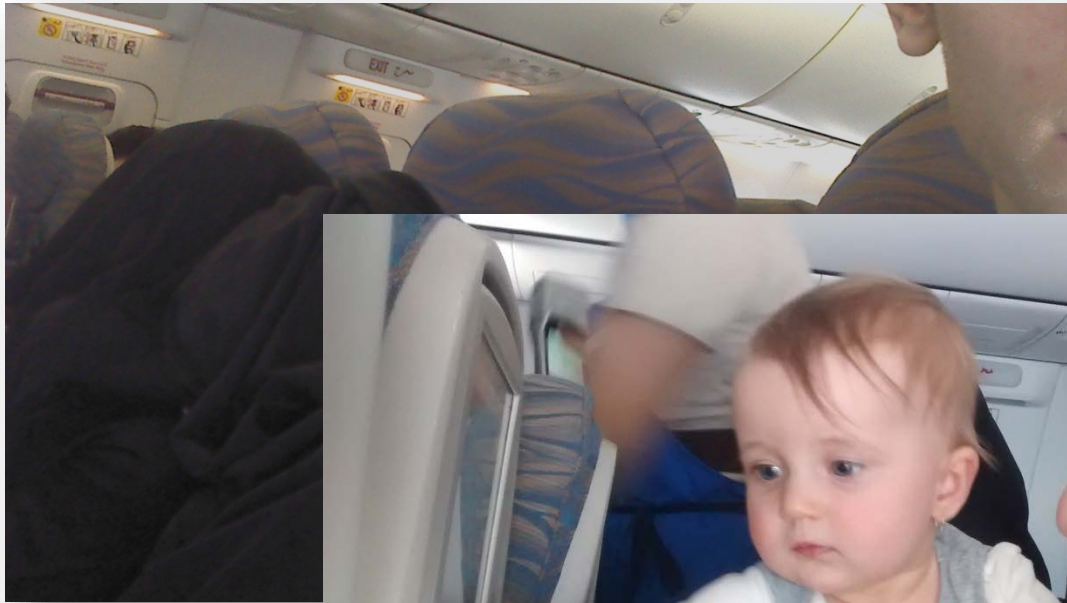
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The end of tribal society

- contact with other societies - the end of the **world of obvious values**
- finding out that the world of values can be different









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The rise of ethics - after emergence from the non-problematic world of myths (relations between societies)





The rise of the environmental ethics - when?

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The rise of environmental ethics - after emergence from the non-problematic relations of people x nature



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Env. ethics - a set of rules how we should behave towards the environment

Do we need environmental ethics? YES

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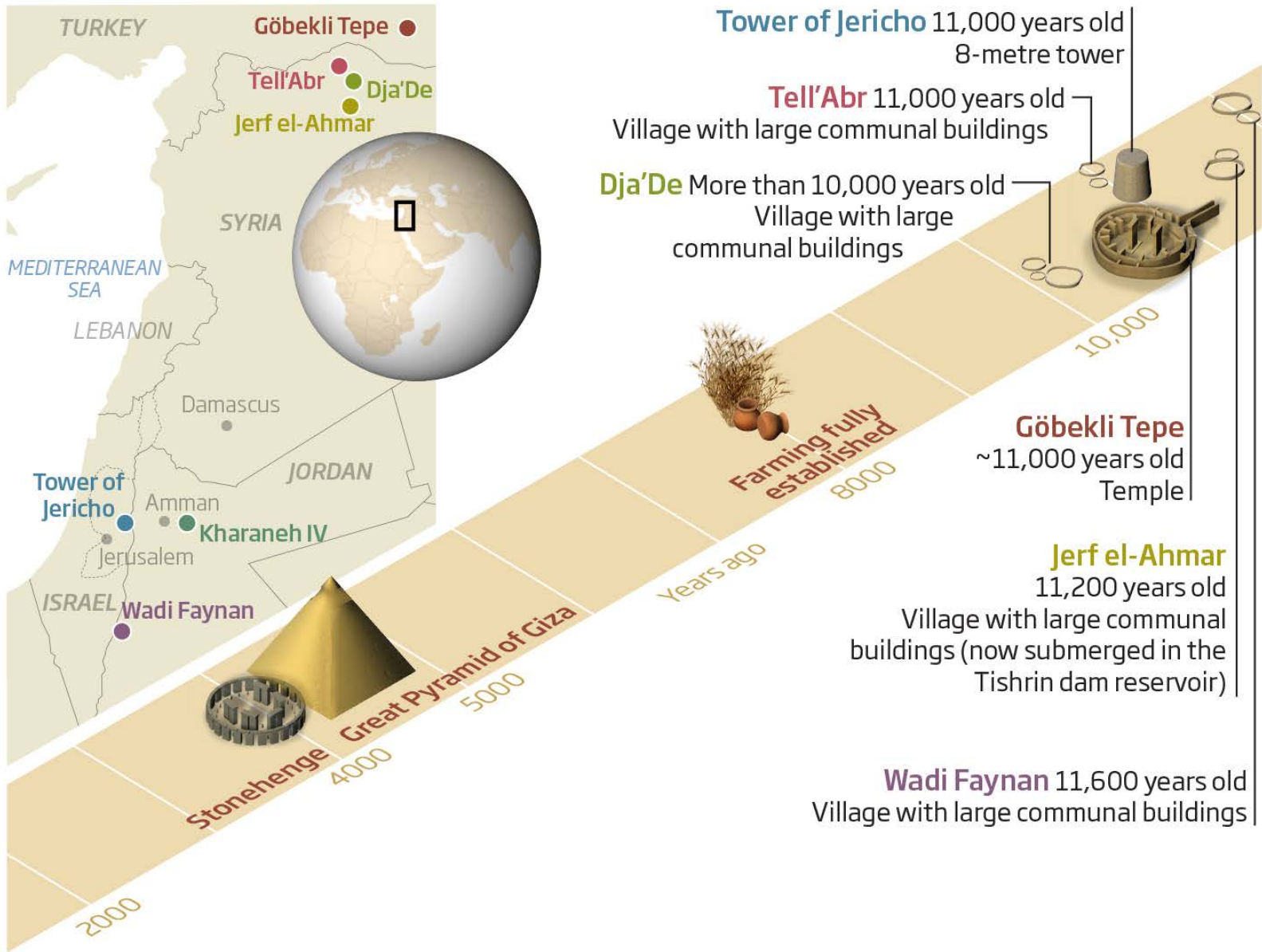
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II. **Pastoral-agricultural** relationship

