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Callicott's Last Stand

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The Land Ethic Discovers—and Claims—the New World

Assimilation redux. Early in *Earth's Insights: A Survey of Ecological Ethics from the Mediterranean Basin to the Australian Outback*, J. Baird Callicott presents in summary fashion his vision of the reconciliation of his land ethic—"proffered as a universal [and univocal] environmental ethic, with globally acceptable credentials"[2] —with the multiplicity of worldviews and values found in Indigenous cultures:

> One might therefore envision a single cross-cultural environmental ethic based on ecology and the new physics and expressed in the cognitive lingua franca of contemporary science. One might also envision the revival of a multiplicity of traditional cultural environmental ethics, resonant with such an international, scientifically grounded environmental ethic and helping to articulate it. Thus we may have one worldview and one associated environmental ethic corresponding to the contemporary reality that we inhabit one planet, that we are one species, and that our deepening environmental crisis is worldwide and common. And we may also have a plurality of revived traditional worldviews and associated environmental ethics corresponding to the historical reality that we are many peoples inhabiting many diverse bioregions apprehended through many and diverse cultural lenses. But this one and these many are not at odds. Each of the many worldviews and associated environmental ethics can be a facet of an emerging global environmental consciousness, expressed in the vernacular of a particular and local cultural tradition.[3]

In this essay we critically examine Callicott's attempted intellectual coup d'état of Indigenous thought and find it deeply problematic.

The Indian problem. Although Callicott purports to celebrate the rich diversity of traditional and Indigenous cultures and their diversity of worldviews and "associated environmental ethics," he has deep misgivings concerning the ethical pluralism that seems to be implied by such a celebration. "Untempered pluralism," he says, "courts conflict rather than mutual understanding and cooperation. The endpoint of untempered 'claims of otherness and an ethic of difference' . . . is the violent ethnic conflict now plaguing the world. . . . What is needed is a Rosetta stone of environmental philosophy to translate one Indigenous environmental ethic into another, if we are to avoid balkanizing environmental philosophy."[4]

This Rosetta stone, of course, is Callicott's "postmodern evolutionary–ecological environmental ethic"—his land ethic. He explicitly invokes the land ethic "as a standard for evaluating the environmental attitudes and values associated with traditional cultural worldviews. For example, . . . the woodland Indian concept of multispecies socioeconomic exchanges [is,] abstractly speaking, identical to the ecological concept of a biotic community, which is foundational to the Leopold land ethic." Callicott likens his "Rosetta stone" to ecosystem integration: "The myriads of species that make up biological diversity do not . . . exist in isolation from one another. Each is integrated into an ecosystem. How, analogously, might we unite the environmental ethics of the world's many cultures into a systemic whole?"[5]

In his earlier "The Case against Moral Pluralism," Callicott raises an additional objection to ethical pluralism based on the premise that to buy into a particular ethic is to buy into a particular worldview; ethics is grounded in metaphysics. For example, "Utilitarianism assumes a radical individualism or rank social atomism completely at odds with the relational sense of self that is consistent with a more fully informed evolutionary and ecological understanding of terrestrial and human nature," and "To adopt Kant's moral theory is to buy into a vintage Enlightenment philosophy of human nature in which Reason (with a capital *R*) constitutes the essence of 'man.' "[6] Indeed, a hallmark of Callicott's work in environmental ethics has been his concerted attempt to defend his land ethic by defending the "metaphysics of morals" that he believes grounds that ethic.

Callicott's project in *Earth's Insights*, then, is threefold: (1) to defend a particular ethical theory, (2) to articulate and defend (or, at least, throw in his lot with) the worldview—the "metaphysics of morals"—that grounds that theory, and (3) to somehow, consistent with this, celebrate a rich diversity of traditional and indigenous cultures and their diversity of worldviews and "environmental ethics."

The missionary ameliorates the yoke of conquest. No reader of this volume needs yet another summary of Callicott's version of Aldo Leopold's land ethic. It suffices for our purposes to note only that Callicott has consistently worked to align his land ethic with the latest developments in evolutionary and ecological biology. He has also taken pains to show the ways in which Leopold has either anticipated these developments or provided the conceptual resources for their accommodation.[7] Callicott distances his land ethic from specifically modern aspects of the scientific worldview and embraces what he calls a "postmodern evolutionary–ecological environmental ethic." It is this move that allows him to claim "Indigenous non-Western systems of ideas [as] cocreators of a new master narrative for the rainbow race of the global village."[8] In claiming that the postmodern scientific worldview is substantively non-Western in its epistemology and metaphysics, Callicott takes himself to have Indigenous non-Western credentials for his land ethic while at the same time holding that the land ethic is the touchstone by which Indigenous environmental ethics are either validated or rejected, the touchstone by which their relative "greenness" can be assessed.

The relevant postmodern aspects of the land ethic for our purposes are these:

1. With Darwin, "our species becomes a part of nature, a creature among creatures":

> Darwin's evolutionary epic not only undermines the Cartesian dogma that our fellow creatures are soulless automata. More profoundly, it undermines a cornerstone of the Cartesian modernist epistemology—viz., that we human beings are essentially disembodied passive observers of nature. From a Darwinian perspective, reason is a survival tool. . . . Darwin thus set the stage for the great epistemological upheaval of postmodern physics, in which the observer, as a physical being, invariably affects and is affected by the physical object of observation, and always observes from a finite and immersed, rather than from a synoptic and privileged, point of view.

2. Adding Elton's notion of a biotic community to Darwin's notion of evolution, Leopold's "vision of nature as an integrated community and an organic whole . . . points beyond the bifurcated Cartesian model of nature" toward the view that "any entity (oneself included), from an ecological point of view, is a node in a matrix of internal relations."[9]

Science, Callicott says, is "a legacy of the Western intellectual tradition." Concerning the difference between modern and postmodern science, he says

that they "differ in the substantive worldview or paradigm each presents, [but] *not in the questions regarded as worth pursuing or the method used to pursue them*." In virtue of its *substantive differences* from the modern scientific worldview, however, the "postmodern scientific worldview need not be received in non-Western cultures as yet another Western import or imposition."[10]

Callicott is aware that many might perceive his view as "an arrogant assertion of philosophical imperialism, a bid for intellectual hegemony." Conceding that "science is Western in provenance" and that, therefore, "one cannot pretend that a scientifically grounded environmental ethic is culture-neutral," Callicott argues against the charge of imperialism that "science is now practiced internationally" and that his land ethic may "make a claim to universality simply to the extent that its scientific foundations are universally endorsed." Western science and its associated technology has "inoculated all other cultures with Western attitudes and values."[11]

Furthermore, Callicott claims that the Western postmodern scientific worldview is "epistemologically privileged," because in virtue of its methodology "it is self-consciously self-critical" and "comprehend[s] more of human experience" than any other.[12] The epistemic privilege of this worldview confers similar epistemic privilege on the land ethic itself: "the evolutionary-ecological environmental ethic . . . may stake a coattail claim to epistemological privilege, since it is grounded in the epistemologically privileged reconstructive postmodern scientific worldview."[13]

