

**THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PHILOSOPHY**  
**Eighteenth Annual Meeting**  
**October 25-27, 2014**  
**New Orleans, LA**

# **ABSTRACTS**

## **SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2014**

***SUNDAY MORNING 9:00—10:30 a.m.***

**IAEP Session 1: Moral Sentiments and Environmental Virtues**

Acadian I

Moderator: David Storey, Boston College

**“Being (Not Just Doing) Green:  
Intention, Integrity, and Identity and Environmental Ethics”  
Brandon Boesch, University of South Carolina**

I will explore some of the ways in which environmental ethics can aim to incorporate concerns about the moral agent qua agent. I will look first at the role of intentions, arguing that we should aim to have agents who not only do the right sorts of actions, but further intend them for the right reasons. Secondly, I argue that special attention needs to be given to the way in which agents make commitments which constitute various identities, and the ways in which they integrate these commitments with one another.

**“Environmental Moral Sentiments and Cultural Criticism”  
Lauri Lahikainen, University of Tampere**

Theories of moral sentiments have been important topics of discussion in environmental philosophy. In my paper, I will contribute to these discussions by showing how concepts from cultural studies, such as "structures of feeling" (Raymond Williams), "cruel optimism" (Lauren Berlant), or "affective economies" (Sara Ahmed) can be fruitful for analysing contemporary ethical and emotional landscapes and how social forms, in particular our historical relations to the environment both figure or remain invisible in these landscapes and shape them. I will read Dale Jamieson's analysis of "epistemological cynicism" in the face of climate change as a revealing case of how environmental moral sentiments are implicated in cultural and economic structures feeling, and since their forms are historical, how they could perhaps be otherwise.

**“Human Sentiment Can Support a Genuinely Normative Environmental Ethic  
(by way of Hume though not through Darwin and Leopold)”  
Christopher Pearson, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville**

Ethical theory undergirding environmental ethics is dominated by cognitivism. Perhaps the lone prominent exception to this generality is Baird Callicott's efforts at outlining a Humean interpretation of Aldo Leopold's land ethic. I argue that proponents of a non-cognitivist environmental ethic should accept only Callicott's broadly Humean foundations and reject the

accompanying Leopoldian framework. I contend that in place of Callicott's Leopoldian framework, the most compelling version of a non-cognitivist environmental ethic is much more pluralistic and pragmatic.

**IAEP Session 2: Contemporary Issues in Environmental Ethics:  
Parts & Wholes, Plants, and Future Nonhuman Generations**

Acadian II

Moderator: Scott Cameron, Loyola Marymount University

**“Why Valuing Parts and Wholes in Environmental Ethics is a Sorrowful Business”**

**Daniel Crescenzo, University of Georgia**

In this paper I argue that both biological organisms and ecosystems have moral value, but that respecting the value of individuals often entails violating the value of other individuals or of wholes or visa versa. It is therefore impossible to respect all that is of value. Nevertheless, I argue that we are morally responsible for seeking to respect all that is of value. Our inevitable failure to do so is a tragedy over which we should grieve in solidarity with earth others. Our ability to grieve in this way is an important human virtue.

**“Plant Neurobiology and the Moral Defense of Vegetarianism”**

**Andrew Smith, Drexel University**

Recent research in plant neurobiology supports the proposition that plants feel pain, possess intelligence and memory, can learn and make decisions, and are perhaps even conscious. This gives us reason to consider that they are sentient and can be harmed. These concepts should not be used to support the moral defense of vegetarianism. Other bases must be identified. The appeal to the ecological benefits of vegetarianism remains available. I also contend that defenders of vegetarianism can appeal to an anatomical argument. Plants have a modular design, which permits parts of them to be eaten without them being killed. But we must account for their capacity to feel pain. So we should reject industrial agriculture in favor, optimally, of tending our own organic gardens and buying organic food locally.

**“Double Turn-Taking Among Generations and with the Environment”**

**Matthias Fritsch, Concordia University**

This paper complicates the model of turn-taking among generations by suggesting that such taking turns with nature is supported and interrupted by a second turning, that of individuals and generations out of and back into the biosphere. This counterargument undermines the impression of anthropocentrism by insisting that generations take turns not only with the biosphere as a merely external object, but within it: each generation emerges from and re-turns to it, and so is never external to the ‘object’ of intergenerational sharing. Thus, the generational turning is doubled by an environmental turning that reintroduces the dependency of humans, not only on previous human generations, but on a larger, non-totalizable process of life.

**IAEP Session 3: The Social Dimension of the Environmental Imagination**

Fulton

Moderator: Tama Weisman, Dominican University

**“Eco-Politics and the Imagination: From Ideology and Utopia to *Phronesis*”**

**Nathan Bell and David Utsler, University of North Texas**

There is a critical role for the social imagination, in connection with *phronesis*, to play in eco-politics. *Phronesis*, practical judgment, provides the means of exercising the imagination such as

to allow for open discourse between conflicting environmental views that each may be equally legitimate. It is where the horizons of competing eco-imaginings join that the space for discourse is opened between conflicting political views on environmental questions. The imagination, infused with practical reasoning, is not merely a secondary idea or futile practice, but a necessary tool in ecological-political considerations between ideology and utopia.

