

Wrestling with Arne Naess: A Chronicle of Ecopsychology's Origins

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Mark A. Schroll, Ph.D. Philosophy of Science, forged his history of ecopsychology in conversations with Warwick Fox and Ralph Metzner. Later accepting an invitation from Metzner to write a review of *Green Psychology in Resurgence 200* (2000). Guest Editor of *Anthropology of Consciousness 16* (1), 2005, a special issue on "Primordial Visions In An Age of Technology." Schroll's pursuit of ecopsychological inquiry continues to unfold via his organization of symposiums at scientific gatherings—the Association for Transpersonal Psychology, International Transpersonal Association, the Society for the Anthropology of Consciousness, and the International Association for the Study of Dreams.

We are the survivors, the eternal survivors
Androgynous energies traveling through time.
Nick Turner¹

Introduction

This chronicle of conversations and significant publications is part of an ongoing attempt to provide a better understanding of ecopsychology's origins. These reflections on the evolving perspective of ecopsychology will assist others in furthering their own inquiries. Attempting a summary such as this is a humbling task because something is always overlooked. I therefore apologize to anyone who was left out of this account, and invite anyone to share these additional chronicles of ecopsychology's origins, such as Whit Hibbard's brilliant review of ecopsychology,² whose observations we will examine later in this essay. Likewise, as most of the *Trumpeter's* readers are well aware, ecopsychology's story dovetails with the multifaceted narrative known as the deep ecology movement. Here again, the present essay will only be successful if its personal reflections invite additional voices from the deep ecology movement to join in this conversation regarding the origins and future direction of ecopsychology.

Tracing the Many Paths of Ecopsychology's Origins

The Tao that can be named
Is not the eternal Tao.
Lao Tzu

Ecopsychology is one word among many names, but for some reason it has gathered momentum instead of others. Warwick Fox (whose orientation to this discussion grew out of environmental ethics and the deep ecology movement) surveys the parade of names that various authors have suggested in trying to define this movement in chapter 1 of his book *Toward A Transpersonal Ecology*.³ One of the many paths of ecopsychology's origins can be traced to Robert Greenway, who, (while working as a writer for Abraham Maslow) coined the term *psychoecology* in 1963 in an essay he wrote at Brandeis University, Boston.⁴ That same year, Greenway became the founding dean of Franconia College in the mountains of New Hampshire and continued to explore the relationships between humanistic psychology, the farther reaches of human nature (which later morphed into transpersonal psychology), and psychoecology.

Greenway began teaching courses in psychoecology and the then nascent field of transpersonal psychology at Sonoma State University, in 1968.⁵ Twenty years would pass before Greenway's research would rise to national attention through the efforts of Elan Shapiro, one of Greenway's graduate students. In 1989 Shapiro formed a psychoecology discussion group that met every other week in Berkeley.⁶ Besides Shapiro, early members of this group included Mary Gomes, Alan Kanner, Fran Segal, and others.⁷ Greenway was invited to participate in these discussions.

The reputation of this group eventually attracted the attention of Theodore Roszak in 1990, who asked to attend its meetings.⁸ This inspired Roszak to write an essay on *ecopsychology*, which was Roszak's way of playing with words and Greenway's idea of psychoecology. Perhaps, based on the mainstream response to Roszak's early interest in the counter culture,⁹ he was attempting to avoid the obvious ridicule of being called a "psycho ecologist." Roszak's essay eventually reached book length as *The Voice of the Earth*.¹⁰

Roszak provides a broad definition of ecopsychology with which to frame our discussion:

- 1) The emerging synthesis of ecology and psychology.
- 2) The skillful application of ecological insights to the practice of psychotherapy.
- 3) The discovery of our

emotional bond with the planet. 4) Defining “sanity” as if the whole world mattered.¹¹

Despite Roszak’s broad definition of ecopsychology, the name ecopsychology fails to convey the full spectrum of his multidisciplinary concerns. Nor does the name ecopsychology call to mind the contributions of indigenous science. These criticisms hark back to my discussion of ecopsychology and indigenous science.¹²

A few years later, Roszak expanded on these four points, whose expression was more consistent with his multidisciplinary concerns and those of indigenous science.¹³ This more recent work by Roszak also addressed the concerns that I have referred to as “The Night of the Living Dead” model. These continuing points of revision, however, exceed the limits of the present essay.

Unaware of the psychoecology discussion group taking place in Berkeley, my own inquiry chose to focus on the question: *how, and in what directions, can we move beyond simply treating the symptoms of the world’s growing number of social and environmental crises?* The motivation to ask this question was the result of reading Roger Walsh’s book *Staying Alive: The Psychology of Human Survival*.¹⁴

Pondering this question represented a real turning point in my thinking. It allowed me to realize that healing the world’s social and environmental crises was not going to come about simply by creating new technologies and discontinuing the use of fossil fuels, nor by rejecting the development of new technologies and trying to live more simply. It is not a matter of philosophers envisioning a better environmental ethic to guide the practice of conversation biologists and urban planners, allowing us to serve as better stewards of the land. Nor would a concentrated effort of protest by eco-activists employing guilt, fear, and letter writing campaigns, urging politicians to enact stiffer environmental laws, create the kinds of changes needed in our behaviour. Necessary as all these approaches might be, I believe that the real starting point toward healing the social and environmental crises begins with self-confrontation and self-examination. We need to examine the worldview influencing our attitudes and our behavior.¹⁵

Many mainstream environmentalists may take offense with this turning point in my thinking, believing that I no longer support the work of environmental activists and those involved in resource management and conservation biology. But this is not correct. I do continue to actively support and participate in working with environmental activists, as well as continuing to support and participate in projects related to resource management and conservation biology.¹⁶ This need to recognize the

importance of merely treating or healing the symptoms and getting to the root causes of these symptoms is therefore an essential step toward our understanding of ecopsychology. This focus on healing the symptoms, as Ralph Nader has pointed out, results in the tremendously high burnout rate among environmental activists.¹⁷ Why? Because the motivation that ignites most environmental activists are simply reactionary and symptom focused. Trying to heal each one of these separate symptoms is a never-ending task because the system keeps breaking down amidst our efforts to heal it; meanwhile, absent from such a focus is a coherent philosophy of life that enables people to sustain and nurture themselves.