- the farmer is no longer a passive recipient from nature, but still dependent

Monumental discoveries

Recent finds in the Levant suggest that people were living in large settlements and building temples long before they invented agriculture



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IV. **Producers-consumers relationship**

- the idea that meaning of life is to accumulate and consume more goods
- awareness of nature as the primary source of life is greatly suppressed

Stuff: Humans as hunters and mega-gatherers

- › 30 March 2014 by [Alison George](#)
- › Magazine issue 2962. [Subscribe and save](#)
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How did we evolve from indigent apes with no possessions into hoarding humans with more stuff than we can track? Our urge to accumulate has deep roots

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Papooses were probably among our earliest possessions (Image: Tao Images/Getty)

Anthropocentric x non-anthropocentric env. ethics

Anthropocentric types of env. ethics

I. Selfish predatory attitude

- the center of evaluation is man, his needs, interests
- every value arises only on the basis of human interest
- only instrumental value of nature
- justifies nature protection by its **usefulness to humans**
 - why to protect the air? animal welfare? forests?





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II. The attitude of a noble humanity

- nature is cruel, it does not know remorse, hope, good or evil
- only man brings value, altruism, freedom = purely human qualities into nature
- the ability to act in the interests of others and in the interests of all mankind in the long run = **truly human**
- egoism, selfishness, lordship - **loss of purely human traits**
- why to protect nature? animal welfare? forests?





Why to protect the air? Animal welfare? Forests?

Altruism

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LIFE'S MOST IMPORTANT SKILL

Happiness



Matthieu Ricard

FOREWORD BY

DANIEL GOLEMAN

"In a brilliant synthesis of 25 centuries of the wisdom of Buddhism with the neuroscience and cognitive psychology of the 21st century, Matthieu Ricard, who embodies both traditions, gives humanity a gift it desperately needs: a vision of a positive human future."

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TED Ideas worth spreading

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DISCOVER



Non-anthropocentric types of env. ethics

- nature and living organisms have **its own (inner) value**
- in the history - a unique figures of Christian mystics + romanticism
- for romantics, however, nature only a reflection of their inner feelings + the influence of non-European cultures (Buddhism)
- **emotionality and an intuitive approach** to the world play an important role



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Selected versions of env. ethics:

- I) Biocentric ethics - *A. Schweitzer*
- II) The extended rights concept - *R. Nash, P. Singer*
- III) Land ethics - *A. Leopold*
- IV) Deep ecology - *A. Naess*



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These theories differ in their imperative assumption:

- *Schweitzer*: "We must respect and protect every life"
- *Nash, Singer*: "We must respect the natural rights of animals and nature!"
- *Leopold*: "We must protect the whole ecosystem"
- *Naess*: "We must learn to live with all beings"“



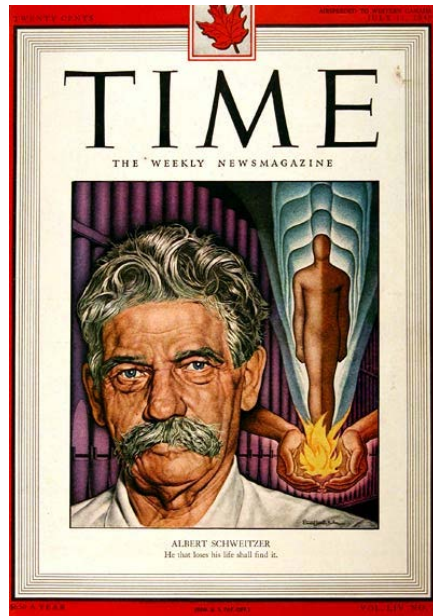
Biocentric ethics

Reverence for life ethics

Albert Schweitzer

1875 Alsace (Germany) -1965 Lambaréné

- philosopher, theologian,
- physician and famous artist (organist)
- 1913 founded a hospital in Lambaréné (Gabon)