**“Why ‘Nature’ Matters: Three Social Imaginaries of Nature,  
and Their Implications for Social Practice”**

**Joseph Aloï, University of North Texas**

It is difficult to conceive of environmental philosophy without the concept “nature.” Yet the usefulness of this concept has been often challenged. We are told that we are living after the end of nature, yet we are also told that there will never be an end to nature. This paper investigates “nature” as a social imaginary. There are at least three social imaginaries of nature that environmentalists draw on when making arguments: the Aristotelian, the Wilderness and the Ecological Imaginaries. The paper investigates how environmentalists participate in these different imaginaries in sustainable and in unsustainable ways.

**“Environmental Imagination: Framing and Identifying with Other Species”**

**Joseph Tuminello, University of North Texas**

In this paper, I extend the concept of "remoteness" beyond spatial, temporal, and cultural remoteness, to encompass remoteness regarding *size* and *species*, demonstrating environmental imagination's vitality in relating to species which are conceived of as "alien" or as lacking utility. Further, I extend environmental imagination's capacity for the development of shared post-national and global identities to encompass the capacity for humans to conceptualize themselves as members of a community alongside other species by cultivating an ecological understanding of complex causal events. The environmental imagination is a crucial tool for raising environmental awareness and engendering ethical responses to environmental problems.

***SUNDAY MORNING 10:45 a.m.—12:15 p.m.***

***IAEP Session 1: Thinking in the Wake of Katrina***

Acadian I

Moderator: Francis P. Coolidge, Jr., Tulane University

**"Facing Apocalypse: Post-Katrina Meditations"**

**John Clark, Tulane University**

**"Re-Thinking New Orleans in the Wake of Katrina"**

**Michael Zimmerman, University of Colorado Boulder**

***IAEP Session 2: Environmental Imagination and Narratives of Place***

Acadian II

Moderator: Bryan Bannon, Merrimack College

**“‘Thoughtlessness,’ Language, and the Power of Imagination”**

**Eva Maria Räßple, College of DuPage**

The paper argues that Hannah Arendt’s emphasis on a path of thinking the present within the gap between past and future plays a vital role for locating thinking again in the life world when facing potentially thorny issues as environmental future diagnoses. Such thinking requires that

metaphorical language may recover lost potentials negotiated in the diagonal between past and future.<sup>1</sup> A photo, entitled <11.02>, originally taken by the Japanese artist Shōmei Tōmatsu, exemplifies how visuality can provide a spur for imaginative thought to rethink the past, a space for exploring responsible future perspectives.

**“The Meander and the Mississippi: A Shift toward an Environmental Imagination”**

**Irene Klaver, University of North Texas**

Mississippi hydro-politics has shifted from a 19-20<sup>th</sup> century paradigm of control to a 21<sup>st</sup> century paradigm of ‘living with the river.’ I frame this as a shift in cultural imagination expressed by a shifting understanding of meandering. The Meander River has essentially disappeared from the cultural imagination; meandering has acquired a negative connotation. In a modern era of efficiency meandering has become synonymous with aimless wandering, rambling through a longwinded argument. I show how in the 21<sup>st</sup> century a new cultural imagination is emerging, an environmental imagination, in which meandering has a renewed value, of which I develop further specificities.

**“Heidegger’s topology: Re-grounding environmental ethics through narratives of place”**

**Jen Christion Myers, Prescott College**

Cronon suggests place as the appropriate ground for locating environmental value. Moreover, as O’Neill, Holland, and Light demonstrate, narratives reveal place-based values in particularly rich ways. In this paper, I draw on Heidegger’s topology to bring a phenomenological perspective to bear on the question of place. By revealing dynamic human and natural histories, narrative can be a particularly useful tool for orienting our environmental commitments. I share stories from Vieques, Puerto Rico, an island shaped by trauma, to illustrate the power of people articulating what they most value about the places they call home.

**IAEP Session 3: Rethinking Worldviews**

Fulton

Moderator: Lorraine Code, York University

**“The Very Idea of an Ecological Worldview,” Keith Peterson, Colby College**

Since the late 1970’s it has become conventional for environmentalists to contrast “ecological” and “mechanistic” worldviews. Although the “worldview” concept is everywhere taken for granted, there are reasons to believe that its use is at least unproductive, if not positively harmful, for the environmental movement. It is harmful because it implies an inadequate notion of the relation between reflection and action, or of history and social change, because it is based on an idealist conception of the relation of mind and reality, implies a simplistic conception of motivation, and is ultimately psychologically self-defeating. It is concluded that environmentalists should avoid the “worldview model” of environmentalism.