This symptom-oriented approach to healing our planet can be compared to a field surgeon trying to mend all of the wounded in an ongoing war without end. Thankfully we are able to save some of the wounded, but many others die. With each new day greeting us there is the need to care for more wounded, and that eventually results in burnout. Similarly, we as surgeons trying to heal the wounds of our culture will never see an end to our labours merely by trying to heal all of its symptoms of decay. Instead, the only way to truly heal the wounds of our culture will be to find a way to stop all of the fighting and end our war with nature; whereas, according to Joseph Meeker's *Comedy of Survival*:

The comic way is to avoid trouble if possible and otherwise to defuse its dangers or, failing that, to move out of its way.¹⁸

Unlike the heroic warrior image found in tragic literature, the comic perspective is non-confrontational. Thus, instead of fighting nature, the comic perspective attempts to establish a right relationship with nature. The phrase "right relationship" may suggest, to readers unfamiliar with the terminology of Eastern and transpersonal psychology, an ideological creed similar to "my country right or wrong!" Additional reasoning along this line might lead readers to assume it means a political mandate for correct behavioural conduct. In actuality, the phrase "right relationship" refers to humankind's coherent, co-evolutionary, sustainable orientation with nature.¹⁹

Summary

The primary idea or contribution in this section is the epiphany or turning point in my thinking that led me to ask, *how, and in what directions, can we move beyond simply treating the symptoms of the world's growing number of social and environmental crises?* Our need to recognize the importance of merely treating the symptoms and getting to the origins of their causes is an essential

step toward understanding ecopsychology's message. In fact, I raised this point in response to Peter Russell's comments (referring to these symptoms as our "habits of cognition"), during the conversation forum "Animism, Shamanism and Ethnobotany: Ecopsychology's Link With the Transpersonal."²⁰ Equally important to diagnosing these symptoms or habits of cognition that are associated with the social and environmental crisis is our need to create a new philosophy of life. In support of this need, Bill Devall points out that:

Alfred Adler coined the term *lifestyle* in 1929 after he broke with his teacher, Freud. . . . He defined lifestyle as the sum of eccentricities, values, meaningful acts, passions, and knowledge. Lifestyle includes a person's vision of how to make peace in the wasteland that we call modern society.²¹

A Breakthrough in 1990: Continuing to Trace Ecopsychology's Many Paths

A breakthrough came in 1990 with two significant essays: Warwick Fox's essay, "Transpersonal Ecology: 'Psychologizing' Ecophilosophy" in the *Journal of Transpersonal Psychology*²² and Ralph Metzner's, "Germanic Mythology and the Fate of Europe" in *ReVision*.²³ I began corresponding with Fox sometime in June of 1990. In August, I read in Michael Harner's *Foundation for Shamanic Studies Newsletter* that Metzner was forming the Green Earth Foundation:

Through its projects, the Green Earth Foundation aims to help bring about changes in attitudes, values, perceptions, and [our] worldview that are based on ecological balance and respect for the integrity of all life forms on Earth. Specifically, this involves re-thinking the relationships of humankind with the animal kingdom, the plant kingdom and the elemental realms of air, water and earth/land.²⁴

Becoming a member of the Green Earth Foundation I soon began a correspondence with Metzner. Through our correspondence, Fox and Metzner agreed to serve as dissertation supervisors on my doctoral committee through the Union Institute.

During this time, Jeremy Hayward, vice president of the Naropa Institute and editor of Shambhala's New Science Library, edited Fox's doctoral dissertation, which was published in the summer of 1990 as *Toward A Transpersonal Ecology: Developing New Foundations for Environmentalism*.²⁵ Eugene Hargrove, editor of *Environmental Ethics*, noted that: "*Toward A Transpersonal Ecology* ought to be read not only by supporters of the deep ecology movement but also by its critics. It is destined to be a classic in the field." Devall, one of the early deep ecology movement supporters commented that

Toward A Transpersonal Ecology is essential reading for teachers, scholars, and all people concerned with the fate of the earth. It is an excellent book that will be used as a benchmark for all discussion of environmental philosophy in the 1990s.²⁶

The momentous enthusiasm generated by Earth Day's 20th anniversary contributed additional motivation to begin my examination of Fox's book. Hayward also drew inspiration from this period of celebration, which followed on the heels of his essay "Ecology and the Experience of Sacredness."²⁷ Fox's critique of environmentalism's limited capacity to achieve its goals of creating a coherent, co-evolutionary, sustainable culture provided Hayward with the vision to organize the "Human In Nature" conference held at the Naropa Institute at Boulder, Colorado, from May 4 to 7, 1991. It was at this meeting that Fox and I met for the first time. I was fortunate to attend a panel presentation that included lectures by David Abram, Alan Drengson, Jeremy Hayward, Arne Naess, Elizabeth Roberts, and Francisco Varela. I also had the good fortune to engage in some brief private conversation with Arne Naess, Herbert V. Gunther, Jeremy Hayward, Ken Wilber, and Michael Zimmerman.

The week after this conference I defined and defended the proposal for my doctoral program and thesis with Fox, Metzner, Lisa Mertz, Byron Plumley, and Kevin J. Sharpe. During this meeting, Fox mentioned that he would be editing a special issue of *ReVision* titled "From Anthropocentrism to Deep Ecology," the focus of which was an attempt to clarify and sum up this very misunderstood and growing area of inquiry.²⁸ Metzner's contribution to this issue provides us with the most thorough review of Fox's *Toward A Transpersonal Ecology*, and its essential contributions. Metzner's summation of Fox's contributions is worth quoting at length.

The revitalization of academic philosophy, its transformation under the influence of the "subversive science" of ecology, has been accompanied by equally profound soul searching in theology and religious studies (ecotheology, creation spirituality), by new attention to neglected aspects of history and prehistory (patriarchal Earth Goddess cultures), and by parallel paradigm revolutions in the social sciences (e.g., the works of William Catton in sociology and Herman Daly in economics). . . . The one discipline that, sad to say, has hitherto remained virtually untouched by any concern for the environment or the human-to-nature relationship is psychology. You will search in vain in the texts and journals of any of the major schools of psychology—clinical, behaviorist, cognitive, physiological, humanistic or transpersonal—for any theory or research concerning the most basic fact of human existence: the fact of our relationship to the natural world of which we are a part.