Reverence for life ethics

Descartes

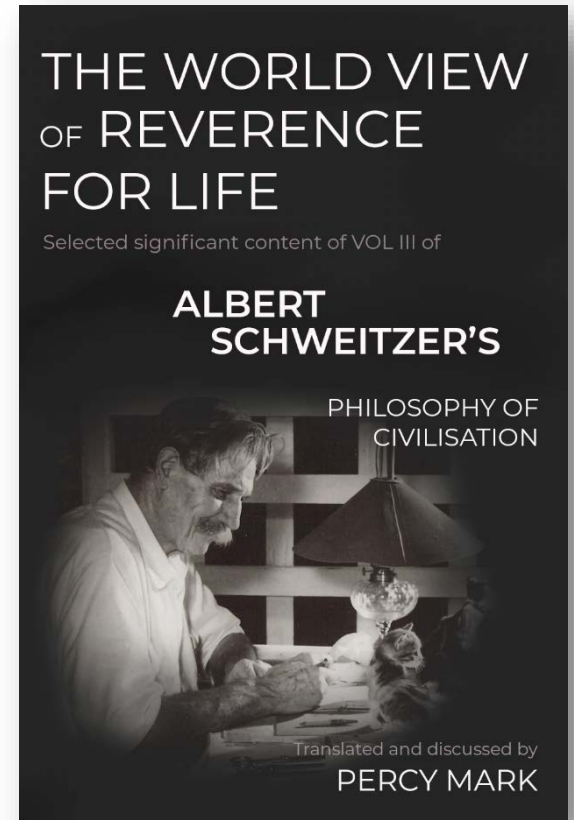
„ I think therefore I am“

x

x

Schweitzer

„ I am a life that wants to live in the middle of a life that wants to live“



Reverence for life ethics

Descartes

x

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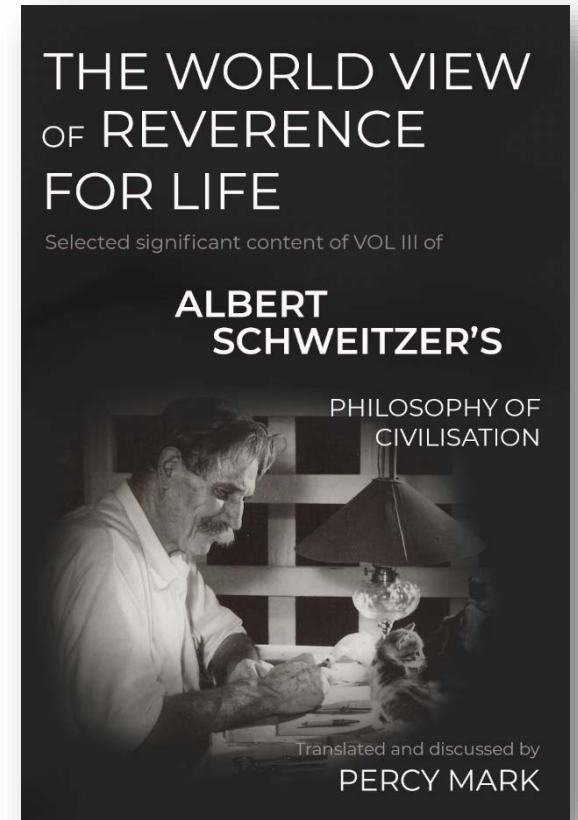
Schweitzer


„ I am a life that wants to live in the middle of a life that wants to live“

There is a basic thesis of the Reverence for life ethics:

"Ethics is nothing other than Reverence for Life. Reverence for Life affords me my fundamental principle of morality, namely, **that good consists in maintaining, assisting and enhancing life; and to destroy, to harm or to hinder life is evil.**"

Albert Schweitzer





**Is it possible to live strictly in consistence
with the main thesis of the Reverence for
life ethics?**

Reverence for life ethics

- and what about food?

*When I damage any life (living organism), it must be clear to me **how far it is necessary.** "*

*"A countryman who has mown thousands of flowers in the meadow **as fodder for cows** should be guarded so that he **does not pluck a flower** by the road thoughtlessly (just for fun) on the way home.,,"*



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*"None of us should allow any **pain for which there is no excuse.** And no one should be content with not wanting to interfere in things that don't concern him. "*



The „extended rights“ concept I

Roderick Nash „The rights of nature“

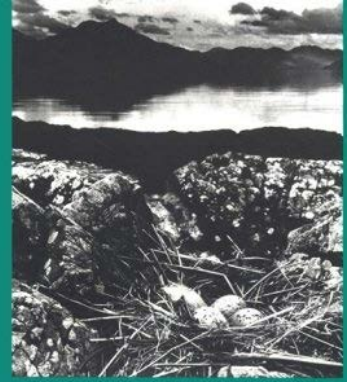
- the idea of extending rights to the whole living world

rights of white men

→ rights of slaves

→ rights of women

→ rights of Afro-Americans



The Rights of Nature

A HISTORY OF ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS

Roderick Frazier Nash

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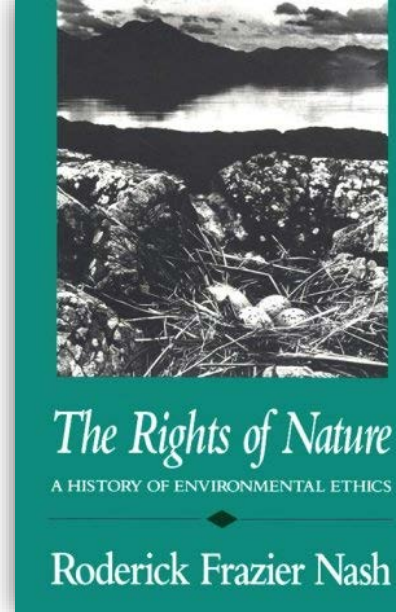
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.... → **rights of animals**