Despite the epistemic privilege of both the Western postmodern scientific worldview and the land ethic, non-Western worldviews can, Callicott says, play an important role in the development of postmodern natural philosophy. He allows that these worldviews "can provide a multiplicity of critical perspectives, bringing to light 'areas that we may have failed to see as important' and deep assumptions that might otherwise go unnoticed." This "can" is strictly hypothetical in *Earth's Insights*, however. What is given most weight is the idea that "Indigenous worldviews around the globe can contribute a fund of *symbols*, *images*, *metaphors*, *similes*, *analogies*, *stories*, and *myths* to advance the process of articulating the new postmodern worldview," and can *in this way* "be cocreators of a new master narrative." Because "interesting similarities [exist] between the ideas of the new science and non-Western traditions of thought," and because the postmodern scientific worldview is radically different from its modern predecessor, Callicott can generously conclude that, although historically and developmentally the postmodern worldview is Western, substantively it is not.[14]

The heart(lessness) of the matter. We can certainly agree when Callicott insists that his is no "starry-eyed" attempt to transplant non-Western views, atti-

tudes, and roles into the West. The asymmetry of the relation between Callicott's land ethic and Indigenous thought is precisely expressed in the following passage: "Traditional environmental ethics can be revived and, just as important, *validated* by their affinity with the most exciting new ideas in contemporary science, while the abstract and arcane concepts of nature, human nature, and the relationship between people and nature implied in ecology and the new physics can be *expressed* in the rich vocabulary of metaphor, simile, and analogy developed in the traditional sacred and philosophical literature of the world's diverse cultures."[15] Indigenous thought is validated by the land ethic. The task of Indigenous thought is to express the abstractions of the Land Ethic in the "rich vocabulary" of Indigenous cultures. Indigenous thought provides color commentary in the local vernacular, and Indigenous practices show how to put the land ethic into practice in local bioregions.

The remainder of this essay is a critical commentary from an Indigenous perspective on the project of *Earth's Insights.*

The Greasy Grass

Callicott's moral monism and Indigenous pluralism. Callicott's view that we need a single environmental ethic to function as a standard for evaluating environmental attitudes and values on the grounds that "untempered pluralism . . . courts conflict rather than mutual understanding and cooperation" flies in the face of the historical fact that hundreds of Indigenous cultures have existed side by side on this continent "forever" without the "violent ethnic conflict now plaguing the world" about which Callicott is so concerned. Certainly, conflicts occurred between various indigenous cultural groups, but they were of an entirely different nature and of a vastly different magnitude than the Balkan conflicts. The Balkan conflicts were the result, not of the advocacy and acceptance of cultural diversity and ethical pluralism, but—quite the contrary—of pitting monistic ideologies one against the other, each claiming to be in possession of the "One Truth." It is this condition that did not prevail on the North American continent prior to European contact. It was, in fact, the acceptance (and even celebration) of a rich cultural and ethical diversity, of the differences between cultures, that made it possible for hundreds of cultures to flourish side by side "forever."

Much of the conflict between "factions" has been fostered by larger powers seeking to gain control. (This has been particularly true with respect to the incorporation of Indigenous peoples into larger states.) Only after the conquest is the new political unit's breakup considered unthinkable by those in power. Conflict is caused, ultimately, by those in control of the larger political

unit. The conqueror is unwilling to allow its conquest and power to slip away. Callicott's use of the "Balkans defense" of moral monism fits right in with this imperialist conquest model: we need, Callicott says, a single ethic because pluralism courts conflict. On the contrary, Indigenous peoples (and other groups not "inoculated" by ideologies claiming to be in possession of the one truth) seeking independence would be more than willing to achieve independence peaceably.[16]

To evaluate fairly ethical pluralism we must look closely at actual exemplifications of it, not at Western instances that exemplify pluralism only on the surface—that is, instances in which various ethnic groups, each with a different monistic conception of the One Truth find themselves no longer under the top-down state control that keeps these conflicts at bay. Differing monistic cultures are kept from one another's throats by imposed political order, whereas cultures that endorse pluralism exhibit an emergent ecological order. The moral monism that Callicott proposes is, in fact, closer to state-imposed political order than it is to the emergent ecological order he claims as an analogue to the unification of "the environmental ethics of the world's many cultures" by means of his privileged Rosetta stone.

Two interconnected aspects of Indigenous moral perception set its pluralism apart from the pseudo-pluralism that prevailed in balkanized Europe: the Indigenous notion of respect and the Indigenous use of narrative.

Imagine a deep practice of universal consideration[17] for all beings (including what Euro-Americans would call "things"), a consideration (perhaps a considerateness) that is not instituted as a moral principle or rule governing behavior, but is a dimension of one's very perception of the world. Such a conception is present in the notion of "respect" for all beings that is pervasive in Indigenous cultures. To Western ears, the term *respect* may have overtones of hierarchically structured relationships or it might have a Kantian flavor of obedience to moral law. But to Indigenous ears it signals a mode of presence in the world the central feature of which is awareness, an awareness that is simultaneously a mode of knowing—an epistemology—and what might be called a "protocol" or mode of "comportment," as Carol Geddes explained in response to a question concerning the meaning of the Tlingit notion of respect: "It does not have a very precise definition in translation—the way it is used in English. It is more like awareness. It is more like knowledge and that is a very important distinction, because it is not like a moral law, it is more like something that is just a part of your whole awareness. It is not something that is abstract at all."[18]

Next, consider the way in which Indigenous peoples tend to characterize concerns related to what Euro-Americans call "environmental ethics." Geddes,

in explaining the difference between Western ethics grounded in scientific knowledge of the nonhuman world and Indigenous thought on "respectful" relationship with the nonhuman world, tells the following story:

> I would like to tell you a small story about a very great lady in the Yukon. Her name is Mrs. Annie Ned. This illustrates, in a way, what bothers me about thinking about environmental ethics in the way we do today. Mrs. Annie Ned . . . was taken to a scientific conference in Kluane National Park. . . . Well, Mrs. Ned listened to all of the scientists giving their ideas about physical events in the park: what sort of things happened in the park, the geography of the park, and various other subjects. Mrs. Ned just very quietly listened to this all day. Then as they were leaving that evening . . . Julie [Cruikshank] said to Mrs. Ned, "How did you like the conference?"
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> Mrs. Ned said to her, "They tell different stories than we do."
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> This is very, very important, in fact, it is profoundly important that we hear that. That is what they are, different stories. . . .
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> This is . . . a source of confusion for me: that I would be able to understand environmental ethics within the context of narrative as the way First Nations people were taught about the environment. We would never have a subject called environmental ethics; it is simply part of the story. When you are a child you first hear the animal mother story, about how animal mother gave the animals to the world, and how people have to consider this as a gift from the animal mother; and if we do not take care of the animals, then the animal mother will start to take the animals back. We see that happening now. That is the context with which we understand environmental ethics, within that narrative, within the storytelling.
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> On the other hand there is all the scientific knowledge that we also learned in school, the different stories as Mrs. Ned said, the new paradigm. Too many people say, well let's take lessons from First Nations people, let us find out some of their rules, and let us try and adopt some of those rules. Let us try to look at it the same way that First Nations people do. But it is not something that you can understand through rules. It has got to be through the kind of consciousness that growing up understanding the narratives can bring to you. That is where it is very, very difficult, because people have become so far removed from understanding these kinds of things in a narrative kind of way.[19]

For Indigenous cultures, stories convey an attitude of respect for all beings that is not primarily theoretical and not what Euro-Americans would call *ethical* or *moral*. Respect is presence in the world, a practical awareness that is si-

multaneously a mode of knowing and a protocol or comportment reflecting that practicality rather than an abstract and imposed morality. Deeply practical knowledge arising out of this respect, this very practical awareness, is perhaps best conveyed in, and understood as, *stories* of engaged experience in the world—it is best kept close to the bone, rooted in the experiences out of which knowledge arises.[20] And it is the storied nature of respectful relationship to all beings in Indigenous cultures—in Geddes's example, stories of gifts given and reciprocity—that makes possible a rich pluralism untainted by subtextual claims to be in possession of the One Truth about the way the world really is or about proper ethical or moral behavior.

