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The Solitary Walker in the Political World

The Paradoxes of Rousseau and Deep Ecology

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Rousseau argued forcefully for the superiority of a life lived in accordance with “the simplest impulses of nature,” but his complex (some would say contradictory) understanding of the relationship between humans and “nature” is rarely cited as a source of inspiration by those seeking to reform the human relationship with the natural world. We argue that the complexities of Rousseau’s political thought illuminate important connections between his works and the programs put forth by deep ecology. In Part One, we explore the theoretical connections between Rousseau’s account of the human fall from nature and major works of radical environmentalism. In Part Two, we offer suggestions for a reconsideration of Rousseau’s work that may illuminate the paradoxical political requirements of deep ecology’s recommendations for a more ecological human life. We hope to illustrate how a careful reading of Rousseau’s work may serve as the basis for fruitful questioning of environmentalist thought.

Keywords: *Rousseau; deep ecology; environmentalism; compassion; identification*

In his account of environmentalism as a modern ideology, Stephen Bronner argues that Rousseau represents an important turn in the status of nature in modern political philosophy because he “tried to reverse the trend” evident in

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the works of Bacon, Hobbes, and Locke, all of whom treated nature as “atomic, inert, and reducible to its constituent parts,” a mere physical resource to be manipulated at will for human use. However, Bronner claims that Rousseau “never developed a genuine philosophy of nature: the ‘natural’ served merely as the critical point of reference for confronting an amoral notion of ‘progress’ and a profoundly decadent form of ‘civilization.’”¹ We think that Bronner’s dismissal of Rousseau is premature and that Rousseau’s works contain a comprehensive reconsideration of the fundamental character of the human animal, the causes of historical changes in human behavior, and a credible account of the process by which these changes altered humans’ relationship to the natural world. Rousseau shows how these changes have been harmful; that is, how man’s estrangement from nature is fundamentally linked to his estrangement from his own natural (i.e., physical) self as well as from other (human and nonhuman) beings. Furthermore, we argue that Rousseau’s account of humans’ estrangement from nature provides a crucial vantage on radical environmentalist thought. Rousseau’s view of the cause and contours of the human “fall” from nature is one that is generally shared by radical environmentalists, particularly deep ecologists; understanding this connection can illuminate our understanding of contemporary radical environmentalism.

We have chosen to focus on deep ecology because its proponents distinguish themselves from other environmentalists by claiming to be concerned with the root causes of humans’ environmentally unsustainable ways of life. Their works explore the fundamental tensions between the individual and the whole, and thus they ask questions that have always been central in the history of political thought and Rousseau’s thought in particular.² “Deep ecology,” which is sometimes characterized as “transpersonal ecology” and which is situated within the broader category of “ecocentric thought,” refers to both a diverse grassroots movement and a group of thinkers whose views inform this movement’s approach to explaining the philosophical and spiritual roots of environmental problems.³ Arne Naess, a Norwegian philosopher and mountaineer, coined the term “deep ecology” in the early 1970s to underscore what he saw as the superficiality of the mainstream, or “shallow,” environmental movement, which occupies itself with technological and managerial solutions to the problems of “pollution and resource depletion.”⁴ According to deep ecologists, this approach is misguided because it implicitly accepts the Cartesian, instrumentalist view of the natural world that has led to the current environmental crisis. The primary tenet of Naess and Session’s “Deep Ecology platform” is that all forms of life have intrinsic value and an “equal right to live and blossom.”⁵ For deep ecologists, environmental degradation is as much a *symptom* of a profound crisis of human spirit

and culture as a concern in itself. The alienation of humanity from nature is the “deepest” concern of deep ecologists.

Although the connection between Rousseau and deep ecology is largely unacknowledged, Gary Snyder, a poet, essayist, and one of the deep ecology movement’s major figures, has proclaimed, “One of the most remarkable intuitions in Western thought was Rousseau’s Noble Savage: the idea that perhaps civilization has something to learn from the primitive.”⁶ In light of comments like this one and important similarities that we will elucidate between Rousseau’s works and those of contemporary environmentalist theorists, one might wonder why Rousseau is not recognized more widely or discussed more prominently by environmentalist thinkers.⁷ Deep ecologists never seem to go beyond the myth of the noble savage, and commentators have not explored Rousseau’s insights in their efforts to explain, or even critique, deep ecology’s troubling paradoxes, particularly what has been characterized as a tendency to anthropomorphize “nature.”⁸

But perhaps this is not so surprising. Arthur Melzer begins his work on Rousseau, “I am not a Rousseauian, nor do I know anyone who is,” and it has been widely noted that Rousseau’s work, like his life itself, appears to be confused and self-contradictory.⁹ The ambiguity of both Rousseau’s philosophy of nature in the *Second Discourse* (hereafter cited in text as *SD*) and the apparent contradictions between it and his political recommendations in other works do not translate easily into practical politics. The complex and paradoxical character of Rousseau’s *corpus* may lead thinkers with programmatic agendas to shy away from summoning Rousseau’s arguments and language or even recognizing an affiliation with him.¹⁰ This reticence may be compounded by the fact that some commentators claim that Rousseau’s political writings helped lay the groundwork for at least one of the most ruthless dictatorships of modernity. Put simply, adopting Rousseau as one of your own can put you in bad company.