**“Towards an Understanding of Ecological Wisdom:**

**Exploring Worldviews, *Habitus*, and *Phronesis*”**

**Mark Hathaway, University of Toronto**

Arne Naess originally described deep ecology as an *ecosophia* – or ecological wisdom – that is characterized by an understanding rooted in deep personal acquaintance and that is directly relevant to actions that produce concrete results. This paper explores the meaning and nature of ecological wisdom by examining a number of related concepts – worldviews, habitus, cosmopraxis, and phronesis – and assessing their relative strengths and limitations to describe the

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<sup>1</sup> Arendt, Hannah. *The Life of the Mind*. San Diego, New York, London: Harcourt, Inc., 1971. 103, 208.

kinds of perception and knowing that become embodied in genuinely ecological dispositions, behaviors, and practices.

**“On the Necessity of Recourse to Human Experience and Metaphors”**

**Scott Cameron, Loyola Marymount University**

One of the most powerful objections to a broadly biocentrist approach starts from a pressing practical question: can we claim to take non-human perspectives into account if those perspectives are inevitably constructed and evaluated by human beings? In this paper, I will argue that while this objection successfully draws attention to the dangers of a biocentrist approach, it does show that such an approach is impossible. Using our own immediate experience to gain insight into what we have not experienced or even cannot experience is in fact central not only to moral reasoning in general but to the structure of language itself. Thus while biocentrist perspective-taking is fraught with peril, there are good reasons to conclude that it is both possible and important.

***SUNDAY AFTERNOON 2:00—3:30 p.m.***

**IAEP Session 1: *Biopolitics: Population, Climate Change, and the Genome of Food***

Acadian I

Moderator: Johanna Oksala, University of Helsinki

**“Biopolitics, Race, and Global Population Control:  
Neo-Malthusianism and Environmentalism”**

**Alex Feldman, Pennsylvania State University**

The environmental movement has often worried about global population growth. This paper addresses the racialized character of these worries through Foucault’s analyses of biopower. Foucault’s treatment of race is a corrective to current liberal understandings. If eugenics is a paradigm case of biopolitical racism, I nevertheless argue that population control projects share the tendency to draw radical racial breaks in the population between who may live and who must die. While sensitive to what sets global population control off from eugenics, I argue that biopoliticized race is at very least on the horizon of many population control platforms.

**“Biopolitics of Extinction: Radicalizing Derridean Biopolitics in the  
Emerging Theaters of Climate Change”**

**Rebekah Sinclair, Claremont Graduate University**

Although biopolitics is one of the primary ways philosophers have rethought the human/animal divide and subsequent ethical responsibility, it has not been rethought in light of its new operations in the context of climate change—the issue of our, and perhaps all future centuries. Both critiquing and radicalizing Derrida’s discussion of human/animal biopolitics (primarily in *Beast and The Sovereign*), this paper 1) clarifies what, if anything, Derrida adds to the discussion of biopolitics and speciesed bodies, 2) uses Derrida’s method to trace the expanded biopolitical operations surrounding extinction, global disaster, and other climate change issues, and 3) clarifies possible ethical responses to those operations.

**“Specialty Cheese, Its Bacteria, and Their Genome”**

**Andrea Borghini, College of the Holy Cross**

In this paper I discuss an emerging trend within microbiopolitics: identifying specialty foods via the genomes of their bacteria. Bacteria of specialty cheeses – like Cravero Parmigiano Reggiano (Bra, Italy) or Chalet Cheese Coop Limburger (Green County, Wisconsin) – are among the most distinguished cases. Most specialty cheeses are now produced in Europe and the United States. In both regions, the identity of the cheese rests on *terroir*. Genomic-based approaches to the identity

of cheeses became available in the late '90s. The paper argues that, while *terroir* is a vague term, genomes make for a too narrow criterion of identity.

**IAEP Session 2: Transforming Human-Nature Relations: Ecopolitics and Critical Theory**

Acadian II

Moderator: Ladelle McWhorter, University of Richmond

**“Critique and Transformation: On the Hypothetical Nature of Ecosystem Service Value”**

**Andony Melathopoulos and Alexander Stoner, Dalhousie University**

The concept of ecosystem services attempts to overcome the opposition of human economic necessity to ecological conservation by valuing the latter in the service of the former. There is considerable evidence, however, that it fails to realize these ends. For this reason we raise the need for a critical approach to ecosystem service value. This would go beyond describing how valuation liquidates ecological and economic principles, the focus of criticisms advanced by Bryan Norton, Mark Sagoff, Nicolas Kosoy and others, but would instead explain the basis of this liquidation in historically specific, and transitory social forms.

**“Bioregionalism and Social Ecology: An Ecopolitical Proposal”**

**Brian Schroeder, Rochester Institute of Technology**

An ecoregional society would be one that reconciles social and natural freedom with ecological accountability and responsibility so that both humanity and the ecosystem can flourish. But how is this form of society to be called forth? This paper advances a conception of the eco-political by taking up the possible relation between bioregionalism and the sociopolitical proposal of social ecology. I begin by mapping the possibility of a new ground for an ecopraxis by briefly engaging three separate but mutually informative proposals for socioeconomic and political arrangement that lend themselves toward a practical realization of this ground—namely, bioregionalism, libertarian municipalism, and a federated planetary form of governance.