This glaring, scandalous, and, to this psychologist, embarrassing omission has now begun to be remedied and addressed in this book by Warwick Fox. . . . [He] deserves immense credit for having raised the level of discussion of these difficult, subtle, and complex issues to a very high level and for having made a first, and major, contribution to the integration of psychology and philosophy within an ecocentric framework—and thus to the formulation of a worldview that may heal the biosphere and save our souls.²⁹

The ecopsychology movement has yet to come together as an established discipline or as a national or international organization. This is why so many diverse perspectives and approaches to the study of ecopsychology exist, because an association with a clear platform stating the goals of ecopsychology, with a journal and an annual conference where its evolving definition can be discussed, has yet to be organized.

Here I must digress briefly and mention that I really appreciated reading Whit Hibbard's "Ecopsychology: A Review."³⁰ His labour-intensive analysis of the literature has given all of us a lot more time to experience nature, instead of merely reading about it. Especially impressive was Hibbard's section on "Definition and Delimitation," in which he summed up the burgeoning confusion of books on ecopsychology and their relationship to what Roszak has put forth as his statement on ecopsychology. More problematic is the difficulty of separating environmental psychology from ecopsychology, which seems very clear until we include the work of James A. Swan.³¹ Almost every book and essay on ecopsychology fails to consider Swan's groundbreaking research on "sacred places," while giving praise to the Gaia hypothesis: yet James Lovelock wrote the forward to Swan's book.

From a historical perspective, Swan was a very early contributor to the perspective many are now calling ecopsychology, which raises another point of contention, the increasing reference to ecopsychology as a field. It is an extraordinary presumption to proclaim this disparate collection of pioneers that have yet to agree on a common definition, history, methodology, theoretical, and conceptual orientation are even getting close to establishing a field. This raises one of the many questions I have concerning ecopsychology's future: should it become a separate discipline within psychology? Ecopsychology certainly needs a place, but where? Currently, I remain unconvinced that the concerns people have expressed while waving the banner of ecopsychology are limited solely to the discipline of psychology, or what we presently refer to as scientific inquiry.³²

Nevertheless, I have begun to tread beyond the limitations of this essay and will return to my concern with ecopsychology's orphan status later. In regard to the concerns for an annual conference (so that those of us interested in ecopsychology's evolving definition and discussion can have a place to thoroughly explore these issues), we must ask who would organize such a meeting. There are those that oppose a narrowly defined discipline of ecopsychology, including Roszak and Metzner. In late 1993 Roszak and Metzner agreed that ecopsychology should not be viewed as an emerging discipline within psychology.³³ Instead, ecopsychology can be understood as a critique of social science and can be more widely characterized as a wide-ranging critique of Euro-American science. This harks back to my previous concern about our present limits of scientific inquiry.³⁴

I spent a few days discussing these concerns with Roszak, Metzner, Walsh, and others at the 25th Anniversary Convocation of the Association for Transpersonal Psychology conference held in Pacific Grove, California, in August 1993. These questions and unresolved concerns about the limits of our scientific inquiry motivated Metzner to organize the 13th International Transpersonal Psychology conference "Toward Earth Community: Ecology, Native Wisdom and Spirituality," held in Killarney, Ireland, in May 1994. Nevertheless, I have yet to read any significant summary and/or response to the variety of concerns that were raised at either of these conferences. Among this variety of concerns was Greenway's contribution, which provided him with the opportunity to suggest his own definition of ecopsychology as

. . . defining it as a language drawn from the fields of ecology, various psychologies, anthropology, and philosophy that expresses the human/nature relationship in enough depth to reveal the dynamics of why we are destroying our habitat.³⁵

Summary

One of this section's key points is that psychology has failed to address the human-to-nature relationship, which is why ecopsychology's concerns need a forum where they can be considered. The question of where ecopsychology fits in remains unanswered. More precisely, *I remain unconvinced that the concerns people have expressed while waving the banner of ecopsychology are limited solely to the discipline of psychology, or what we presently refer to as scientific inquiry.* These concerns continue to cry out for a decent hearing and a forum for discussion. In other words an annual conference where all of us interested in these concerns can collectively

address them. All of these concerns hinge on the practical question: Who is going to organize this meeting?

Wrestling with Naess and the Deep Ecology Movement

Persistent why's and how's lead to philosophy.
Arne Naess

The complexities of Arne Naess's personality and the variety of intellectual influences that have shaped his philosophy of "radical pluralism" are difficult to pin down. In chapter 4 of *Toward A Transpersonal Ecology*, Fox wrestles with summing up Naess's amorphous character.³⁶ I too have wrestled with Naess, physically grappling with him in the Naropa Institute's parking lot during our first meeting at the Human In Nature conference May 5, 1991. Although a thorough discussion of the complex relationship between the deep ecology movement and ecopsychology exceeds this essays limits, the brief overview provided here will assist us in understanding many of the core insights that these movements share.

My personal involvement with the deep ecology movement began in the fall of 1989. Soon thereafter, while attempting to discuss this budding interest with a young student environmental activist, I experienced how important it is to choose the right name for a movement. Upon hearing the term *deep ecology*, he replied: "Is it too deep that it's over our heads?" This is a common criticism and misunderstanding of deep ecology. Those interested in a detailed examination of this misunderstanding and a critical inquiry into the deep ecology movement should read *Toward A Transpersonal Ecology*.³⁷

Beginning our discussion with a clear definition of the deep ecology movement is therefore essential. Beyond all else, the deep ecology movement is the process of asking deeper questions; it is the pursuit of an ongoing inquiry into the nature of things. Fox makes this clear:

In [his] "Deepness of Questions" [essay] Naess argues that "questions are roughly divided into everyday, technical, scientific and philosophical" and that asking progressively deeper questions—asking strings of why and/or how questions—eventually takes one beyond the realm of the everyday, the technical, and the scientific and into the realm of the philosophical. In Naess's view: "Persistent why's and how's lead to philosophy" . . . This strikes me as an elegant and simple way of answering the question What is philosophy?—a question to which many philosophers seem unable or unwilling to provide any kind of simple, easily communicated answer.³⁸

According to Henryk Skolimowski, this definition of the deep ecology movement still has its limitations. Skolimowski has argued that the deep ecology movement stops short of establishing itself as a complete philosophical position because it is founded solely on a method of critical thinking or analysis; telling us: “No philosophy of lasting importance has been built on denials.”³⁹ Consequently, says Skolimowski, the deep ecology movement lacks a clear statement of what it stands for. What, in other words—beyond the belief in a radical egalitarian population stance—does the deep ecology movement believe in?