The notion of respect and use of narrative that underwrite Indigenous acceptance of cultural and ethical pluralism contrast strongly with the coupling of a "metaphysics of morals"—the postmodern scientific worldview—and ethics at work in Callicott's land ethic.

Callicott holds that his land ethic provides us with a universal and univocal environmental ethic that is grounded in the postmodern scientific worldview. Rather than ground ethics in a "metaphysics of morals," Indigenous peoples give primacy to the grounding practice of respect. Respect, as a practice, is a particular way of being aware in the world. Respect is what we might call a "thick" epistemological notion. That is, it is a practical epistemology—an epistemology honed to a particular way of being in the world—and, in its engagement in the world, gives rise to practical values that in turn inform the epistemology. Implicitly, Indigenous epistemology rejects the idea that an epistemology is a method of coming to understand how the world really is. An epistemology is a mode of engagement in the world.

Respect for Indigenous peoples does not propose a theory about how one ought to behave. Respect is *practical engagement and presence in the world*. To survive in this world, and to live fully and well, one must be attentive. To impose agendas on the world (e.g., ethical, political, economic, scientific) is, to some extent, to cease to pay attention, it is to organize one's perception of the world according to the dictates of the mode of control (theoretical as well as physical) one wishes to impose. Out of practical engagement and presence arise techniques and technologies for survival, values and disvalues, protocols for engaging the world, and, importantly, stories telling of this engagement, what one has witnessed and learned. In this way one does really become, in Leopold's words, "plain member and citizen" of the land community.[21] One may well ask if the project of exporting the land ethic globally is the work of one who is a plain member and citizen of the land community. It seems that we have in the Indigenous practice of respect and Callicott's project of exporting the land ethic a clear example of the difference between emergent, ecological order and imposed, ideological order.[22]

Callicott's "metaphysics of morals." Callicott's claim that the scientific worldview is privileged in part because it is self-consciously self-critical is at best puzzling. To hold that the scientific worldview is both epistemically privileged and self-consciously self-critical is on the face of it to subscribe to mutually exclusive views. A rigorously self-conscious, self-critical method, although certainly desirable, would, one would think, include a refusal to claim epistemic privilege. To hold such apparently mutually exclusive views, one must be placing very impressive limits on one's self-criticism. There must be some premise or element of one's method of generating a worldview that is held to be somehow above suspicion to merit the appellation of "epistemic privilege." Callicott, in other words, does not think of himself as simply telling another story; he is explicitly attempting to construct a new, epistemologically privileged master narrative—as he himself puts it. "Master narrative" is not far off, actually, but calling it a *narrative* suggests that he believes it is just another story, which he does not.

The claim that Western science is self-critical and therefore privileged also seems to imply that other traditions, because they are not privileged in this way, are not self-critical (or not as self-critical). This is a dubious conclusion at best. Arguably, Indigenous peoples are far more self-critical than Euro-Americans. They engage in self-criticism communally, over the long haul, and expect that dissension will always occur because there really are different stories. We might call this "unself-conscious examined interaction." It comes quite naturally; it is not forced, it is not artificial, and it does not have a rigid protocol—all to the good: it gives a flexibility of mind that Western science does not have. The way Indigenous peoples engage in self-criticism, along with the results of that criticism, just appear uncritical to the outside observer. Indigenous people swap stories and come to understand each other better and understand the various ways of examining the subject matter of the stories better. They are not uncritical. It is just another form of criticism and arguably should stand Indigenous people in better epistemic stead than any form of privilege-assuming self-conscious self-criticism if only because it does not and never would claim primacy and privilege. Indigenous peoples know that their stories differ from those of most Western science. The stories of Western science are good for some things and Indigenous stories are good too. But to suggest that Indigenous people are not self-critical in the way that supposedly stands Western science in such good stead comes off as arrogant and misguided. The claim to privilege on behalf of the science and the ethic it "grounds" can only deepen the problem, not help solve it.

Callicott's claim that modern and postmodern science differ in substantive worldview but not in questions raised and methods of addressing them is also problematic, and calls into question Callicott's claim to have produced a gen-

uinely postmodern evolutionary-ecological environmental ethic. Surely the questions and methods of science are too intimately bound up with its substantive views to be so easily disentangled, except at a highly abstract level. The understanding Western science has of nature is partly a function of the questions, values, purposes, and methods of observation and theory construction that it brings to the world. Historically, the methods and theoretical concepts of science were in significant measure (although by no means exclusively) forged as tools for understanding nature instrumentally because so ordering science's understanding of nature that it could be effectively harnessed for exploitation. These methods and concepts constitute a method of knowing that invites (although it does not require) the manipulation of nature far beyond biological and cultural needs, far beyond the reach of available knowledge, and not only leads to destructive practices, but also entices environmentalists into managerial and stewardship models of right relationship to nature. Conservation biology—to which Callicott conceives his land ethic to be a contribution—has recently been criticized by Jack Turner on just this score:

> In the face of biodiversity loss . . . conservation biology demands that we do something now, in the only way that counts as doing something—more money, more research, more technology, more information, more acreage. . . . In short, the prescription for the malady is even more control.
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> This mirrors the mode of crisis response familiar from Michel Foucault's studies of insanity, crime, and disease. Like psychiatry, criminology, and clinical medicine, conservation biology is a theoretical discipline that seeks control in pursuit of a morally pure mission: to end a crisis. . . .
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> Unfortunately, instead of striking at causes, modern theoretical disciplines such as conservation biology strive to control symptoms. Their controls are directed at the Other, not at our own social pathologies. . . .[23]

The lesson, here, is that Callicott's claim that Western science "comprehend[s] more of human experience" than any other is misleading. If the "knowledge" embedded in a culture results in practices of "controlling" nature that leave it ever more out of control, can that culture be said to "comprehend more of human experience" than any other in any sense relevant to the matters at hand? Culturally unmoored knowledge is not "comprehensive" in the relevant sense.[24] To think that the "metaphysics of morals" invoked by the land ethic could provide those moorings is not to think ecologically.

In contrast to Callicott's procedure of beginning with a scientific account of the world—one historically founded on the value of control over nature—from which an ethic is derived, Indigenous peoples begin with practical respect that structures an epistemological orientation to the world not shaped a priori by values of control and manipulation. This contrast illustrates a fundamental difference between Western environmentalism and Indigenous attitudes toward nature. Western environmentalism is, in one way or another, control oriented, as Indigenous relationships to nature are not. Whether that control be exercised in seemingly benign ways—as in conservation biology and Christian stewardship—or in obviously destructive ways, it is fundamentally different from the ethos of Indigenous peoples.