**“Reclaiming Prosthetic Gods: Marx and the Critique of Technological Rationality”**

**Greg Gabrellas, Drexel University**

The question of technology has become central to political debates over the direction of modern society. A prominent strain of thought has considered technology as a form of reason, *e.g.* technological rationality in critical theory. However, technology should be approached not as a form of reason, but in terms of the contradictory role it plays in the development of our species capacities. In grasping how this contradiction of domination and liberation is anchored in our social form, we can begin to discern a path towards achieving the harmony of technical activity and human needs long dreamed of in social thought.

**IAEP Session 3: Environmental Hermeneutics: A Memorial Panel for Helen Tartar**

Fulton

Moderator: Brian Treanor, Loyola Marymount University

**"For the Beauty of the Earth: Toward Beauty as a Hermeneutic of Nature.  
In Memory of Helen Tartar"**

**Christina Gschwandtner, Fordham University**

**“Aporetic Ecohermeneutics”**

**David Wood, Vanderbilt University**

***SUNDAY AFTERNOON 3:45 p.m.—5:15 p.m.***

**IAEP Session 1: *Wildness, Friendship, and Domestication:*  
*Reconsidering Interspecies Relations***

Acadian I

Moderator: David Wood, Vanderbilt University

**“New Ideals of Belonging and Africana Origins of Interspecies Living”**

**Cynthia Willett, Emory University**

Since the Neolithic era, human populations have learned to band together in ever increasingly large groups and live like a handful of other ultrasocial species (wasps, ants, bees, termites, and naked mole rats). The threat of the Anthropocene’s massive extinctions ushers in once again a classical philosophical question for our ultrasocial species, but this time with unprecedented urgency and trans-species reach—*what might provide the basis for a life in common?*

Unexpected sources from Africa trace an ethos that has characterized our species along with other social mammals for eons, at least up until the rise of large-scale societies.

**“Biting Wolves”**

**Thomas Thorp, Saint Xavier University**

Building on an argument developed by Kelly Oliver this paper attempts, first, to confirm the futility of efforts to ground ethical obligations toward animals in claims to inclusion (animal rights). Second, building on arguments advanced by Heidegger, Derrida, and David Wood, the paper radicalizes the ontological gap between humans and other animals. Drawing upon research into the specific practices of wolves I argue, third, that a full appreciation of the difference between humans and other animals leads us beyond the limits of environmental ethics and into a form of philosophizing that looks like interdisciplinary activism.

**“Zoo Animals as Friends, Zoo Animals as Specimens:  
The Life and Death of Marius the Giraffe”**

**Abigail Levin, Niagara University**

I argue that the recent controversy over the death and disposal of Marius, the giraffe at the Copenhagen Zoo, illustrates the tensions that exist between the four stated objectives of zoos – recreation, education, science, and conservation – all of which operate on the level of animals as specimens, and the display practices of contemporary zoos, which encourage us to view the animals on display as individual persons. The display practices give rise to more stringent moral obligations than the former, and I conclude that zoos ought to take Marius’ fate to incline towards honoring the stricter dictates entailed when animals become the individual persons we get to know in contemporary zoos.

**IAEP Session 2: *Technology and Technologies***

Acadian II

Moderator: Irene Klaver, University of North Texas

**“Big Bio versus DIY Bio”**

**Jozef Keulartz, Radboud University and Henk van den Belt, Wageningen University**

This paper focuses on the DIY Bio (Do It Yourself Biology) movement that is usually overlooked in the ethical and philosophical discourse on synthetic biology. The movement is inspired by the hacker movement, with its emphasis on access, sharing, collaboration and decentralization. Biohackers challenge Big Bio’s concentration of power; they are responsive to community

interests rather than to corporate interests. Also, with the DIY Bio movement biotinkering has appeared alongside bioengineering. This goes hand in hand with the ‘vernacularization’ of high tech, with the promotion of low tech solutions, and with a revival of indigenous and traditional practices of knowledge creation.

**“Newfound Habitats: Rethinking the Physis-Techne Distinction”**

**Craig Condella, Salve Regina University**

Though environmental problems arise from the encroachment of human beings on nature, I maintain that such encroachment has largely become unavoidable and that, moving forward, environmental responsibility will amount to negotiating habitats where human beings must consider how the world of artifacts might work alongside nature. From the introduction of species to foreign environments to the ecosystems that form around offshore oil rigs to birds nesting in stadium light towers, we can locate numerous examples where the Aristotelian distinction between *physis* and *techne* is blurred, if not obliterated, suggesting a possible though newfound peace between human and non-human species.

**IAEP Session 3: ‘Nature’ in Phenomenology and Hermeneutics:  
Gadamer, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty**

Fulton

Moderator: Brian Schroeder, Rochester Institute of Technology

**“‘The indestructible, the barbaric principle’:  
Merleau-Ponty and the Psychoanalysis of Nature”**

**Dylan Trigg, University College Dublin**

This paper investigates the role of psychoanalysis in Merleau-Ponty’s thinking. The motivation takes its cue from a fragment in the working notes of *The Visible and the Invisible* where Merleau-Ponty will speak of doing a “psychoanalysis of Nature” (Merleau-Ponty 1968, 267). My thesis is that in order to understand this notion of a psychoanalysis of Nature, we need to understand the role Schelling plays in the final stages of Merleau-Ponty’s thinking. In positive terms, the advantage of a psychoanalysis of Nature is that it would allow us to conceptualize the role of the nonhuman within the structure of the subject.