It was this kind of deep questioning that was on the minds of Naess and George Sessions when, in April 1984, they chose to embark on a camping trip to Death Valley, California. Alan Drengson and Yuichi Inoue added the editorial note that this meeting between Naess and Sessions, “marked fifteen years of thinking on the principles of the deep ecology movement.”⁴⁰ Immersing themselves in the stark beauty of this place, their conversations led them to articulate the platform principles that people who say they support the deep ecology movement would choose to hold. It should also be especially noted that Naess abhors referring to these platform principles as *deep ecology*, because this name suggests a reified thing that has definite boundaries and limitations.

Furthermore, Naess makes it clear when he speaks that his aim has never been to create any specific discipline called deep ecology.⁴¹ This is why Naess always refers to his work in this area as “the deep ecology movement,” because he wants to connote a dynamic process. The deep ecology movement can best be understood as *a process-oriented method of self-examination that is helpful toward re-awakening our co-evolutionary relationship with all natural systems*. In other words, the deep ecology movement is a methodology that is useful toward our remembering that we are all integral aspects within a web of co-evolutionary relationships. It is this conceptual framework and cognitive re-awakening that we need to internalize and feel a sense of empathy with before we can truly begin to understand and appreciate what Naess means by the deep ecology movement.⁴²

Naess is therefore not the least bit interested in establishing a lasting philosophy or an established discipline: an attitude that is shared by Roszak and Metzner’s agreement that ecopsychology should not be viewed as an emerging discipline within psychology. The question that remains to be answered is this, What, exactly, the beliefs associated with this process-oriented method of critical inquiry known as the deep ecology movement are, remains unanswered.

Summary

The central contribution of this section was the point *that the deep ecology movement is a process-oriented method of self-examination that is helpful toward re-awakening our co-evolutionary relationship with all natural systems*. This is a point we need to repeat more often because so many people have misunderstood it.

Platform Principles of the Deep Ecology Movement⁴³

Naess considers the platform principles of the deep ecology movement to be the briefest way to explain his position on environmental studies. Naess is quick to point out that his articulation of these principles should not be treated as a catechism; this kind of rote learning is completely contrary to what the deep ecology movement represents and would be totally inconsistent with Naess's "radically pluralistic views." Instead, Naess considers these platform principles to be handy reference points, like the North Star, that can help us navigate our process of questioning.

1. The well-being and flourishing of human and nonhuman Life on Earth have value in themselves (synonyms; intrinsic value, inherent value). These values are independent of the usefulness of the nonhuman world for human purposes.
2. Richness and diversity of life forms contribute to the realization of these values and are also values in themselves.
3. Humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy vital needs.
4. The flourishing of human life and cultures is compatible with a substantial decrease of the human population. The flourishing of nonhuman life requires such a decrease.
5. Present human interference's with the nonhuman world is excessive, and the situation is rapidly worsening.
6. Policies must therefore be changed. These policies affect basic economic, technological, and ideological structures. The resulting state of affairs will be deeply different from the present.
7. The ideological change is mainly that of appreciating life quality (dwelling in situations of inherent value) rather than adhering to an increasingly higher standard of living. There will be a profound awareness of the differences between big and great.

8. Those who subscribe to the forgoing points have an obligation directly or indirectly to try to implement the necessary changes.⁴⁴

Again, this platform should not be taken as a catechism or a methodology that we can learn to apply through rote memorization. Many environmental activists I have met do, however, treat this platform as a catechism. This is because Naess has failed to mention often enough in his publications that *this platform is only a helpful list of reference points to assist us in navigating our process of deep questioning.*

As a consequence, environmental activists and philosophers like Skolimowski have become confused. Without this understanding it is easy to misinterpret this platform as nothing more than a list of denials, or the things we are saying *no* to or the things that we need to stop doing.

1. One and five – we are saying *no* to unlimited growth based solely on human use-value.
2. Two and Three – we are saying *no* to our selfish human tendencies and the urban military industrialist mentality that has, in many cases, consumed animal, plant, and mineral resources until extinction.
3. Four – we are saying *no* to population increase.
4. Six – we are saying *no* to the current socio-political policies that continue to perpetuate One to Five.
5. Seven – we are saying *no* to the current Euro-American scientific perspective whose conceptual narratives continue to shape our worldview and guide our actions.
6. Eight – indeed the only thing that Naess and Sessions are saying *yes* to in this platform is that all of us who share these concerns need to begin doing something about One to Seven.

We therefore need to remind ourselves again that this platform is a means to guide our process of deep questioning about what needs to be done to create a better world. The absence of telling us *how* to create this world is consistent with Naess's radically pluralistic stance. Naess does not spell out the specific means in this platform of how to create a better world because he wants us to figure it out for ourselves. This is why the deep ecology movement is a dynamic process and not a reified discipline with established boundaries; Naess wants all of us to continue asking ourselves deeper questions. Likewise, Roszak and

Metzner seek to encourage our wide-ranging re-examination of the established infrastructure of EuroAmerican science.

We should, therefore, applaud Skolimowski for his questions, because his criticism serves to remind us of the broader social-psychological and environmental concerns that continue to loom like dark clouds on the horizon. My own inquiry has been guided by questions such as: What kinds of inner journey's and what courses of social action can humankind embark on in order to heal its dissociation from nature? What method(s) can humankind use to rediscover the wisdom of the body? What new questions must humankind ask itself to re-establish its basic trust of nature's processes as intrinsically perfect and whole? How do we create a coherent, co-evolutionary, sustainable culture? What kinds of value choices are necessary for us to live our lives by in order to create this kind of world? How can we today—right here and now—bring this kind of wisdom into our lives in a way that incorporates the best of what indigenous wisdom and Euro-American science has to teach us?