John Rodman asks whether environmental ethicists are like missionaries, ameliorating the yoke of conquest, "or whether they criticize the process of conquest in the interest of liberation." In speaking to his own question, he offers another way of understanding the hubris we have been describing. Rodman views Natural Law theory as stemming from "a desperate nostalgia for a state of nature . . . in which the prohibitions now prescribed by God, Conscience, and the State would have operated 'naturally' (i.e., from inside the organism, as a matter of course)." From this perspective, he says, moral law in contemporary moral theory represents a kind of externalization of this natural "law" in which the domination of external nature is replicated in the ethical domination of the "natural" self. To invoke such a "law" on behalf of the liberation of nature is to be of two minds: it is to work for the liberation of nature by using an ethic modeled on the externally imposed order that is at the heart of the problem of the domination of nature. Rodman argues that "from the standpoint of an ecology of humanity, it is curious how little appreciation there has been of the limitations of the moral/legal stage of consciousness," and urges that we "become less fixated" at this stage of consciousness.[25]

Callicott's land ethic also seems to work both sides of this split. It purports to be an "evolutionary-ecological environmental ethic," suggesting that it is in large part a description of an evolutionarily emergent ethic, one which is simply informed, and thereby expanded, by contemporary ecological science. On the other hand, Callicott, in his worry about pluralism, argues strongly for a privileged place for the land ethic as the Rosetta stone by which the greenness of each Indigenous environmental ethic is validated (or not). He is clearly uncomfortable with a truly emergent environmental ethic. This doubleness (or ambiguity) in Callicott's work is epitomized in his claim that the uniting of "the environmental ethics of the world's many cultures into a systemic whole" by means of the land ethic—clearly an instance of *imposed* moral order because the relative greenness of the various Indigenous ethics is deter-

mined by their congruence with the land ethic—is analogous to the integration of species into an ecosystem—clearly a case of *emergent* order.[26]

Callicott's disclaimers to the contrary notwithstanding, his use of his land ethic as a Rosetta stone of environmental ethics operates clearly within a Western framework of control over nature (however seemingly benign) and represents yet another cooption of Indigenous thought. Callicott does not adopt Indigenous views; rather, he adapts distorted versions of those views to his land ethic and sells them as real Indigenous views. At the same time that Callicott touts the land ethic as the Rosetta stone of Indigenous ethics, he seeks the mantle of authority of Indigenous cultures by proclaiming that the substantive views of the postmodern scientific worldview are distinctly non-Western.

As an example of this cooption, witness Callicott's account of the Ojibwa land ethic:

> The Ojibwa land ethic . . . rests on the same general concept as Leopold's. Human beings, plants, and animals, if not soils and waters, are members of a single, tightly integrated economy of nature, or biotic community. Human beings are not properly "conquerors of the land community"; neither ought we to be stewards of it. Rather, we should assume the role, as Leopold would have it, merely of "plain members and citizens" of the land community. In the Ojibwa land ethic, as in Leopold's, human beings ought principally to respect their fellow members of the biotic community. . . . When the mythic and scientific detail is stripped away, an identical abstract structure—an essentially social structure—is revealed as the core conceptual model of both the totemic natural community of the Ojibwa and the biologists' economy of nature. In form, the Ojibwa land ethic and the land ethic of Aldo Leopold are identical.[27]

Yet Callicott's land ethic, not the Ojibwa worldview or the Ojibwa notion of respect (which Callicott transforms into a moral "ought"), is named the Rosetta stone. Why is this? Because presumably the land ethic is based on a knowledge system that is privileged by its self-consciously self-critical attitude and its comprehensiveness. Oddly, however, the scientific worldview that is the basis for the land ethic is the historical product of a methodology underwritten by the value of control over nature, which is precisely the problem, or the root of the problem, the land ethic is brought on stage to deal with. Indigenous "knowledge," on the other hand, is *not* the basis of an Indigenous "ethic." Rather, Indigenous respect is closer to the bone. It is a mode of awareness, an epistemology, honed to practical engagement in the world.

Indigenous knowledge and wisdom are based on and grow out of respect. Indigenous knowledge, that is to say, is fundamentally shaped by practical respect in relationship to all that exists. The ontologies of Indigenous worldviews are a kind of residue of Indigenous practices of respect and the modes of attaining knowledge associated with those practices. That is, ontology is a kind of picture, or metaphor, of epistemological orientation to the world and the practices of respect on which those epistemological practices are founded. For Callicott's land ethic, ethical respect for the land comes *last*: First there are the parental, filial, and other social sentiments or instincts nurtured into existence through evolutionary time; these in turn are informed by the scientific worldview, which broadens the scope of moral sentiment to encompass our true community (the nature of which is revealed by evolutionary and ecological biology). For Indigenous peoples, on the other hand, respect for all beings is primary; it shapes epistemology; and, in shaping epistemology, it shapes Indigenous worldviews. The land ethic and Indigenous respect may cross paths in a sense, but they are fundamentally different orientations to the world.

Callicott assimilates Indigenous practical respect to his land ethic. That is, he adapts that respect and transmutes it into a land ethic—he does not adopt it. Callicott attempts to bridge a gap in the only way a Western philosopher knows how—by providing an overarching theoretical construct. But there is no need to bridge a gap if only we all realized that a gap does not exist. The gap arises precisely because some people assume that there is one truth out there. There is no gap because we all live in the world and the world is made up of all our stories. We grow closer and appreciate each other by listening to the stories and allowing them to make their own sense. Indigenous people do not sense the gap Callicott is trying to bridge, but they are well aware of the widening chasm brought about by the apparent lack of respect and understanding caused by Callicott's attempt at bridging a nonexistent gap.[28]

Respect, epistemology, and ceremonial worlds. The world just is. Any theory is distortion. A story, on the other hand, makes sense or not in its own right within the world, and only has those implications beyond itself that are brought in by listeners in their own interaction with the world.

Epistemologies, we have said, shape ontologies.[29] We have been describing the very different epistemologies of Indigenous peoples and Euro-Americans. The close-to-the-bone practicality of Indigenous epistemology embedded in practical respect in engagement in the world lends itself to the practice of embedding knowledge in stories—stories of engagement with respect—leading to knowledge and wisdom. (Differing stories, we should note, do not generate genocidal war; differing conceptions of the One Truth do.)

What this suggests is that because worldviews are fundamentally shaped by epistemologies, we should not understand the accounts of the world that emerge as accounts of the way the world really is but as what we call *ceremonial worlds.* The various practices of cultures are enactments of ceremonial worlds within which they live. These worlds are not mere fantasies; they are more or less adequate to a culture's purposes in enacting them and can be evaluated and modified as such.

We can best get at this notion of a ceremonial world by turning to J. L. Austin's focus on the performative functions of language.[30] Consider the following example. Sam Gill reports (as have many others) that nonliterate people are often highly critical of writing. He says of this, however, that he does "not believe that it is actually writing that is at the core of their criticism. The concern is with certain dimensions of behavior and modes of thought that writing tends to facilitate and encourage. And these dimensions are linked to the critical, semantical, encoding aspects of language. . . . We interpret texts to discern systems of thought and belief, propositional or historical contents, messages communicated. Put more generally, we seek the information in the text. We tend to emphasize code at the expense of behavior, message at the expense of the performance and usage contexts."[31] The written word conspires with visual metaphors of knowledge to turn the world into a passive object for human knowledge and to focus our attention on language as a sign system primarily designed to encode beliefs.