**“The Fleshy Texture of Things: A Phenomenological Response to Timothy Morton”**

**Brendan Mahoney, University at Albany**

In this paper, I critically examine the environmental philosophy of ecocritic Timothy Morton. In his most recent work, *Hyperobjects* (2013), Morton situates his work within the conceptual framework of object-oriented ontology. While acknowledging that he raises important and fascinating questions concerning our concepts of nature and our role in the environment, I argue that Morton’s claims would find a stronger foundation in the phenomenology of Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty. Specifically, I critically re-read Morton’s concepts of “object” and the “mesh” through Heidegger’s concepts of “world” and “thing” and Merleau-Ponty’s late phenomenology of “visibility” and “the flesh.”

## **MONDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2014**

***MONDAY MORNING 9:00 a.m.—10:30 a.m.***

### **IAEP Session 1: *Rethinking Models of Nature and Nature as Model***

Acadian I

Moderator: Keith Peterson, Colby College

#### **“Nature as Liberty’s Touchstone: A Historical and Conceptual Sketch”**

**Piers Stephens, University of Georgia**

In this paper I argue that attention to the history of political thought yield two broad traditions of thought which validate nonhuman nature as a touchstone for human freedom. These are (i) the agrarian tradition, united with the garden tradition for this paper’s purposes, and (ii) the tradition of wild nature as a corrective to arbitrary human authority. Drawing upon such thinkers as Paul Thompson, David Cooper, Robert Pogue Harrison, Richard Hayman and Christopher Hill, I shall argue that these traditions were obscured by modernity, but that new information on healthy human development should cause environmental philosophers to re-examine them.

#### **“The materiality of ecological innovation: Towards a natural concept of biomimicry”**

**Vincent Blok, Wageningen University**

In this paper, we reflect on the concept of nature which is presupposed in biomimetic approaches of technology and innovation. Because current approaches of biomimicry presuppose a *technological* model of nature, it is questionable whether the claim of being a more eco-system friendly approach of ecological innovation is justified. In order to maintain the potentiality of biomimicry as ecological innovation, we explore an alternative for this technological model of nature. We develop a *natural* model of nature, which enables us to conceptualize biomimicry as conative responsiveness to the conativity of the bio-sphere.

#### **“Integral Ecology: A New Epistemology of Environmental Problems”**

**David Storey, Boston College**

I present and assess a fresh perspective in environmental philosophy called *Integral Ecology*, recently introduced by Michael E. Zimmerman and Sean Esbjörn-Hargens. Drawing on research in developmental psychology and utilizing a version of Evan Thompson’s “enactive” paradigm, they offer a new epistemology of environmental problems, suggesting that many of our disagreements about environmental issues stem from different value-frameworks and worldviews. After laying out the basics of the model, I assess its practical potential by examining three cases studies the authors present: 1) community development in the San Juan del Gozo Community, in El Salvador; 2) fishery management in Hawaii; and 3) conversation in Canada’s Great Bear Rainforest.

### **IAEP Session 2: *Contemporary Continental Perspectives on***

***Ecological Relations and Responsibility***

Acadian II

Moderator: Steven Vogel, Denison University

#### **“Ecologies of the Living: Transcendence and Immanence”**

**Phil Lynes, Concordia University**

This paper adapts a distinction of Agamben's in an attempt to delineate two trends in contemporary thoughts of ecological relationality; on the one hand ecologies of immanence via Spinoza, Nietzsche and Deleuze, and on the other ecologies of transcendence via Husserl, Levinas and Derrida. The author suggests that the latter approach holds more promise in addressing an ethical relationship to all other living beings, and poses a stronger critique of the technobiopolitical mechanisms responsible for the loss of the Earth's biodiversity.

**“The Framing of the Fencing: Derrida’s Explication of ‘Parergon’  
and Environmental Conservation”**

**Trent Yarosevich, Stony Brook University**

Contemporary discussions of environmental conservation frequently employ a conceptual framework that betrays an inheritance of what Heidegger called an ‘ordering’ understanding of nature that holds its energy in ‘reserve’. A few examples of this include Leopold’s invocation of ecology and his view to the integrity of natural systems, or the use/non-use discussion in economic analyses. This ‘enframing’ mode of understanding has a profound conceptual and etymological resonance with Derrida’s discussion of ‘frames’ and artwork in *The Truth In Painting*. The commerce of ideas surrounding the *parergon* that bounds and situates the *energeia* of the art work’s internal system serves as a useful tool for addressing the conceptual inheritance at play in the ‘preserving’ of natural spaces, as well as the dangers this inheritance entails.