... → **rights of all living beings**



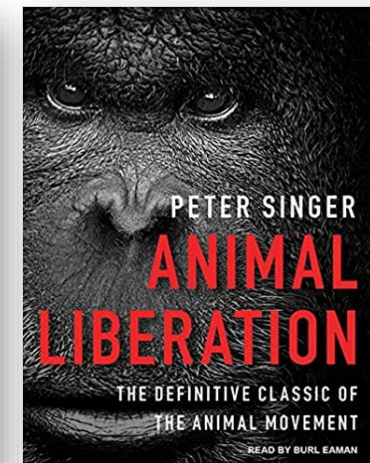
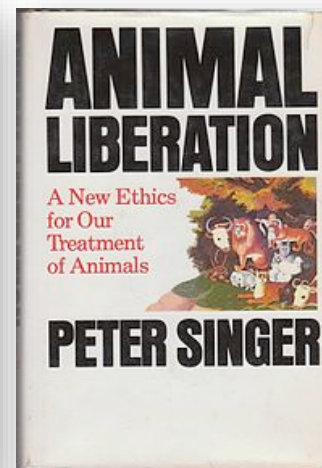
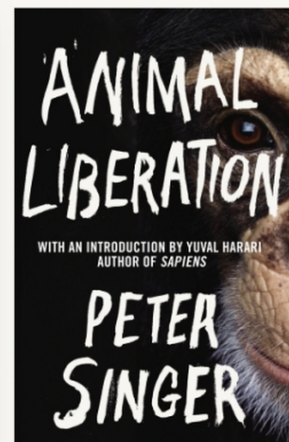
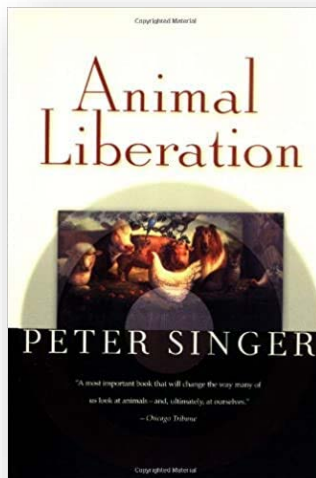
The „extended rights“ concept II

Peter Singer „Animal Liberation“ 1975

- the idea of equality of all living beings
morality of relationship to others
(humans and animals → all living things)
- It is not a matter of loving animals, it is a moral principle



Science may have found a cure for most evils;
but it has found no remedy for the worst of
them all - the apathy of human beings.



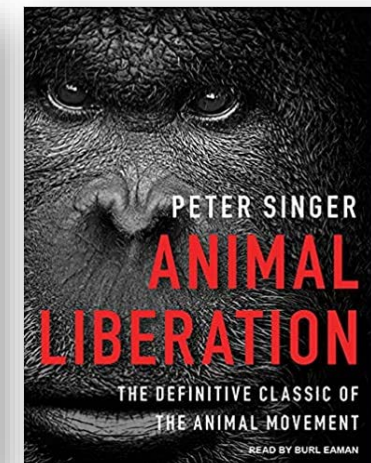
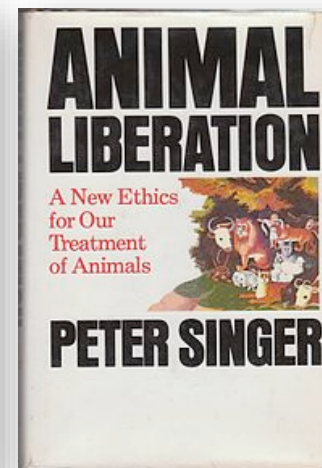
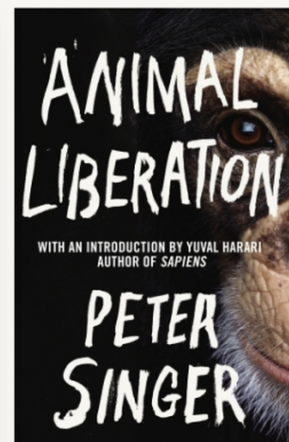
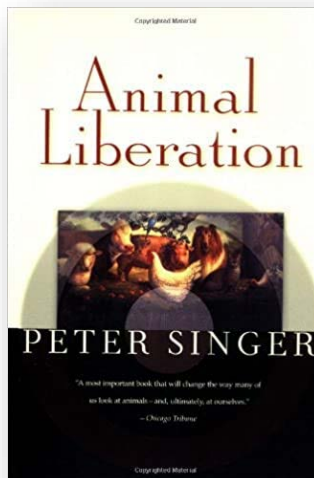
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- anything that may suffer wants to avoid suffering and this desire deserves respect
- the **ability to suffer is a sufficient reason for respect** of animals



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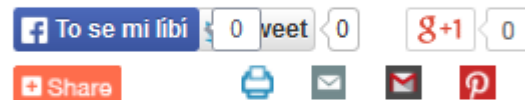
Animal welfare: See things from their perspective

› 23 September 2006 by [Andy Coghlan](#)
› Magazine issue 2570. [Subscribe and save](#)

Your dog falls ill, so you take him to the vet. After a quick consultation you take him home, and soon he appears to be better. But he is not. You and the vet have failed to realise that he is still in severe pain, and the drugs the vet has prescribed will turn him into a social outcast, a dog that may be shunned or even attacked by others.