In a number of articles, Sam Gill has attempted to reinstate the fundamental nature of the performative function of language, using Navajo prayer as a case study. Invariably, when he asks Navajo elders what prayers mean, they tell him "not what messages prayers carry, but what prayers *do*." Furthermore, "the person of knowledge in Navajo tradition holds that [theology, philosophy, and doctrine] are ordinarily to be discouraged. Such concerns are commonly understood by Navajos as evidence that one totally misunderstands the nature of Navajo religious traditions."[32]

Generalizing from his analysis of prayer acts to religious practice generally, Gill asserts that "the importance of religion as it is practiced by the great body of religious persons for whom religion is a way of life [is] a way of creating, discovering, and communicating worlds of meaning largely through ordinary and common actions and behavior."[33]

We would like to generalize even further, arguing that the performative dimension of language be understood as fundamental—not just in obviously religious settings, but generally. There are alternative ways of intelligently engaging the world, alternatives to construing one's thinking in terms of belief.[34] We do things with words. Foremost among these performative func-

tions is the creation of the ceremonial worlds within which we live. Other performative functions of language are possible only within these ceremonial worlds—promise making, for instance, is possible only within an accepted set of social conventions, as is the progress achieved within science.

Take, for example, Diamond Jenness's report of a Carrier Indian of the Bulkley River who says, "The white man writes everything down in a book so that it might not be forgotten; but our ancestors married the animals, learned their ways, and passed on the knowledge from one generation to another."[35] We suggest that this be understood as saying that Carrier Indians passed down the means of creating, or recreating, the worlds, the ceremonial worlds, within which the ancestors lived—the stories, the ceremonies, the rituals, the daily practices. They passed down modes of action, which when written down come to be understood as information. Euro-Americans want to know what beliefs are encoded in the utterances of Indigenous peoples, they want to treat these utterances as mirrors of Indigenous worlds. This may, however, be asking the wrong question. In fact, these utterances function primarily to produce these worlds. Euro-Americans are concerned with ontology, correct descriptions of Indigenous worlds. Indigenous peoples, on the other hand, are concerned with right relationship to those beings that populate their worlds; they are concerned with respect.

N. Scott Momaday in justly famous words says: "It seems to me that in a sense we are all made of words; that our most essential being consists in language. It is the element in which we think and dream and act, in which we live our daily lives. There is no way in which we can exist apart from the morality of a verbal dimension."[36] Momaday is speaking not so much of sets of beliefs by which people constitute themselves, but more fundamentally of performance, enactment, the bringing into being of cultural and personal identity by means of action and practice, primary verbal. It is the difference between, for example, the sacred as object of knowledge or belief (and, derivatively, of acts of faith and adoration) and sacramental practice—a matter of comportment, which brings into being a world, a ceremonial world, around it.

Ceremonial worlds are not fantasy worlds. We do, of course, experience the world, and given their epistemological practice of respect, no people experience the world more fully, perhaps, than Indigenous peoples. Experience is taken up into ceremonial worlds. It is part of the self-correcting feedback loop that makes it possible for the day-to-day activities of food gathering, child rearing, shelter building, and so on to take place, to succeed, not only on the terms set by the world, but within the context of richly textured ceremonial worlds. In such worlds, as Paul Shepard has observed, "everyday life [is] inextricable from spiritual significance and encounter."[37]

Moving away from epistemologies based on the values of domination and control toward an epistemology based on the Indigenous notion of respect, we move closer to an older sense of the word "knowledge": knowledge as a kind of intimacy. Contrary to the emphasis some place on the constructed nature of the worlds we live in, reflected in the catch phrase "It's words all the way down," we suggest a very different emphasis: It's *world* all the way *up*—even into the language of the ceremonial worlds we have been discussing.

Language is rooted in being, rooted in the world as are we who speak forth that world in our language. And our language is a mode of interaction with, and hence a mode of knowing, that world. Knowing can take shape as a form of domination and control—it can break faith with language rooted in and expressive of the world. It can also take shape as a way of "stepping in tune with being."[38]

The postmodern notion that "it's words all the way down" is a vestige of modern dualism in which the knowing mind is cut off from (or, rather, cuts itself off from[39]) the world it inhabits and can never bridge its imposed epistemological gap between self and world. Rather than attempting to *model* the world to control it (the epistemological orientation of an estranged, alienated consciousness), Indigenous ceremonial worlds are fundamentally expressions of the world (an epistemological orientation that reflects awareness *in* the world rather than awareness *of* the world).

Jeannette Armstrong emphasizes the ecological dimension of Momaday's thought that "we are all made of words": "The Okanagan word for 'our place on the land' and 'our language' is the same. The Okanagan language is thought of as the 'language of the land.' This means that the land has taught us our language. The way we survive is to speak the language that the land offered us as its teachings. . . . We also refer to the land and our bodies with the same root syllable. . . . We are our land/place."[40] Momaday's notion that we are "all made of words" is not the postmodern "it's words all the way down" but, rather, an articulation of the notion of ceremonial worlds, language rooted in the earth and expressive of it.

If language is performative and if we have our being and identity fundamentally within ceremonial worlds, then the coherence we should be listening for is not merely the logical coherence of one sentence with another, one belief with another, but something more like the harmonic coherence of one note with another. Practices, including linguistic practices, create ceremonial songs of the world, worlds of meaning, within ecological niches. Within these ceremonial songs of the world language is a mode of interaction with the world.

Ceremonial practice defines the worlds in which we live and work. The ontology of a culture's world is a residue from its practice in engaging the world and the modes of attaining knowledge associated with that practice. This

residue is highly prized and receives intense scrutiny in Western literate culture, but the epistemology embedded in our practice is the fundamental dimension of our relationship to, and understanding of, the world. Ontology is a kind of picture, or metaphor, of epistemic practice. It is in this context that we can understand both the reality and the ceremonial nature of practices such as "running with the sun" to help it on its journey.

The comprehensiveness of Indigenous worldviews is a function of the fact that they are ceremonial worlds designed to encompass Indigenous life in the world in which it finds itself. The kind of overall coherence for which ceremonial worlds strive is a mosaic of language (in the broadest sense) that serves many purposes at once. In the life of a community it must articulate a sense of those processes that bind the community together and to the land; and it must do this in a language that functions effectively to call forth appropriate responses. Above all, in such a world "natural things are not only themselves but a speaking."[41]

As an example, consider the difference between the "search for one's roots" that is fashionable in the West these days and the relationship between Indigenous identity and place. Indigenous practice shows that the need for roots can take other shapes than that of a search for redemption in the mode of a search for the "Truth" of one's origin and identity. Choctaw legend maintains that the Choctaw people migrated long ago to Mississippi carrying the bones of their ancestors with them. When they reached Mississippi they are said to have built the mound of *Nanih Waiyah* to house these bones. Yet, Choctaw legends also state that *Nanih Waiyah* is the great "Productive Mound" from which all people emerged. From the point of view of the One (literal) Truth this seems contradictory—the new burial mound could not be the Choctaw place of origin, emergence. From the point of view of Choctaw practice, however, a different meaning of emergence and origins arises.

When forcibly removed to Oklahoma, the first Choctaw capitol in Oklahoma was called *Nanih Waiyah* and even today there is a Lake Nanih Waiyah near the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma council building in Tuskahoma. Although they were forced to leave their ancestors behind and although many of their loved ones died on the Trail of Tears, the Choctaw people of Oklahoma are rooted in their new land. Choctaw practice has the consequence that as a people the Choctaw are always at home on this earth, never detached from tradition and tribal history—these are always present in the tangible form of the emergence mound. Practice and the social meaning embedded in that practice are central. Choctaw knowledge grows from this practice.

Understanding the worlds we construct as performances, enactments of worlds for various purposes, makes it easier to understand the Indigenous view that the fundamental issues are not ones of "Truth," but of respect and

well-being—the telling of "stories" that enable a culture to live in balance. The world's Indigenous cultures represent a vast array of stories within which cultures live well and achieve balance.