**“Responsibility Reconsidered: Jonas and Levinas”**

**Ilan Safit, Pace University**

The concerns of environmental ethics suggest the need for a philosophical notion of responsibility that will allow us to account for our relationship with the other-than-human world as well as with future humanity. Hans Jonas offers an “imperative of responsibility” that might seem to subject individuals to the needs of the collective, and to subordinate all other values to the one of survival, whereas Levinas’ notion of responsibility is decisively anthropocentric and appears ambiguous in terms of its guidance towards action. Yet a sympathetic critique and a synthesis of these two notions of responsibility will demonstrate their reconstructed efficacy for eco-phenomenology.

**IAEP Session 3: Existential Ecology, Wilderness, and the American West**

Fulton

Moderator: Jonathan Maskit, Denison University

**“Aldo Leopold, the Existentialist: Or, the Facticity of Wilderness”**

**Anthony Fernandez, University of South Florida**

Philosophical interpretations of Aldo Leopold’s work have, for the most part, taken the form of explications of his Land Ethic. His other works, not being explicitly philosophical, have received considerably less attention. In this paper, I examine some of Leopold’s more literary and narrative works, including “The River of the Mother of God” and *A Sand County Almanac*, through a philosophical lens (specifically, an existential-phenomenological lens). By imposing such a lens upon these works, I tease out existential-phenomenological themes, developing an alternative interpretation of Leopold’s philosophical concerns for both nature and humanity.

**“The Idea of an Existential Ecology – A Proposal”**

**Bob Sandmeyer, University of Kentucky**

I will propose an existential ecology using Hans Jonas's interpretation of biological facts as my cue but applying this interpretation to the concept of land. This concept of land is one I will borrow from Aldo Leopold. I will argue that although this existential interpretation of ecology

may be prefigured by Jonas or even by Leopold, it is nowhere explicit in either. In conclusion, I will highlight a salient point of intersection between this idea and a new conceptual model of adaptation and niche construction developed by the evolutionary biologists F.J. Odling-Smee, K.N. Laland & M.F. Feldman among others.

**“Wallace Stegner and the Place of the American West”**

**Josh Hayes, Alvernia University**

While Wallace Stegner was once considered to be the dean of American Western fiction, perhaps best known for his Pulitzer Prize winning novel, *Angle of Repose*, he was also a committed environmentalist who contributed substantially to the emergence and development of the first regional environmental movement in the American West. Beginning with his novel, *Angle of Repose*, and concluding with his memoir, *Wolf Willow*, this paper seeks to reflect upon how Stegner’s literary corpus cultivates a uniquely “Western” ethics that is rooted in how one finds oneself conditioned by both geographical place and chronological time.

***MONDAY MORNING 10:45 a.m.—12:15 p.m.***

**IAEP Session 1: Science, Knowledge, Practice**

Acadian I

Moderator: Meg Mott, Marlboro College

**“Deliberative Democracy in Science and Environmental Policy:  
Reflections on Philip Kitcher and John Dryzek”**

**Darrell Arnold, St. Thomas University**

In Philip Kitcher’s recent work on science and democracy he develops a deliberative democratic theory of science uncannily similar to Jürgen Habermas’ and John Dryzek’s views. Yet Kitcher nowhere cites Habermas, Dryzek or many other standard sources in deliberative democratic theory. This paper examines ways that Kitcher’s work would benefit from integrating ideas from Dryzek on environmental politics. It also argues reflections on “citizen science” initiatives could aid Kitcher’s cause of democratizing science and Dryzek’s cause of democratizing environmental policy.

**“The Tyranny of Certainty”**

**Lorraine Code, York University**

The paper examines how an insistence on achieved *certainty* as a *sine qua non* marker of valid knowledge, in ecological-environmental epistemology and ethics, truncates scientific inquiry. It circumscribes, or disqualifies, even cautiously developed investigative experiments on whose outcomes investigation and action rely. The paper engages critically with US Presidential candidate Mitt Romney’s insistence on *uncertainty* as an excusing factor in refusing to acknowledge the possibility that the implications of “climate change” need to be acknowledged in public environmental policy, and private lives.

**IAEP Session 2: Soundscapes, Landscapes, and Environmental Values**

Acadian II

Moderator: Margret Grebowicz, Goucher College

### **“Soundscape Ecology and Environmental Valuation”**

**Jonathan Beaver, Pennsylvania State University**

Soundscape ecology is a field focused on the sonic interactions between individuals in a given ecosystem. As a case study in environmental ethics, the field exemplifies the debate about the complexity of environmental values while building empirical support for a fairer evaluation of the needs of nonhuman environmental stakeholders. Soundscapes are demonstrably valuable to a range of both human and nonhuman stakeholders and so push us to more critically evaluate the relationship, overlap, and compatibility between competing value priorities in ethically-charged decisions regarding environmental impacts.

### **“Is Ansel Adams an Ecopornographer? or Visual (Mis) Representation of the Environment”**

**Thomas Weidemeyer, Florida Atlantic University**

How important is it to start a different narrative involving the environment? Let’s look towards future generations and the health of their relationships with their surroundings today! Are the different styles of nature photography beneficial or detrimental to conservation/preservation/restoration of the environment? I will critically reflect on the concepts of ecopornography and ecoruin pornography styles of nature photography, and their (potential) impact on public perception and environmental conservation/preservation. Ecopornography (as defined by Bart Welling) is “a type of contemporary visual discourse made up of highly idealized, anthropomorphized views of landscapes and non-human animals”.