Summary

The key point of this section is *the platform principles of the deep ecology movement are not a catechism to be learned by rote*. This platform is only a methodology to guide our ability to ask deeper questions about what needs to be done to create a better world. *The reason Naess does not tell us how to create a better world is he wants us to figure this out for ourselves*. Hence, to proclaim that one is a “radical pluralist” does not support a belief in anarchy. *Radical pluralism means a respect for a diversity of well argued points of view through a process of asking progressively deeper questions about what needs to be done to create a better world*.

Animism, Shamanism, and Ethnobotany: Ecopsychology's Link with the Transpersonal⁴⁵

One of the many questions that remains unanswered as ecopsychology continues to evolve its discussion is whether the deep ecology movement will come to an end? According to Fox's thorough discussion of the deep ecology movement's theoretical development and its subsequent misunderstanding, he has argued that it is time to say “farewell to deep ecology.”⁴⁶ In place of the deep ecology movement,

Fox argues for what he has referred to as *transpersonal ecology*. Fox argues that Naess's philosophical sense of the deep ecology movement is the most distinctive approach, which he sees as

. . . one that involves the realization of a sense of self that extends beyond (or that is *trans-*) one's egoic, biographical, or personal sense of self, the clearest, most accurate, and most informative term for this sense of deep ecology is, in my view, transpersonal ecology.⁴⁷

Michael Zimmerman defends Fox's use of the term transpersonal ecology in his⁴⁸ book *Contesting Earth's Future: Radical Ecology and Postmodernity*, telling us that

. . . Fox distinguishes between a formal, a popular, and a philosophical sense of deep ecology. The *formal* sense, which Fox believes he has undermined, describes deep ecology as "deep questioning" to ultimate norms. The *popular* sense refers to the [deep ecology platform] DEP, but within the larger Green movement there is nothing particularly distinctive about DEP's affirmation of ecocentrism and its criticism of anthropocentrism. Hence, Fox concludes that what is distinctive about deep ecology is its *philosophical* sense, which holds that self-realization leads beyond egoistic identification toward a wider sense of identification. Since this view and the notion of wider identification are both compatible with transpersonal psychology, Fox proposes that deep ecology change its name to *transpersonal ecology*.⁴⁹

Limitations with Fox's discussion of transpersonal ecology have been pointed out by Homer Stavelly and Patrick McNamara in their essay "Warwick Fox's 'Transpersonal' Ecology: A Critique and Alternative Approach."⁵⁰ But Stavelly and McNamara's criticisms of Fox fall far short of Metzner's more exacting criticism.⁵¹ The one exception in Stavelly and McNamara's essay is their discussion of what I have referred to as "the need for ritual."⁵²

Mentioning the communal rites required to release the archetypes of Self-Realization! opens the way to another problem with Fox's account of transpersonal ecology, that is, his continuing focus on the individual to the exclusion of the group. In fact, humans are creatures of culture, and are not fully human without enculturation.⁵³

In spite of my praise of Stavelly and McNamara's views of ritual or communal rites, I cannot support their comment that "humans as creatures of culture are not fully human without enculturation." Yes enculturation does make us human, but at what price?⁵⁴ Becoming enculturated can also lead to what Maslow referred to as "the psychopathology of the average." Maslow and other humanistic psychologists have voiced their concern about the need to break away from the overriding emphasis on conformity within modern society. This includes the policing action of therapists preoccupied with the client's adjustment and adaptation. I agree with Stavelly and McNamara

that conformity, or enculturation, is our natural orientation as social creatures, which represents our need for security and community. The problem is that enculturation has the tendency to degenerate into becoming synonymous with the herd or group as our symbol of social identity. Indeed the more we conform in our thoughts and behaviours to the ways Wall Street wants us to act, the better we end up serving the whims of industry as the willing (or unquestioning) consumers of their products.⁵⁵

Rather than viewing ritual as a technique to facilitate enculturation, I perceive ritual as a dramatic reenactment of universal archetypal truths that represent its therapeutic and transpersonal value. This is why I am cautious about developing an ecotherapy until we spend more time asking deeper questions about ecopsychology's relation to animism, shamanism, and ethnobotany, which I will say more about in a moment.

Bringing the focus of this discussion back to Fox, in many ways I continue to support his arguments for adopting the name *transpersonal ecology*. But Fox and I parted intellectually after a four-hour conversation on June 20, 1994, in Totnes, England. Our meeting took place less than a month after I had attended the 13th International Transpersonal Psychology conference in Killarney, Ireland (which included a post-conference workshop with Metzner on "Remembering The Earth").⁵⁶ Fox and I parted intellectually because I disagreed with his refusal to support Metzner's continuing research in ethnopharmacology, and what I perceived as his very critical position regarding Metzner's support of animism and its links to shamanism. Fox and I officially parted several months later with his cordial resignation from my doctoral committee in January 1995.

From my perspective, Fox's failure to embrace ethnopharmacology, transpersonal anthropology (which has renamed itself SAC or the Society for the Anthropology of Consciousness), its study of animism and links to shamanism, is where he, Stavely, and McNamara miss the point Metzner is making with his emphasis on *green psychology*.^{57, 58} Following up these insights, on April 6, 2000, at the 20th Annual spring SAC meeting, in Tucson, Arizona, I organized its first session on ecopsychology titled "Ecological Consciousness: Shamanism's Challenge to Science."⁵⁹ Continuing to develop this perspective, I presented the lecture "Ecopsychology: Escaping the Night of the Living Dead" at the 31st Annual Transpersonal Psychology conference, held at the University of British Columbia on August 5, 2000.

Since this meeting, another forum has begun to open up for ecopsychology through Humanistic Psychology. In the spring 2001, the

Journal of Humanistic Psychology published a special volume on ecopsychology. But so far I have not heard of any attempt to organize an ecopsychology focus group within humanistic psychology. Since humanistic psychology has a tradition of philosophical criticism, this might be a path of discussion that would not immediately focus on ecopsychology's application as a therapy.⁶⁰

Summary

One of the central questions raised by Fox is whether the deep ecology movement will come to an end. This is still an open question and one that I anticipate exploring in future conversation forums and essays. In particular, I look forward to inviting those who have aligned themselves with the deep ecology movement to ask deeper questions about the importance of embracing animism, shamanism, and ethnobotany.⁶¹

Resumé: Where Are We Now and Where Are We Going?