Indigenous ecological ethical reflection. Having said that Indigenous peoples do not have ethics in Callicott's sense of the term and having treated the most likely candidate for a key ethical concept (namely, respect for all beings) as nonideological, practical engagement, and presence in the world (that is, as a *practical epistemology* that gives birth to *practical* values) the reader might well wonder whether ethics exist at all in Indigenous worlds.

What we have stressed in this essay is the kind of ethic that does not appear in Indigenous thought, namely, ethical theory, at least theory of the kind Callicott insists on. His reason for insisting on a universal and univocal ethical theory is to provide "a means, in principle, to assign priorities and relative weights and thus to resolve . . . conflicts in a systematic way" because "when competing moral claims cannot be articulated in the same terms, they cannot be decisively compared and resolved. Ethical eclecticism leads, it would seem inevitably, to moral incommensurability in hard cases. So we are compelled to go back to the theoretical drawing board." The alternative to resolution by means of theory, according to Callicott, is, at best, a "mere coalition of convenience."[42] For Callicott, as we have seen, such an ethic is to be grounded in an acceptable "metaphysics of morals" reflecting state-of-the-art scientific theory.

We have argued that this approach, along with Callicott's desire to validate Indigenous environmental ethics to the extent that they conform to his land ethic, is decidedly nonecological, despite his claim that the land ethic serves to "unite the environmental ethics of the world's many cultures into a systemic whole," as, analogously, "the myriads of species that make up biological diversity . . . [are] integrated into . . . ecosystem[s]."[43]

Indigenous ethical reflection, on the contrary, is "ecological." Its roots are in a very practical attentiveness and respect regarding the world in which one is engaged. This respect is not moral respect. Rather, it is a circumspection, or practical humility, one is well advised to exhibit in relation to a world full of surprises, unexpected powers, dangers, and gifts. As a practical epistemology, respect seems to be inherently holistic. That is, practical awareness and engagement focuses on relationship or interrelationship; it looks for interconnectedness between things. Holism is the most practical epistemological assumption. By assuming that interconnectedness is pervasive, such an epistemology maximally heightens practical perception. Perception that is relationship focused will monitor events with better practical effect than isolating, object-focused perception. The resulting practice will most likely be more attentive to context and will be maximally sensitive to ripple effects.[44]

The fruit of respect in an Indigenous culture is a rich ceremonial world that weaves the threads of knowledge that respect yields into a tapestry that functionally relates these threads one to another, to the practical values that knowledge suggests, and to the virtues required to engage fully in the world in a practical and fulfilling way with harmony and balance. There is little to wonder at that this tapestry reflects Indigenous epistemology, that interconnectedness is the central feature of Indigenous ceremonial worlds, and that the central value is harmony—at all levels: within and between tribes as well as between tribes and the rest of nature. The harmony that is given ritual and ceremonial status in Indigenous religion circles back and underwrites perception itself and the practical concerns of survival and well-being that are at the heart of Indigenous epistemology.

This tapestry, which is a culture's ceremonial world, must grow organically, ecologically, with attention given to the interconnections between the threads. The order this tapestry exhibits, its particular cultural beauty, is emergent and closely tied to the specific place on earth in which that particular culture is engaged. The order is not abstract, but deeply expressive of a particular place and a particular culture's engagement with that place.

This flowering of ceremonial worlds from practical respect in some measure transmutes respect itself. This respect now values the world in which it is engaged, not abstractly, but in very particular ways embedded in practice. A culture's ceremonial world is that culture's mode of engagement with the world. Effective—rather than imposed, totalitarian—moral authority exists only when it is emergent, embedded ecologically in a culture in the way we have described.

How, we may ask, could ethical theory have the kind of authority that emerges ecologically in this way?

Going Home: A Smudge

Emory Sekaquaptewa recounts a science project in ecology for Hopi children in a school operated under the Bureau of Indian Affairs:

> It called for the children to bring various living things (insects, animals, etc.) into the classroom, putting them in a cage and accepting responsibility for their care while they watched what happened. It seems that the Hopi children were not interested in taking care of the animals while they studied them. It didn't matter to them whether the animals died or survived. The teachers became very concerned about how to teach the Hopi child about ecology if he didn't show any interest. He had no feeling for the animal.

> We never resolved the problem as far as the teachers are concerned. But I would like to make the statement that perhaps ecology, or learning how to live with the environment, is not a matter of taking sides with the environment, is not a matter of taking sides with one or some other living things; rather it is acceptance of the fact that if a certain living thing cannot survive on its own, that is a fact. Must we intervene with our special powers as human beings to control and bring about ways to help this poor thing to survive outside its natural ability to survive? . . . Learning to live with the environment is not a matter of taking sides, but of accepting facts.[45]

(We might add that Hopi children would not have thought to bring these living things into the classroom and put them in cages in the first place.) The critical thing to note, here, is that the Euro-American, whether one who exploits and ravages nature or one who "takes care" of nature, is governed by a model of human control of nature, whereas the Indigenous person is not inclined in either of these directions.

Respect implies a lack of the arrogant pride or presumption (hubris) that brings one to take charge of the world, whether for ill or apparent good. This hubris, in turn, implies a lack of "at homeness" in the world tied to various forms of dualism that are at the heart of the Western worldview. Paul Shepard, who has examined these dualistic splits as well as any Euro-American, says: "In our society those who would choose the owl [over the oil well] are not more mature. . . . Fear and hatred of the organic on the one hand, the desire to merge with it on the other; the impulse to control and subordinate on the one hand, to worship the nonhuman on the other; overdifferentiation on the one hand, fears of separation on the other: all are two sides of a coin. In the shape given to a civilization by totemically inspired, technologically sophisticated, small-group, epigenetically fulfilled adults, the necessity to choose would never arise."[46]

Euro-Americans can as easily imagine "taking responsibility for the fate of the earth" as they can acknowledge being responsible for environmental destruction. But responsibility is tied to the notion of authority, which in turn implies both power and authorship. We become responsible, or take on responsibility, by having or acquiring the power and authority to do so. Indigenous peoples do not think of themselves as having either the power or the authority to become responsible for nonhuman nature. Indigenous peoples have, certainly, played a role in shaping their biotic homes, but for Indigenous peoples it is the sheerest pride to think that one is, or could be, responsible for the biotic community, that one has that sort of power and authority. If one does something, is the author of an action, then, of course, one must or should take responsibility for the fruits of that action, but this is

a far cry from the hubris involved in taking responsibility for the biotic community.

Indigenous peoples understand that they play a part, but not an essential part, in maintaining balance and integrity in the world. Humans might enhance the world with joy and appreciation of the natural world with the creation of beauty and the telling of stories, but such limited powers as they have are given to them as gifts from the nonhuman world. For Indigenous peoples, knowledge, which is power, is not forged and maintained by unifying and controlling consciousness.

What we miss in the evolutionary-ecological scientific worldview that grounds Callicott's land ethic is an account of a presence in the world adequate to the task the land ethic sets itself. Callicott sees that the postmodern scientific worldview and its associated land ethic resonate with at least some Indigenous worldviews and the practical respect associated with them. Assuming for the moment that one of them can be said in some sense to validate the other (as Callicott holds), we may ask whether it is really the land ethic that is the touchstone that validates Indigenous views or whether it might not be, if anything, the other way around.