### **IAEP Session 3: *Dwelling and Cultivation***

Fulton

Moderator: James Hatley, Salisbury University

### **“Mottainai: Buddhist Origins of a Japanese Philosophy of Waste”**

**Kevin Taylor, Southern Illinois University Carbondale**

Building on an argument developed by Kelly Oliver this paper attempts, first, to confirm the futility of efforts to ground ethical obligations toward animals in claims to inclusion (animal rights). Second, building on arguments advanced by Heidegger, Derrida, and David Wood, the paper radicalizes the ontological gap between humans and other animals. Drawing upon research into the specific practices of wolves I argue, third, that a full appreciation of the difference between humans and other animals leads us beyond the limits of environmental ethics and into a form of philosophizing that looks like interdisciplinary activism.

### **“The Temporal Place Value of Viticulture”**

**Julie Kuhlken, Pedernales Cellars**

On the basis of an examination of philosophical literature, ancient and modern, and the actual practice of viticulture, this essay argues that the temporality of viticulture has important moral aspects, which inform its place value and special connection to human dwelling. In order to establish the importance of temporality to the place value of viticulture, I will examine four dimensions of it: permanence, cycle of rebirth, seasonality, and habitual character.

### **“*Mono no Aware* as a Poetics of Environmental Ethics”**

**John Flowers, Southern Illinois University Carbondale**

This paper aims to bring together the transactional model of experience articulated by John Dewey, and the model of affective transaction that governs the production of a work of art within the aesthetic of *Mono no Aware* as articulated by Motoori Norinaga, to generate a holistic environmental ethic that uses an affective transaction as the ground for the cultivation of

humanity. Thus, it is not merely that nature serves as a mode of cultivating the human heart, it is that the capacity for the human heart to engage in affective relations could not exist without nature.

***MONDAY AFTERNOON 1:45 p.m.—3:15 p.m.***

**IAEP Session 1: Society for Nature, Philosophy and Religion: *Art, Nature, Divinity***

Acadian I

Moderator: Christopher Dustin, College of the Holy Cross

**“Mind in Nature: Merleau-Ponty, Cezanne, and the Task of Art”**

**Joseph Aziz, University of Dallas**

**“Writing the Divine Energies: Van Gogh as Iconographer”**

**Bruce Foltz, Eckerd College**

**“Creation, Place, and Intelligibility: The First People’s Buffalo Jump State Park”**

**James Hatley, Salisbury University**

**IAEP Session 2: *Is Environmental Ethics Sustainable?***

Acadian II

Moderator: Josh Hayes, Alvernia University

**“Climate of Denial: Individual Responsibility for Systemic Change”**

**Dan Boscov-Ellen, The New School for Social Research**

In this paper, I suggest that rather than presenting a completely novel philosophical challenge that overturns previously adequate philosophical paradigms, climate change simply makes the limits of our traditional paradigms more apparent. I argue that climate change acts as an amplifier of existing systemic injustices with which ethics has consistently struggled. I conclude that, in considering these limitations, we are led to more radical conceptions of individual responsibility and ethical action than those in common circulation, and that these consequences cannot be confined to the sphere of environmental ethics.

**“Should Environmentalism Embrace a Rights Based Discourse?”**

**Elliot Trapp, The New School for Social Research**

Original Title: “At the Intersection of Environmentalism, Speciesism, and Sexism”

In this paper, I argue that any theoretical framework addressing ethical issues concerning environmentalism, speciesism, or sexism, needs to be sensitive to the intersections between various forms of oppression. Any attempt to abstract or isolate a particular manifestation of oppression, necessarily fails to capture how the relationships between discriminatory frameworks produces instances of injustice that are irreducible to one framework, or the other. Contemporary approaches to animal ethics, environmentalism, and feminism are inundated with the tendency to detach systemic oppressive frameworks from a given context and attempt to solve the various empirical forms of injustice that framework produces isolated from any relation to alternative structures of oppression. The point of this paper is to show the limitations of this approach to ethics.

**“Keystone Confusions, or Why Our Moral Concepts Matter”**

**Eric Godoy, The New School for Social Research and Pratt Institute**

I use the debates surrounding the Keystone XL pipeline and the fossil fuel divestment movement to interrogate the concepts of responsibility often deployed when discussing environmental problems. Climate change is not merely an economic or political problem: it is also a *philosophical* problem. Traditional moral theories are ill equipped for engaging the *structural sources* of the problem. To address climate change and our addiction to fossil fuels, we need a notion of responsibility capable of confronting and reconfiguring the structures that keep atmosphere-wrecking practices more attractive than cleaner alternatives. The divestment movement offers a promising structurally-minded alternative.

