*The Trumpeter*
ISSN: 0832-6193
Volume 28, Number 1 (2012)

# Editorial

It is a renewed privilege and pleasure to introduce this issue of The Trumpeter. While reading each contribution, I was, once again, reassured of the insightful maturity of the authors as representative of so many other voices, mostly unheard in the midst of what now appears to be a decisive evolutionary crossroads in the Anthropocene. Somehow, other commonly used epoch contexts, such as "pre-historical," "historical," "The 21st century," become only abstractly descriptive when faced with our collective planetary burdens and a looming-dire exacting transition. The cliff-boundary of our diverse pasts with narrowing possibilities for a secure future seems so well-demarked with the likely global consequences of human-caused chaos, affecting so many classes of organisms, that not to talk about, see, and/or prepare for this species-monumental threshold is equivalent to perpetual blindness rather than mere ignorance. The word "madness" comes to mind.

To the extent that these views and experiences fully represent (or simply intersect) deep ecological thinking, they sum up what the poet Gary Snyder referred to as "real work": "living with integrity, realizing the consequences of our actions, and taking responsibility for them" (quoted from Salter, 1993). Quoted in the same* is Bill Devall's definition of deep ecology, including: "[deep ecology is] not a movement among academics or intellectuals…We are neither left or right."* It is this "real work" that continues to set the 'right' tone in the present issue. A humorous (and sad) footnote from Alan Watt's The Way of Zen, describes "…a politician in San Francisco who so detests the political Left Wing that he will not make a left turn with his car" (p.117). As Alan Watts suggests, this manner of displacement leads to circular, not forward, motion. The contributors in this issue, turning neither left nor right but hedging us forward, present us with a diversity of ideas challenging us to operate at this higher level of "real work."

In no particular order, for example, Alan Warner's Canadian bicycle journey and experiences, Sea to Sea by Bike, describes a locomotion perspective, time-slowed with time-taken, that has become antithetical (antiquated even) to the drive-and-push manner in which we merely pass over the surface of "place." In his own words: "The long bike trip pushed us to live patiently and openly in the present."

While addressing a 'sense of place' and rethinking 'humanism,' Paul Lindholdt echoes deep ecological perspectives while situating our place in nature: "Not for their own sake, not because nature is alive and life has been accorded legal rights, but simply because saving nature saves our particular values and heritage, we ought to make the environment a central organizing principle of civilization." In Antidotes to Humanism, Lindholdt re-introduces the loss of a 'sense of place.'

In Spinoza, Deep Ecology and Human Diversity, Brenden MacDonald presents an environmental perspective of schizophrenia as a malady-product of social chaos, a 'social rather than a personal' condition. Even if aspects of his thesis are at odds with mainstream clinical medical perspectives, it still resonates, for example, with Paul Shepard's view that a profoundly transformed social environment, particularly during sensitive periods of development, is key to understanding modern mental illness.

C. A. Bowers argues for remedial environmental philosophy (my tag) when it comes to presenting philosophy. Bower presents and challenges educators with Gregory Bateson's epistemological (and pedagogical) principles to enquire further into the linguistic foundations of communicating environmental problems and situations.

Paul Chamberlain's delightful and poignant narrative, A Winter's Tale, approaches "the teaching of the elder's" format, recapping and reasserting Inuit mythological wisdom.

Carol Burbank shares an excellent book review of Leslie Main Johnson's Trail of Story, Traveler's Path: Reflections on Ethnoecology and Landscape. Johnson's enthoecological work continues in Trail of Story as an "interest in sustained, endangered and obsolete landmarks of key plant localities into an analysis of the representation of place kinds, or ecotopes."

In a philosophically rigorous and extended presentation, Neil Kessler ably proposes and deals with an identification and exploration "of the strengths and weaknesses of a pragmatist metaphysics of chaos and its effect on theories of human-nature relationships." Thoughtful queries for example, into understanding/viewing the universe as "fundamentally relational instead of chaotic," are raised.

Sebastian Malette's, From Knowledge to Ontological Awakening: Thinking Nature as Relatedness, becomes an important complement article to the aforementioned ontological contributions making this issue of a piece. Malette delves at great length and depth into the construct/problem of "ecological valuation." Readers familiar with previous Trumpeter's issues will discover a recurrent and central theme in Malette's work (and in the work of other authors in this issue): that of re-interpreting our relational ethos with natural processes—"nature."

The diversity (and serendipitous convergence) of themes, their encompassing and relevant scope, their scholarly work, their artful presentation, and wide horizon-viewing make for a rewarding reading experience. We are all honored by their fruits.

Jorge Conesa-Sevilla

Managing Editor, uchitola@yahoo.com

*Deep Ecology, Susan Salter Reynolds, Los Angeles Times, 9/5/1993