In the one case we have a worldview that—going back to its Baconian roots—developed in part from values of domination and control of the natural world in a social setting in which individualism was highly prized. As it happened, this worldview developed in such a way that many Euro-Americans now understand themselves as members of one species among others, brought into existence by the forces of evolution and kin to all living creatures, part of an ecological web of interdependence and reciprocity. Although this understanding may help mitigate the destructive uses to which the scientific worldview has been put, and although it may for some evoke a deep, inclusive, and even sacred sense of kinship with the world, one must keep in mind that that worldview (even in its postmodern dress) is still a powerful engine of destruction. Looking at the storyline of Western science, it is as though science inadvertently (and quite contrary to its intentions at the outset) stumbled on a conception of self and world that bears some resemblance to Indigenous worldviews—a conception that seems to call to task science's own initial intentions. The scientific worldview is close to the Western heart and the land ethic is validated to the extent that it is grounded in that worldview. Euro-Americans bootstrap themselves up to a better ethical place in this way, although, as we have seen, along with this comes a strong tendency to adopt a managerial stance with respect to the environment, whether that manifest itself in "Save the Earth" bumper stickers, conservation biology, or a desire to "manage" the world's Indigenous cultures on behalf of the land ethic.

The practical respect cultivated by Indigenous peoples has served the

world far better than Callicott's land ethic could ever hope to. Indigenous peoples, when trained in Western science, can, of course, see that evolutionary and ecological theory resonate in some fashion with their worldviews, but they are perplexed that something so immediate as respect is treated (and transmuted) in such an abstract way in environmental ethics that it must route itself through evolutionary and ecological science and be first grounded in that theorizing and then imposed as a moral rule on behavior.

From this perspective, Indigenous worldviews validate the emerging postmodern scientific worldview of which Callicott speaks. Or, more properly, Indigenous worldviews can point the direction for the development of a Western practical respect that has become at least a conceptual possibility for the West with the development of evolutionary biology and ecology. Indigenous thought can provide the West with a model of moral pluralism in its understanding of worldviews, not as so many pretenders to the throne of the One Truth, but as multiple stories of the world built on respect.

At a recent conference on ecological resistance movements in Madison, Wisconsin (following Callicott's address on the themes of *Earth's Insights*), Walter Bresette spoke—seriously, but at the same time a bit tongue in cheek—about a conference in Estes Park, for which he had been asked, as a Native American, to give a keynote address. He observed that the people at that conference (all white) cared more about the earth than any people he had ever met. And, he said, they knew more about Native Americans than he did. He confided to a friend with some concern: "I think I'm at the wrong conference. There's nothing I can say here that I can bring anything new to." His friend responded that they just had a different problem than they thought. The education has been accomplished, but one thing was missing. "If they are not going back home, those who get it, how can we expect Exxon or any corporation to go back home? So we need to adopt them and make this their home, so that they will then accept it in an entirely different way than in the past." After telling this story, Bresette adopted everyone at the conference, saying: "When I do that, the earth becomes your mother. You have no choice. Now if you want to pimp her, if you want to sell her, if you want to treat her the way you are treating her, it becomes your choice—after tonight. You have no excuses. . . . You ain't going to become a Chippewa, but . . . you better become a Native American!"[47]

The West can have its own story; it can become native in its own way. But it ought not engage in the hubris that leads it to say that its thought is the touchstone, the very Rosetta stone, of environmental ethics. Callicott's land ethic only just barely begins to glimpse the balanced worlds of Indigenous peoples. The World Trade Organization and North American Free Trade Agreement may require that Callicott be permitted to export his land ethic to

Indigenous cultures (as he wants to do), but those cultures, we hope, will not be required to buy it (because they will not).[48]

Ayaangwaamizin.

The authors dedicate this article to the memory of Anishinabe Native American rights and environmental activist Walter Bresette.

Notes

This essay incorporates material previously published in the following articles: Lee Hester, Dennis McPherson, Annie Booth, and Jim Cheney, "Indigenous Worlds and Callicott's Land Ethic" *Environmental Ethics* 22 (2000): 273–290; Jim Cheney and Anthony Weston, "Environmental Ethics as Environmental Etiquette: Toward an Ethics-Based Epistemology," *Environmental Ethics* 21 (1999): 115–134; Jim Cheney, "The Journey Home," in *An Invitation to Environmental Ethics*, ed. Anthony Weston (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 141–167.

1. This essay was shaped by Western problematics in environmental ethics. Indigenous coauthors provided some Indigenous content, but the problem is Western and in most ways so is the voice of this essay. Although this essay attempts to bridge some of the gap between these two philosophical worlds, to understand the Indigenous perspective one must be willing to engage Indigenous people on their own ground.
2. J. Baird Callicott, *Earth's Insights: A Survey of Ecological Ethics from the Mediterranean Basin to the Australian Outback* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 186 (emphasis added).
3. Callicott, *Earth's Insights*, 12.
4. Callicott, *Earth's Insights*, 186. This passage might leave some readers wondering whether Callicott's concern is with ethical pluralism or with cultural pluralism. Other passages, and Callicott's work in general, make clear that his concern is with ethical or moral pluralism. The ethnic conflict (or the dimension of ethnic conflict) that concerns Callicott is that which stems from differences in ethical belief. Although this essay traces what we take to be a widespread thread of agreement in practice at the very heart of Indigenous ethical practices, we also acknowledge the ethical pluralism that is a dimension of Indigenous cultural pluralism.
5. Callicott, *Earth's Insights*, 189, 186.
6. J. Baird Callicott, "The Case against Moral Pluralism," *Environmental Ethics* 12 (1990): 114–115
7. See for example, J. Baird Callicott, "Do Deconstructive Ecology and Sociobiology Undermine Leopold's Land Ethic?" *Environmental Ethics* 18 (1996): 353–372.
8. Callicott, *Earth's Insights*, 192.
9. Callicott, *Earth's Insights*, 199, 200, 206.
10. Callicott, *Earth's Insights*, 193 (emphasis added), 197.
11. Callicott, *Earth's Insights*, 189. This argument does not defeat the charge of imperialism. Indeed, many would argue that such "inoculation" is far more effective than military or biological assault as a strategy of imperialism. Cultural vaccination versus spreading the smallpox virus with blankets: "It's for their own good," versus "The only good Indian is a dead Indian."