**IAEP Session 3: Benjamin and Nietzsche on Nature**

Fulton

Moderator: Ilan Safit, Pace University

**“Walter Benjamin: Nature as Origin and Event”**

**Shannon Hayes, University of Oregon**

In this paper, I explore the role of nature in Walter Benjamin’s philosophy of history. Between early works such as *Origin of German Tragic Drama* and the late *Arcades Project*, we find a shift in emphasis from the origin to the event, eternal time to now-time, the critic to the messiah. Whereas nature plays an integral role in the notion of history developed in Benjamin’s concept of the ‘ruin’, in his late work nature seemingly falls silent. I argue that, although nature remains integral to Benjamin, it no longer bears emancipatory potential constituted as origin, thus Benjamin reconstitutes the concept of nature as event.

**“Deciding Nature: Walter Benjamin”**

**Brendan Moran, University of Calgary**

In “Towards the Critique of Violence” (1921), Walter Benjamin conceives as “philosophic” any “attitude” that can decide against closures. He characterizes those closures as “mythic.” A “deciding” attitude recognizes the preponderance of “decay” over closures. This bond of decision with transient nature is elaborated in Benjamin’s *Goethe’s Elective Affinities* (1922), where two elements of nature are addressed: first, a “mythic” nature that instills adaptation, resignation to fate, and acquiescence; second, a nature that is destructive, ruinous, and thereby the basis for decision that rejects myth. The following paper critically assesses Benjamin’s notion of the relationship of decision and nature.

***MONDAY AFTERNOON 3:30 p.m.—5:00 p.m.***

**IAEP Session 1: Society for Nature, Philosophy and Religion:**

**Kierkegaard, Palamas, Thoreau**

Acadian I

Moderator: Bruce Foltz, Eckerd College

**“Thoreau’s Poetics of Nature”**

**Arnold Berleant, Long Island University**

**“Kierkegaard, St. Gregory of Palamas, and Divine Transcendence”**

**Joshua Reagan, Rice University**

**“Through a Glass Darkly: Thoreau’s Reflective Vision”**  
**Christopher Dustin, College of the Holy Cross**

**IAEP Session 2: Rights, Justice, and Environmental Policy**

Acadian II

Moderator: William Edelglass, Marlboro College

**“Past Conceptions of Environmental Taxation”**

**Ashley Dodsworth, University of Leicester**

To ground her suggestion of an environmental tax, Paula Casal refers to ‘a philosophical tradition advocating the rights of all humans to a fair share of the earth’ and which includes Thomas Paine and J.S. Mill. But this overlooks the fact that these two thinkers themselves suggest a tax on natural resources. These works provide not only early interpretation of Casal’s proposal but, as an examination of Paine and Mill’s work will show, engage with central questions for environmental justice regarding what such a tax is compensating for and how and to whom the revenues should be distributed.

**“Mobility as a Human Right and an Environmental Threat”**

**Laura Hartman, Augustana College**

Mobility may be a right: advocates of social justice and disability rights seem to indicate that it is. But mobility is also a threat: most forms of transportation are harmful to the environment, through emissions of greenhouse gases or encouragement of urban sprawl or both. In this paper, I examine both the human right to mobility and the environmental threat of mobility, seeking a middle ground in the form of “greener” and more accessible public transit.

**IAEP Session 3: Climate Change and the Philosophy of History**

Fulton

Moderator: Barbara Muraca, Friedrich-Schiller Universität Jena

**“The Anthropocene as Human Self-Othering:**

**Understanding Climate Change in Light of Kant and Schiller’s Philosophies of History”**

**Anna-Lisa Baumeister, University of Oregon**

This paper argues that our present-day conceptualization of climate change in terms of the anthropocene, especially as figured within and in response to the work of Bruno Latour, must be understood as a revival of notions of history developed by German Idealist philosophies. I demonstrate the resonances between the contemporary discourse of the anthropocene and German Idealist philosophy of history by first examining four characteristics of history presented in Latour and Dipesh Chakrabarty’s work on the anthropocene, and then comparing these with the accounts of universal history offered in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century by Kant and Schiller.

**“Climate Change Has Not Yet Taken Place:**

**Merleau-Pontian Lessons in History, Freedom, and Collective Political Agency”**

**Tim Christion Myers, University of Oregon**

Merleau-Ponty’s philosophy of history sheds light on the problem of collective action vis-à-vis climate change. In “The War Has Taken Place,” he argues that the war taught the French “history.” That is, it situated them, rendering them passive in the face of international events, while also giving their freedom a field to work with. Like the pre-war French, I submit that many today fail to politically respond to climate change because it has not yet situated us. Relating

current climate debates surrounding the question of collective action to Merleau-Ponty, I argue that these discourses fail to account for the situated character of political agency.

**“The Androcentric Dimension of the Anthropocene:  
Climate Change and the Oppression of Women in Irigaray’s  
Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of History”**

**David Craig, University of Oregon**

This paper argues that our conceptualization of climate change through the concept of the anthropocene must be accompanied by an account of the oppression of women—an account that can be developed out of Luce Irigaray’s critique of Hegel’s philosophy of history. Through a reading of Irigaray’s critical engagement with Hegel in her book *I Love to You*, it is shown that, just as women are “left behind” in Hegel’s account of properly human historical development, so is the historical fact of women’s oppression left out of the narrative of the anthropocene and anthropogenic climate change—a narrative with conceptual roots in the enlightenment.