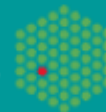
Such mistakes can happen, say animal behaviour specialists, because our understanding of animal welfare is inadequate, and at times misguided. The human tendency to anthropomorphise means we miss out on animals' real feelings and needs, with the result that we often provide them with inappropriate housing and medical care. This is leading to the health and well being of millions of animals kept as pets, livestock or in zoos being adversely affected.

Last week, researchers gathered at a conference held at the Royal Society in London to hear the latest evidence on how animals interpret the world. One thing is clear: they do not see it the same way we do, and only by accepting that can we learn to care for them better. "The matter of central interest is the




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Do invertebrates feel pain?

› 25 February 2014 by [Tamar Stelling](#)
› Magazine issue 2957. [Subscribe and save](#)

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Video: [Pain tests for invertebrates](#)

Boiled alive and torn limb from limb – it's time we took seriously the question of whether animals like squid, octopus and lobsters suffer

A SCIENTIST and a seafood chef walk into a bar. "We have a mutual interest," says the scientist. "I study crustaceans and you cook them." But the chef wanted to know just one thing. Do they feel pain?

[Robert Elwood](#) had been working with crabs and prawns for the best part of three decades when he bumped into TV chef Rick Stein in a local pub on the coast of Northern Ireland. Yet he was stumped. "It was the first time I ever considered the question," he says.

Although some people are horrified by the idea of cooking lobsters alive, or the practice of tearing claws from live crabs before tossing them back into the sea, such views are based on a hunch. We know next to nothing about whether or not these animals – or invertebrates in general – actually suffer. In Elwood's experience, researchers are either certain they feel pain or certain they don't. "Very few people say we need to know," he says.

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05 April 2014

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NewScientist

Do invertebrates feel pain?

An octopus is poked with increasing force on its mantle

The extended rights concept II

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→ the **ability to suffer is a sufficient reason for respect** of animals
- any claim to superiority is problematic
→ **racism of race, nationality, sex or animal species is unjustifiable**
- **sources of cruelty: selfishness**
structural source → rootedness in the cultural tradition
= experimental animals and meat production
- **solution? - not to participate in evil** by rejecting this social mechanisms
→ vegetarianism and protests



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YouTube^{CZ}

peter singer



**BIG
THINK**



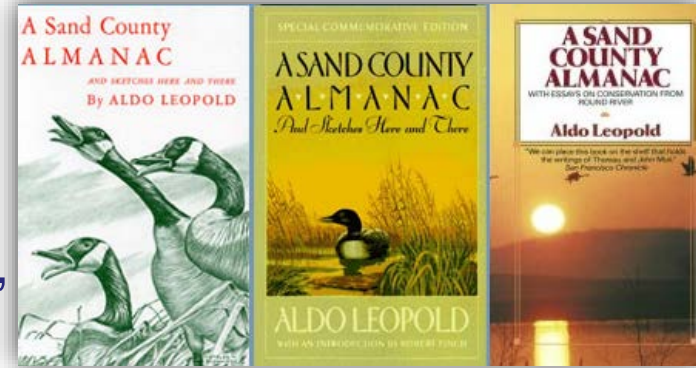
**3 ethical catastrophes
you can help stop,
right now**