In resumé, this chronicle has sought to trace the many paths of ecopsychology's origins. Thirty-four years have passed since the first Earth Day celebration, thirty-one years have passed since Naess first presented his views on the deep ecology movement, and twelve years have passed since the publication of Roszak's book *The Voice of the Earth*, bringing us to this moment of reflection on where we are now and where we are going. On one hand, I have considerable praise for Metzner, Naess, and Roszak's purity of vision to perceive ecopsychology and the deep ecology movement as:

1. an unbounded process of critical inquiry devoted to addressing the embarrassing omission of humankind's relationship with all natural systems;
2. a method of examining the unexamined contradictions and unconscious infrastructure of ideas holding together our views of Euro-American science; and
3. a means of self-examination, self-confrontation, and self-realization!

But, on the other hand, ecopsychology and the deep ecology movement's growth have been stunted because its message has had difficulty finding an audience. Where, by refusing to become a member

of any specific discipline to anchor it, ecopsychology has been set adrift like an orphan searching for a home. More than ever, the time has come to begin putting into practice ecopsychology's and the deep ecology movement's emphasis on diversity—reaching out to mainstream environmentalists, philosophers, anthropologists, theologians, sociologists, psychologists, and those involved in ecocriticism, and beginning the political process of coalition building.

One of the many ways we can begin this process of coalition building and invite this knowledge into our conscious awareness so that we can create the kind of place we want the world to be requires gaining control over the kinds of stories we tell about ourselves, because stories tell us about our past, allowing us to remember and become whole. Thus,

1. If we want to change the way that other people think about us, and the way that other people treat us, the first step is to use our imagination to change our story.
2. To reinvent our self.
3. To transform our self into the kind of person we want to be.
4. This points to the importance of visionary experience, because visions tell us about our future. Visions give us inspiration and hope.⁶²

Metzner's own evolving perspective has led him to make one of his most definitive statements concerning these issues in his book *The Well of Remembrance*.⁶³

Those of us descended from European ancestors are naturally moved to ask whether anything in our own tradition is relevant to surviving the ecological crisis. This book explores the animistic-shamanistic worldview of the aboriginal inhabitants of Europe.⁶⁴ *The Well of Remembrance* is [therefore] an exercise in ancestral remembrance—the kind of re-membering that is the healing antidote to dis-membering. In German, to remember is *erinnern*, which literally means “interiorize,” to know with inner knowing. We have become painfully disconnected from the conscious knowing and perception of our *participation mystique* in the living processes of Earth. Our animistic, shamanistic ancestors had this awareness of symbiotic relatedness with the natural world. Through listening and reflecting on their ancient stories, we may be able to awaken the nature goddesses and gods slumbering in the inner recesses of the collective unconscious.⁶⁵

Metzner clarifies his position on this point in his book *Green Psychology: Transforming Our Relationship to the Earth*.⁶⁶

While I do not mean to suggest that we must all become pagans and worship the ancient gods again, I do believe that by reconnecting with the nature religion of our ancestors, we can recover something of the imaginal sensitivity and ecological spirituality that is the collective heritage of each of us. A tremendous

spiritual revitalization can take place when we recognize the natural world and the divine world as intimately interwoven with each other. I see this as a kind of re-membering through which the dismemberment of human consciousness from Earth could be healed.⁶⁷

This emphasis on re-membering the dismemberment of human consciousness from our awareness of symbiotic relatedness with the natural world harks back to Metzner's reasons for forming the Green Earth Foundation, whose broad agenda provides us with a good starting point from which to begin building a multidisciplinary coalition. To accomplish its aim, the Green Earth Foundation suggests that we begin the healing and harmonization of humankind's relationship to the earth through three transformations.

1. Transforming the *human-to-animal* interaction from one of arrogance, domination and destruction of species to a right relationship of mutuality, empathy, and conscious co-evolution, with respect for the natural relatives of the human species.
2. Transforming the *human-to-plant* interaction from one of green-motivated exploitation, non-sustainable agriculture and biosphere destruction to a right relationship that protects habitats, preserves biodiversity, and acknowledges mutual interdependence.
3. Transforming the interaction of *humans to the elemental environments* of earth/land, water and air from the present state of chemical warfare, pollution, toxic waste accumulation and degradation to systematic right relationship in which we acknowledge, re-balance and repair the disastrous degradation that has already occurred.⁶⁸

This vision of a new green earth capable of weaving together a multidisciplinary coalition can only begin through our shared commitment and courage to embrace it.⁶⁹ Who among us has the courage to embrace this vision of a new green earth? A call to action that Keith Volquardsen has aptly expressed in his song,

Towers of Steel

Finding a book with pages bent and brown
Wandering through the ruins of a city of old
The young man wasn't sure of what he'd found
And so he stopped to read the ancient story it told
Of people in power deep in their ways of war
It was an ageless fire raging out of control
Blinding them to what would be lying before
They never stopped to heed one last desperate call.
Towers of steel in the sunshine glisten
Many will hear but few will listen
Wrapped in their working lives
Unaware that something is wrong

Signs all around us, nature is warning
Some are protesting, many are scorning
Soon you will realize they cannot come along
Leave all the lowlands, run to the mountains
Underground springs and natural fountains
Will help you survive the madness you must go through
Move from the cities, run to the country
There will be refuge for only the chosen few.
You who have gazed on this ancient story
Standin' in what's left of our technical glory
You are again from the garden forbidden
In you the seeds of tomorrow are hidden
Prophets and pastors and political masters
Were all swept away when the damage was done
Still from their laughter a choice of disasters
Looms in the distance for those who live on.⁷⁰

Some of us reading this poem will have negative associations with Volquardsen's reference to "the chosen few;" believing it to be an exclusionary statement suggesting that only "Gods" chosen people are going to be saved from the collective crises that are threatening the future existence of humankind. This is not how I interpret this statement: I like to think of "the chosen few" as those of us who decide, as a consequence of our own efforts and experiences, to awaken and become part of a group of like-minded seekers that are wandering in search of deeper and more highly integrated patterns of wholeness. We are reminded by Metzner in his book *The Unfolding Self*⁷¹ that this search for "the chosen few" has

been beautifully expressed in the following paradoxical saying by the great thirteenth-century Chinese Zen Master Ekai, also called Mumon.

When you understand, you belong to the family;
When you do not understand, you are a stranger.
Those who do not understand belong to the family,
And when they understand they are strangers.