12. Callicott, *Earth's Insights*, 190–191.
13. Callicott, *Earth's Insights*, 190–191.
14. Callicott, *Earth's Insights*, 190–191 (emphasis added). The phrase "areas that we may have failed to see as important" is quoted from Val Plumwood.
15. Callicott, *Earth's Insights*, 12 (emphasis added).
16. A universalist or monolithic view such as Callicott's is unwise in any case because it easily ignores or minimizes relevant regional, historical, and other differences.
17. On "universal consideration" in environmental ethics, see Thomas H. Birch, "Moral Considerability and Universal Consideration," *Environmental Ethics* 15 (1993): 313–332.
18. Carol Geddes, panel discussion by Yukon First Nations people on the topic of "What is a good way to teach children and young adults to respect the land?" Transcript in Bob Jickling, ed., *A Colloquium on Environment, Ethics, and Education* (Whitehorse, Yukon Territory: Yukon College, 1996), 46.
19. Geddes, "What is a good way," 32–33.
20. For a compelling argument for the view that the origins of pragmatism are to be found, at least in part, in the philosophical perspective of Indigenous peoples of North America, see Scott L. Pratt, "Native American Thought and the Origins of Pragmatism," *Ayaangwaamizin: The International Journal of Indigenous Philosophy* 1 (1997): 55–80.
21. One reader of this essay commented: "The authors seem to imply that Callicott has misappropriated Leopold as well as Indigenous views. Arguably, Callicott imposes on Leopold a reading of him as 'environmental philosopher' when, in fact (especially in his latest writings), he was talking about 'respect as presence.' I would be sympathetic to this view." We would indeed be pleased if the referee's suggestion about Leopold is correct.
22. Having ethical, political, economic, and scientific agendas is not always and everywhere wrong—these, too, may have their place in life. And it is not wrong to do science—the stories science tells also have their place.
23. Jack Turner, "Wildness and the Defense of Nature," in *The Abstract Wild*, Jack Turner, ed. (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1996), 114. See also Thomas H. Birch, "The Incarceration of Wildness: Wilderness Areas as Prisons," *Environmental Ethics* 12 (1990): 3–26.
24. This has been a recurring theme in the writing of Wendell Berry. See his *The Unsettling of America* (San Francisco, Calif.: Sierra Club Books, 1977).
25. John Rodman, "The Liberation of Nature?" *Inquiry* 20 (1977): 98, 103.
26. Callicott, *Earth's Insights*, 186.
27. Callicott, *Earth's Insights*, 130.
28. Our use of the term *gap* in this paragraph may seem contradictory and, worse, seemingly contradicts the use of that same term in our disclaimer in note 1. The careful thinker will see that this is not so. In correspondence on this matter, one Indigenous coauthor wrote [in his White mode]:

> Yep, have to remember about those darn "contradictions." If only people would realize that there are different phases of the world, different parts. Though it may seem unlikely that the physical world is ever contradictory, that a chair both is and isn't on the porch, say, it turns out that for things like

human beings and their understanding there really are many "contradictions." Interestingly, because of the academic enterprise, including the need to publish, non-Indian philosophers are much more likely to say that there both is and isn't a chair while at the same time saying that their reasoning and beliefs don't contain contradictions. You see, they know they're right, but they can't get published if they say there is a chair there. Since they know that rightness consists in part of being "rational" and rationality means "non-contradictory" among other things, they know they must be non-contradictory. It follows from their rightness. An Indian would just sit in the chair, unless some fool philosopher said it wasn't there. Then he might be polite and refrain from sitting so as not to befuddle the philosopher. He might even think it was an interesting story, this no-chair story, but kinda silly after a long day. Actually, it is my western philosophy training that most helps me swallow the whoppers. There are a lot of them in the literature. The problem is when they tell whoppers about things they really shouldn't. I can swallow the chair not being there and still sit in it. Unfortunately, the western philosopher is about as likely to remain standing, not out of politeness, but out of principle. He has swallowed the biggest whopper of them all, his own "rationality." They seem to have forgotten the Delphic imperative. They'd rather believe a fictional account of themselves. Luckily, this fictional account fits in nicely with domination and its concomitant subjugation. This is why folks like Hume are not at the forefront of western philosophy. He told some of the truth, and it included some "irrationality" on the part of humans. So the gap, in my story at least, comes from Callicott and others swallowing the whopper of their own rationality. Changing the disclaimer to something that has absolutely no tension with the [paragraph to which this note is appended] would mean we really are writing one of their stories.

29. The view that ontology is relative to epistemological orientation has recently come to the fore in ecosystem ecology itself in the rejection by what is perhaps unfortunately known as "hierarchy theory," of the view that an ecosystem can be subdivided in only one way. Ecosystems are not constructed out of bottom line components. Which analysis is appropriate varies from problem to problem depending upon the questions one asks and the observation set, in particular the spatiotemporal scale, appropriate to the problem at hand. There is "no need to force the phenomena into a set of components that are observable and interesting at some other space and time scale." Contemporary biological theory naturalizes ontology by privileging nonfoundational, contextualist epistemology over foundational ontology. R. V. O'Neill, D. L. DeAngelis, J. B. Waide, and T. F. H. Allen, *A Hierarchical Concept of Ecosystems* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1986), 68, 177.

30. J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1962).

31. Sam Gill, "Holy Book in Nonliterate Traditions: Toward the Reinvention of Religion," in *Native American Religious Action: A Performance Approach to Religion* ed. Sam Gill (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1987), 139–140.

32. Sam Gill, "One, Two, Three: The Interpretation of Religious Action," in *Native American Religious Action: A Performance Approach to Religion*, ed. Sam Gill (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1987), 162–163, 151.

33. Gill, "One, Two, Three," 162.
34. See Leroy N. Meyer and Tony Ramirez, " '*Wakinyan Hotan*' ['The Thunderbeings Call Out']: The Inscrutability of Lakota/Dakota Metaphysics," in *From Our Eyes: Learning from Indigenous People* ed., Sylvia O'Meara and Douglas A. West (Toronto: Garamond Press, 1996).
35. Diamond Jenness, "The Carrier Indians of the Bulkley River," *Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin* No. 133 (Washington, D.C.: Smithstonian Institution, 1943), 540.
36. N. Scott Momaday, "The Man Made of Words," in *Native American Traditions: Sources and Interpretations* ed., Sam Gill (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth Publishing, 1983), 44.
37. Paul Shepard, *Nature and Madness* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1998), 6.
38. "Poetry is one among the many forms of knowing. . . . Knowing freed from the agenda of possession and control—knowing in the sense of stepping in tune with being, hearing and echoing the music and heartbeat of being—is what we mean by poetry." Robert Bringhurst, "Everywhere Being Is Dancing, Knowing Is Known," *Chicago Review* 39 (1993): 138.
39. See Susan Bordo, *The Flight to Objectivity: Essays on Cartesianism and Culture* (Albany, N.Y.: SUNY Press, 1987).
40. Jeannette Armstrong, "Keepers of the Earth," in *Ecopsychology: Restoring the Earth, Healing the Mind*, ed. Theodore Roszak et al. (San Francisco, Calif.: Sierra Club Books, 1995), 323.
41. Shepard, *Nature and Madness*, 9.
42. J. Baird Callicott, "Animal Liberation and Environmental Ethics: Back Together Again," in *In Defense of the Land Ethic: Essays in Environmental Philosophy* ed. J. Baird Callicott (Albany, N.Y.: SUNY Press, 1989), 50, 59.
43. Callicott, *Earth's Insights*, 186.
44. See Sean Kane, *Wisdom of the Mythtellers*, 2d ed. (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 1998). By contrast, the epistemology of control that underwrites modern science isolates, takes apart. Its model of knowing is the controlled experiment, which limits and controls the variables—that is, isolates the experiment from a wider, ecological context as far as possible. When the results of such experiments are brought back into the wild world, the results are, as often as (or oftener than) not, disruptive of natural systems.
45. Emory Sekaquaptewa, "Hopi Indian Ceremonies," in *Seeing with a Native Eye,* ed. Walter Holden Capps (New York: Harper and Row, 1976), 42–43.
46. Paul Shepard, *Nature and Madness*, 123.
47. Walter Bresette, speaking at the Ecological Resistance Movements: Religion, Politics, and Ethics conference, University of Wisconsin–Madison, November 10–11, 1995.
48. For another critique of Callicott from an Indigenous perspective see V. F. Cordova, "EcoIndian: A Response to J. Baird Callicott," *Ayaangwaamizin: The International Journal of Indigenous Philosophy* 1 (1997): 31–44.