Land Ethics

Aldo Leopold „A Sand County Almanach“

- extending ethics to the whole land (ecosystem), not just to individuals

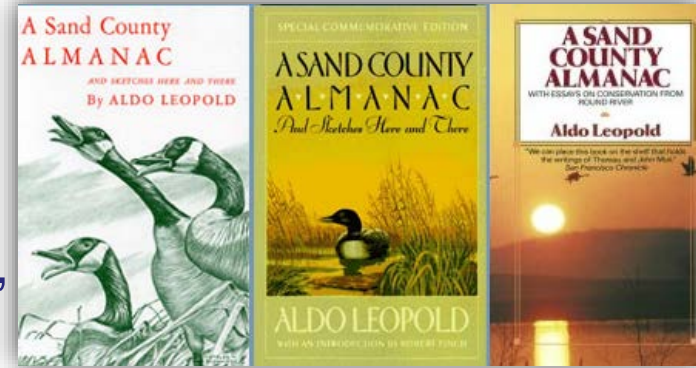
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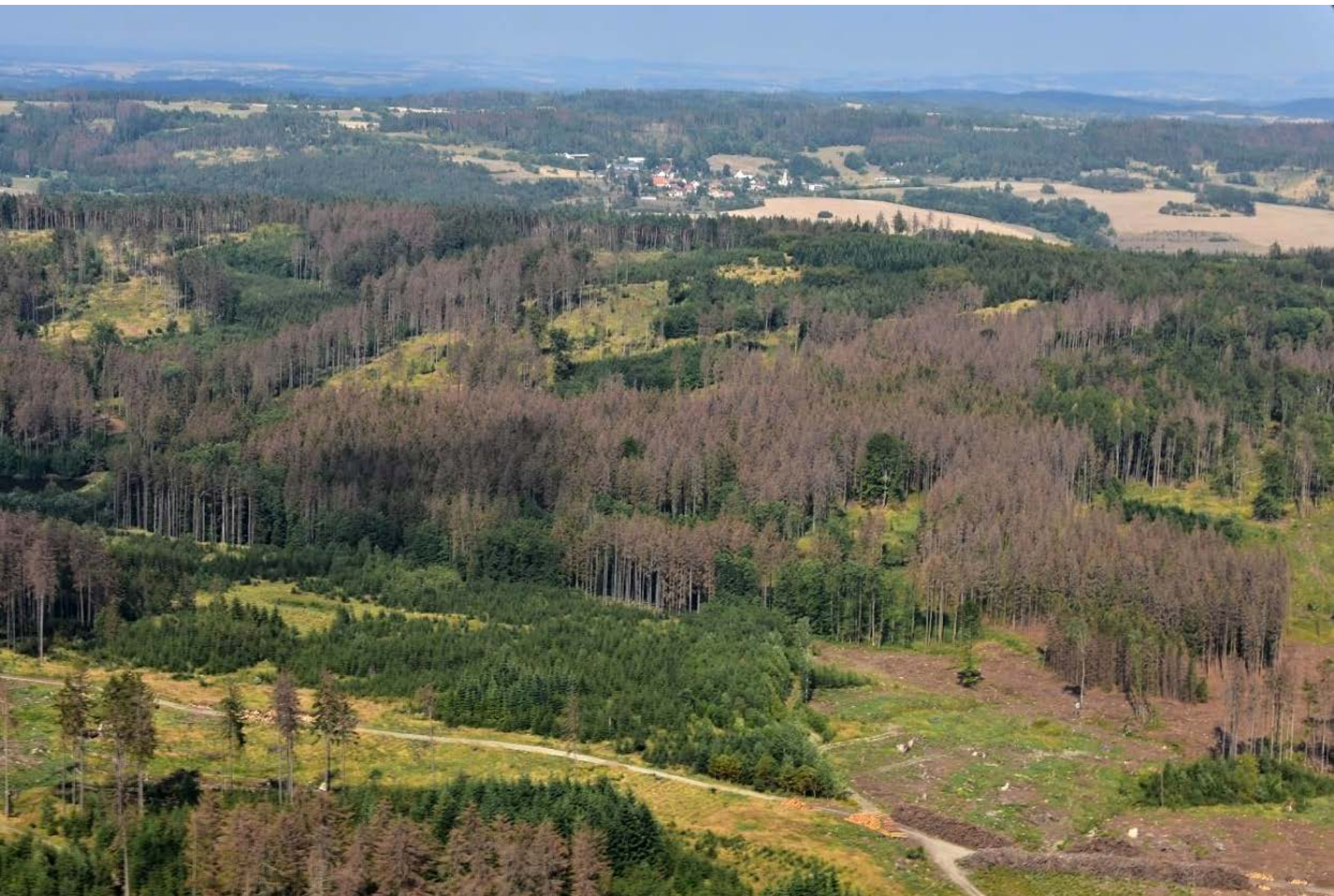
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"A certain thing is right when it aims to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the biotic society. If it's headed elsewhere, it's bad. "

- the meaning of the land (ecosystem) is to provide **living conditions** of individuals who are the only ones who can rejoice in life
- according to the Land ethics, occasional forest fires for the restoration of coniferous forests despite the suffering of game (**whole x individuals**)
- Leopold saw a land as a system of life - the highest good is the smooth functioning of energy exchange throughout life - ecosystem

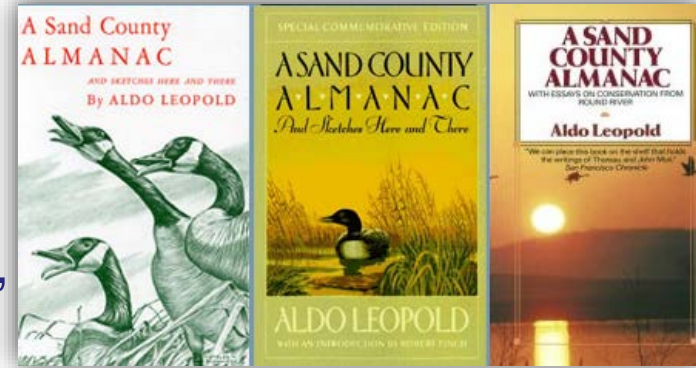




Land Ethics

Aldo Leopold „A Sand County Almanach“

- extending ethics to the whole land (ecosystem), not just to individuals



"A certain thing is right when it aims to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the biotic society. If it's headed elsewhere, it's bad. "

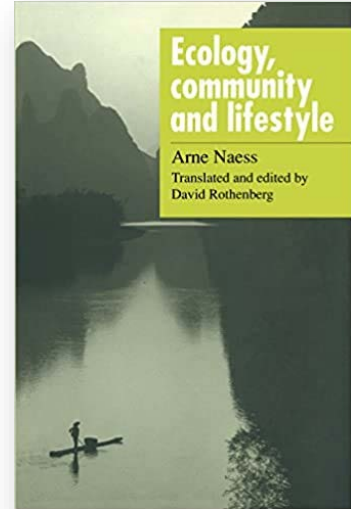
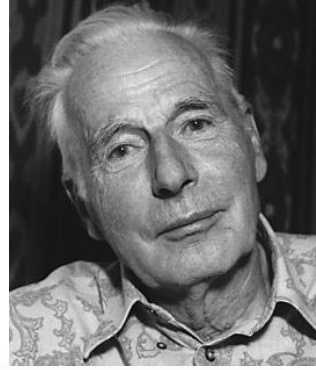
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- Leopold saw a land as a system of life - the highest good is the smooth functioning of energy exchange throughout life - ecosystem
- **recognition that death necessarily belongs to life**
- **this is not about immortal life, but a good life !!!**