The first line refers to our ordinary situation—accepting conventional social reality and experiencing the acceptance of belonging to a "normal" family. But, as the second line states, one who awakens, who experiences inner realities and questions previous beliefs, will feel like a stranger in the conventional world. The third line tells us that those who seek and question, searching for knowledge and enlightenment, find then that they are part of another family, the family of other alienated seekers, others "who do not understand." They are for him or her what Goethe called the *Wahlverwandschaften*, the "chosen relations." As the fourth line states, these alienated seekers understand only that they are strangers in this world, and

because they understand this, they do, in the eyes of the unawakened, become strangers. This is why in so many cultures there are traditions of the “holy fool,” the “wise idiot,” the eccentric, quirky person who turns out to be the wisest and most enlighten one of all.⁷²

Belonging to the “normal” family harks back to the earlier comment about conformity, which is synonymous with the herd or group as our symbol of social identity, and which Maslow referred to as the “psychopathology of the average.” Waking up and beginning to question this overriding emphasis on conformity alienates us from people whose social-psychological adjustment and enculturation has transformed them into unquestioning members of the herd. Thus it is not a mandate from some other-worldly god, but our own alienation and aloneness that motivates us to seek out our like-minded “chosen relations” with whom we can begin to create a new sense of community. We could, of course, recognize this search for our “chosen relations” or “the chosen few” as a recognition of “the God within,” which is an insight that is frequently experienced in *entheogenic* encounters associated with the practice of ethnopharmacology, shamanism, and other animistic traditions.⁷³

This need for awakening “the God within” is the challenge that we have yet to meet as humankind faces its possible extinction from the social, psychological, and environmental crises that we have created through our dismemberment of consciousness from our symbiotic relationship with all natural systems.⁷⁴ Humankind’s collective future is in our hands. It is, therefore, up to each and every one of us to find within ourselves the courage to create this multidisciplinary coalition and begin working toward the healing vision of ecopsychology, the deep ecology movement, and the Green Earth Foundation. The time is now to drink from the well of remembrance and re-awaken the vision of the transpersonal within us all.

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Notes

¹ Turner 1994.

² Hibbard 2003.

³ Fox 1990b. In her review of *Toward A Transpersonal Ecology* (1990b), Alastair S. Gunn gives it solid praise. Telling us that not only is it the most comprehensive overview of deep ecology written to date, but it "would make an excellent core text around which to base an upper level or graduate course on deep ecology" (p. 181).

⁴ Greenway 1994, 1999.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Greenway 1994; Scull, 1999.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Scull 1999.

⁹ Roszak 1969.

¹⁰ Roszak 1992.

¹¹ Roszak 1994, p. 8.

¹² Schroll 2000f.

¹³ Roszak 1998.

¹⁴ Walsh 1984b. Walsh first pointed out this observation in his presentation “World At Risk” (1984a). He repeated this message in his presentation “Revisioning Tomorrow: Psychological Understandings for Survival” (1985). I had spoken with Walsh on these issues at past conferences and had the opportunity to briefly talk with him again on June 17, 2004, at the 16th International Transpersonal Psychology conference, held at the Riviera Hotel in Palm Springs, California, June 13-18, 2004.

¹⁵ Minelli and Schroll 2003; Schroll 2000c.

¹⁶ I do not remember the exact date, but in November of 1997 I attended an annual conference sponsored by Pheasants Forever in Grand Island, Nebraska. During one workshop session facilitated by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission that dealt with the concern of preserving habitat, I articulated the idea of treating the symptoms Vs getting to the philosophical and psychological origins of these symptoms. Not only did the farmers and ranchers attending this workshop grasp the importance of this concept, this idea was published in the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission newsletter as a central concern toward guiding the considerations of future policy and planning of habitat restoration.

¹⁷ Nader 1990.

¹⁸ Meeker 1995, p. 22.

¹⁹ During a conversation that I had with Meeker at his home on December 14, 1997, he acknowledged I had correctly articulated his thesis (Schroll, 1997); my discussion of Meeker’s thesis also appears in (Schroll, 2000f; Minelli & Schroll, 2003). Meeker added that a new more concise edition of *The Comedy of Survival* has been published by the University of Arizona Press, Tempe, AZ, 1997b.

²⁰ Schroll 2004b; 2004a.

²¹ Devall 1991, p. 140.

²² Fox 1990a.

²³ Metzner 1990.

²⁴ Metzner 1992.

²⁵ Fox 1990b.

²⁶ A complete discussion of the deep ecology movement’s relationship to ecopsychology exceeds the limits of this essay. Fox, in *Toward A Transpersonal Ecology*, has summed up the diverse history of ideas and disparate movements that

eventually gave birth to the deep ecology movement. The deep ecology movement began in Oslo, Norway, with its founder Arne Naess and his now classic 1973 paper “The Shallow and the Deep, Long-Range Ecology Movement” (Naess, 1973).

²⁷ Hayward 1990.

²⁸ Fox 1991.

²⁹ Metzner 1991, 147–152.

³⁰ Hibbard 2003.

³¹ Swan 1990.

³² My criticism that ecopsychology’s concerns are not limited solely to psychology or what we presently refer to as scientific inquiry is discussed in essay 41, “Worldviews In Collision/Worldviews In Metamorphosis” (Minelli & Schroll 2003, pp. 65–83). These concerns have been echoed by Roszak in his book *The Gendered Atom: Reflections on the Sexual Psychology of Science*, 1999.

³³ Metzner 1993a; 1993b.

³⁴ Minelli & Schroll 2003; Roszak 1999.

³⁵ Greenway 1994.

³⁶ Fox 1990b.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 92.

³⁹ Skolimowski 1984, p. 285.

⁴⁰ Drengson & Inoue 1985, p. 49.

⁴¹ Naess 1994a; 1994b.

⁴² Schroll’s more complete discussion of the need to feel a sense of empathy with all natural systems is taken up in essay 46, “The Anthropology of Consciousness: Investigating the Frontiers of Unexplainable Personal and Cultural Phenomena” (Minelli & Schroll 2003, pp. 162–188), and “Ecopsychology: Healing Humankind’s Dissociation From Nature,” in essay 47 (Minelli & Schroll 2003, pp. 189–211).