Deep ecology

Arne Naess „Ecology, community and lifestyle“

- Inspired by the legacy of Baruch Spinoza and Mahatma Gandhi
- in the 70's - a huge influence on the modern environmental movement
- 'The deep ecology movement is characterized by an effort to clarify and respect **what is in depth**



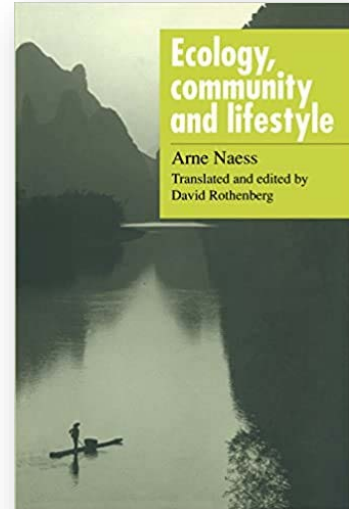
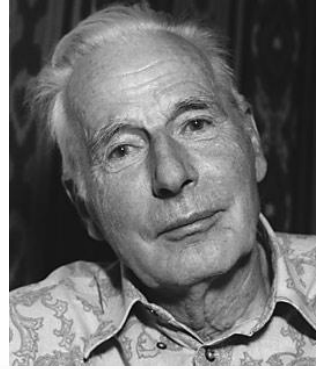
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Starting points of the Deep ecology:

- environmental crisis exists because we **wrongly understand** the world - only by senses and intelligence
- The world seen in this way places the ego in the center in the of the word
- the environmental crisis is only a manifestation of a deeper crisis of impoverishment of our selves, which must be replaced by the Self with the capital S.





Deep ecology

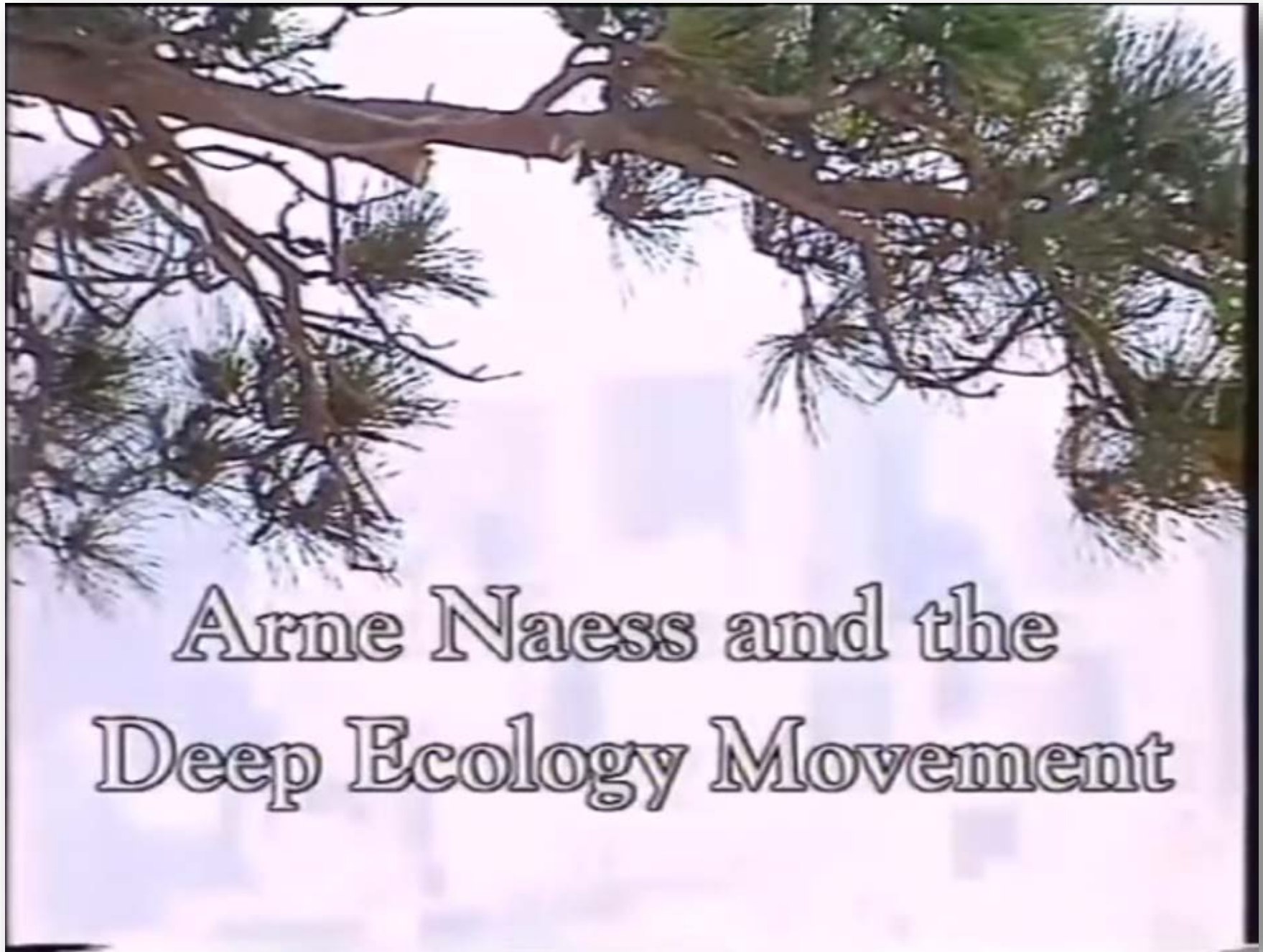
Shallow vs. Deep Ecology

SHALLOW

- Conservation
- Short-term measures
- Ego
- Cost-benefit analysis
- Only humans benefit

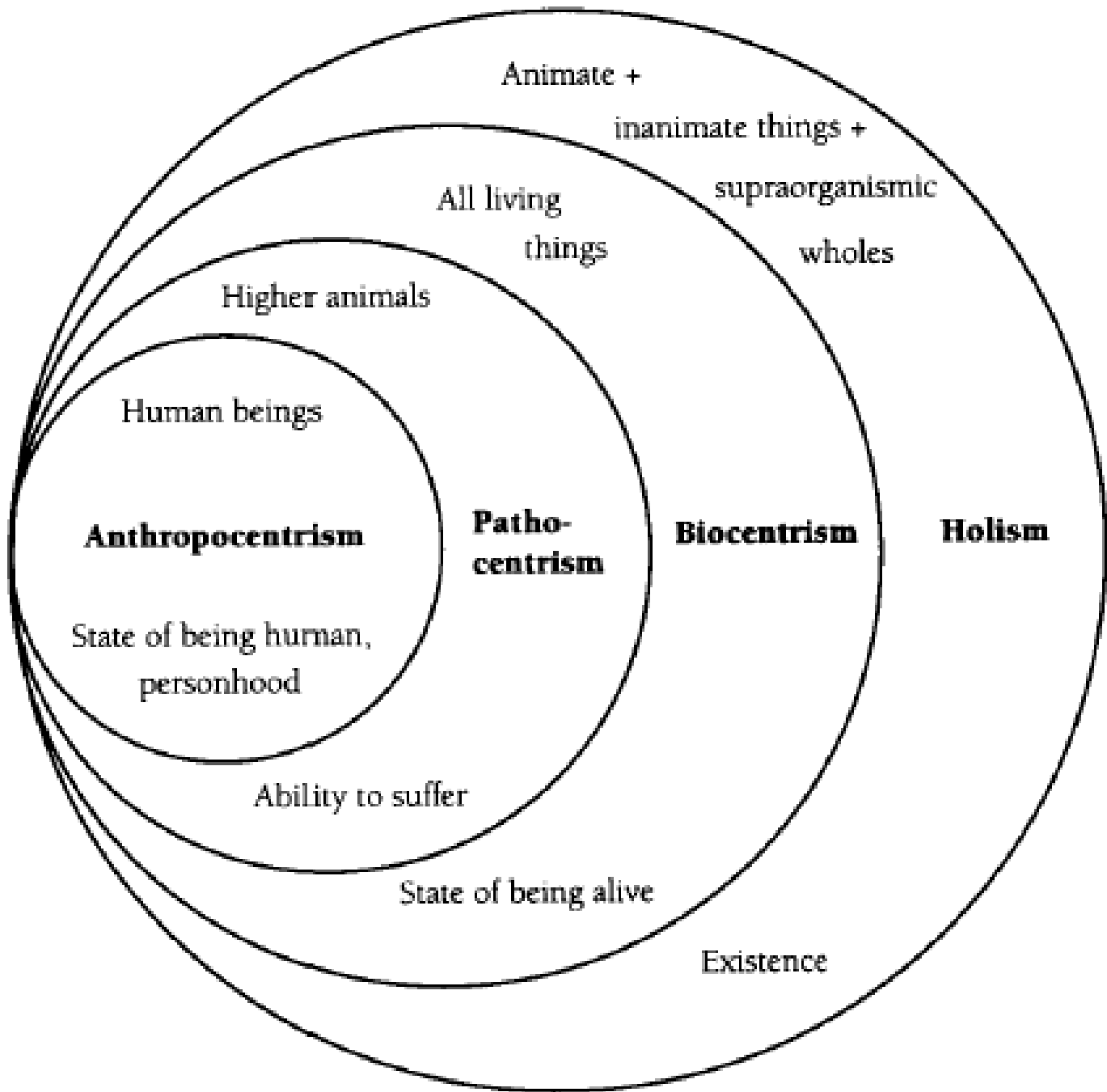
DEEP


- Preservation
- Restoration
- Cohabitation
- Long-term measures
- Self
- Difficult questions
- Symbiosis/coexistence
- “Leaky margins” (Peter Russell)



Arne Naess and the Deep Ecology Movement

Environmental ethics - overview





How much biodiversity will remain in a century from now?

Figure 2. How Much Biodiversity Will Remain a Century from Now Under Different Value Frameworks?

The outer circle in the Figure represents the present level of global biodiversity. Each inner circle represents the level of biodiversity under different value frameworks. Question marks indicate the uncertainties over where the boundaries exist, and therefore the appropriate size of each circle under different value frameworks.