⁴³ The process of deep questioning of ultimate norms has its limits. Fox points this out in chapter 4 of his book *Toward A Transpersonal Ecology* (1990b), providing a thorough example that demonstrates our questioning of ultimate norms does not always lead us to an environmentally aware worldview or self-realization, and/or transcendence. Instead, something more is often needed to boggle our minds out of the habits of cognition associated with consensus reality or rational awareness (Schroll 2004a). Charles T. Tart has referred to this as the need for “essential science” (Tart 2000; 2004), which I like very much having now been made aware of this work. Tart’s idea of “essential science” is what I have been referring to as the need for “integral science” (Minelli & Schroll 2003). Still another important point has been raised by Harold Glasser, who argues that: “. . . only those ultimate norms that allow for the derivation of the deep ecology platform can be classified as deep ecological norms” (Glasser 1997, p. 80). Thus Naess’s method of asking deeper questions does not violate his platform principles. A complete discussion of Glasser’s criticism of Fox exceeds the limits of this essay.

⁴⁴ Naess & Sessions 1995, pp. 49–50.

⁴⁵ I used this theme as the title of a panel I organized and moderated at the 16th International Transpersonal Association conference (which included Peter Russell, Charles T. Tart, and John Mack) held at the Riviera Hotel, Palm Springs, California:

Myth, metaphor, and story are the soul of science and are the threads that weave the myriad bits of experimental data into a meaningful and coherent whole. Science without story, without myth, and without metaphor fails to have any means of expressing ethics because the very fabric of existence lacks the means to guide its actions. Gaia as a living, self-organizing, organic system, is the most ecologically oriented cosmology available to envision and create a coherent, co-evolutionary, sustainable culture. The essential point is Gaia is not a puzzle to be figured out and analyzed: it is an experience that needs to be felt. But without transpersonal experience, animism too becomes only organized religion. Helping others experience and make sense of this remembrance of our original ecological wholeness is the shaman's role as cosmic web-weaver and inner-galactic emissary. This panel will explore this emerging perspective as ecopsychology's link with the transpersonal (Schroll 2004b).

⁴⁶ Fox 1990b, pp. 141–145.

⁴⁷ Fox 1990b, p. 197.

⁴⁸ Zimmerman 1994.

⁴⁹ Zimmerman 1994, p. 50.

⁵⁰ Stavely and McNamara 1992.

⁵¹ In spite of the grand praise Metzner gave Fox's book *Toward A Transpersonal Ecology* (1990b), he has also provided the most thorough criticism (Metzner 1991). Stavely and McNamara's essay would have been considerably better if they had built on Metzner's insightful comments. Stavely and McNamara's essay goes no further than Metzner's criticisms and, in many ways is less thorough than Metzner's. Metzner agrees with my criticism of Stavely and McNamara's essay, telling me shortly after reading their essay he sent Stavely and McNamara a copy of his 1991 review of Fox's book (Metzner 1997). My discussion of Metzner's criticism of Fox exceeds the limits of this essay. This discussion has been taken up at length in my essay "Personal, Ontological and Cosmological Identification: Searching for Consensus and Clarity." (Schroll, forthcoming, a)

⁵² On the one hand, ritual provides a context for community alliances and facilitates enculturation; and is thereby a key component in maintaining transpersonal ecological consciousness. The theoretical development of an ecopsychological perspective or transpersonal ecological consciousness postulates: 1) An increased identification of our personality as fundamentally connected and co-evolving with the living creatures of the earth, the cosmos, and all forms of culture. 2) An increased awareness that our actions or decisions affect the present and future growth, health, and well-being of all existence. And 3) The consequences of postulates one and two will result in an increase of our actions of environmental and humanistic ethics motivated by our metamotivation or being-needs. On the other hand, the question that remains to be answered is what kinds of experiences are able to shift our awareness so profoundly? This question refers to the relevance of entheogenic experiences that I briefly examine later in this essay. Nevertheless, a more thorough examination of this question exceeds the limits of this essay and has been taken up in (Schroll, 2004a).

⁵³ Stavely and McNamara 1992, p. 210.

⁵⁴ Schroll forthcoming, b.

⁵⁵ A more complete discussion of Maslow, humanistic psychology, and our need to break away from the policing actions of therapists is explored in essay 43, “The Historical Context of Transpersonal Psychology” (Minelli & Schroll 2003, pp. 104–133).

⁵⁶ Metzner and Pinkson 1994.

⁵⁷ Metzner 1999; Minelli & Schroll 2003; Schroll 2000f.

⁵⁸ My defense of the revival of animism, shamanism, SAC and their relationship to ecopsychology is discussed in essay 46, “The Anthropology of Consciousness: Investigating the Frontiers of Unexplainable Personal and Cultural Phenomena” (Minelli & Schroll 2003, pp. 162–188). I will continue to build on this discussion of the main philosophical differences between Fox’s, Metzner’s, and my own perspective in (Schroll forthcoming, a), whose evolving discussion will assist us in understanding why I believe Metzner’s green psychology represents a broader framework than Fox’s transpersonal ecology.

⁵⁹ Schroll 2000a; 2000b.

⁶⁰ A discussion of the varieties of contributions to ecopsychology that are beginning to emerge from humanistic psychology exceeds the limits of this essay. This discussion will be taken up in greater detail in (Schroll forthcoming, a).

⁶¹ Schroll 2004b; 2004a.

⁶² Minelli & Schroll 2003, p. 75.

⁶³ Metzner 1994.

⁶⁴ Metzner 1994, pp. 1–2.

⁶⁵ Metzner 1994, p. 13.

⁶⁶ Metzner 1999.

⁶⁷ Metzner 1999, p. 133.

⁶⁸ Metzner 1992.

⁶⁹ A more complete discussion of Metzner’s vision of a new green earth can be found in Metzner 1994; chapter 8 of Schroll 2000d; and Sturluson 1994, pp. 81–91.

⁷⁰ Volquardsen 1986.

⁷¹ Metzner 1998.

⁷² Metzner 1998, pp. 253–254.

⁷³ Ott 1995.

⁷⁴ I have referred to this dismemberment of consciousness from our symbiotic relationship with all natural systems as *cultural amnesia* (Minelli & Schroll 2003, pp. 203–205). My discussion of cultural amnesia has been referred to by Tart as *consensus trance* (Tart 1987, pp. 83–106).