Rousseau’s *Second Discourse*, like many works by ecological philosophers, eulogizes the “natural state” of human beings so eloquently that it might be tempting to conclude that he is encouraging us to pursue a return to that state. This is, in fact, the defining message that many first-time readers take from the text. Voltaire himself is perhaps the most famous among them; he wrote to Rousseau, “Never has so much wit been used in an attempt to make us animals. The desire to walk on all fours seizes one when one reads your work.”¹¹ Yet as many readers have noted, Rousseau simultaneously praises in theory and rejects in practice the possibility of a great return to nature by human beings. His most emphatic statement on the irreversibility

of our evolution is found in the oft-quoted passage from note i that begins with the sarcastic question, “What! Must we destroy societies, annihilate thine and mine, and go back to live in forests with bears?” Rousseau insists that, “for men like me, whose passions have forever destroyed their original simplicity,” there is no simple return to nature (*SD*, 201–202).¹² In his *Dialogues*, Rousseau puts it more concisely: “Human nature does not go backwards, and one can never return to the times of innocence and equality when one has left them; that is one of the principles on which [I have] insisted the most.”¹³ His rejection of a substantive return to the natural origins of human life culminates in his celebration of the restrictive constitution of the *Social Contract*. The highly cultivated (as well as coercive) character of Rousseau’s recommendations for righting man with himself and nature, which become clear in the *Emile* as well as the *Social Contract*, surely offend the tastes, if not the political and intellectual commitments, of many environmentalists.

We argue that it is precisely the puzzling connection between Rousseau’s analysis of the “fall of man” and his prescriptive writings that contemporary environmentalists ought to consider. In short, we suggest that anyone seeking to profoundly reform human interaction with the natural world must consider *why* Rousseau praises the natural state, and yet is ultimately committed to recovering human happiness and environmental sustainability through means that are, by his own account, distinctly *unnatural*. A careful study of Rousseau affirms the importance of reconciling man with himself in order to restore, or rather to forge on new terms, man’s prelapsarian unity in nature. Thus, in Part One, we explore the important connections between the accounts of the causes and character of humanity’s fall from nature as it is presented in the *Second Discourse*, and the writings of radical environmentalists, especially those associated with deep ecology. In Part Two, we reconsider deep ecology in light of the paradoxical relationship between Rousseau’s diagnosis of humanity’s “illness” and his “prescriptive” writings. We discuss a series of connections between deep ecology’s idea of self-realization and Rousseau’s disparate plans to manipulate *amour-propre*, the very passion that facilitated humanity’s fall from nature, to show why Rousseau paradoxically insists on creating artificial models that imitate the natural wholeness we have lost. Deep ecology, we argue, must be understood as relying on just such an approach even as it invokes the notion that we go “back to the Pleistocene.”¹⁴ By reading deep ecology through Rousseau, we can better understand why its call for “an ecological approach to being in the world”¹⁵ represents a formal rather than substantive imitation of a life lived in accordance with the “simplest impulses of nature.”

Part One:
Rousseau's Philosophy of Nature
in *The Second Discourse*

We begin with the classic statement of what we have called Rousseau's "philosophy of nature" in his *Second Discourse*.¹⁶ While Rousseau was not the first to develop a pastoral myth about the earliest times, in the *Second Discourse* he provides an unprecedented philosophical basis for the contention that humans enjoyed their most peaceful, healthy, and contented existence in a life more firmly embedded in the natural world. As Roger Masters has argued, Rousseau redefined "the natural" as "the original."¹⁷ Thus, in this work, Rousseau claims to discover the "natural" character of human beings by looking to the origins of the species "at the beginning" in "the pure state of nature" (in the First Part) and then offers possible explanations of how "two facts given as real"—our original, natural existence and our contemporary unsustainable vanity—"are to be connected by a series of intermediate facts which are unknown or considered as such" (in the Second Part) (*SD*, 141).

The *Second Discourse* is Rousseau's account of how humans changed from a peaceful nomadic species of generally equal individuals firmly embedded in the natural world into the "tyrant of himself and nature." As such, it stands at the head of the long line of "decline narratives," which are a staple of contemporary environmentalist thought.¹⁸ These narratives describe humanity's distant past as a state of ecological harmony and discuss the path by which we have fallen to our present state of degradation. Works fitting this general description are found in nearly every stream of environmental thought including ecofeminism, eco-Marxism, the social ecology of Murray Bookchin, and deep ecology.¹⁹ Rousseau's account of humanity's "cumulative degeneration" justifies the ways of nature to men, absolving nature (as medieval theologians had absolved God) of the roots of evil in the world.²⁰ It reaffirms that "nature is good," and contains the roots of narrative accounts of the tension between nature's goodness and human disorder that inform deep ecology and other streams of environmentalist thought.

Rousseau anticipates modern evolutionary science, as well as the considerable environmentalist literature that repudiates the basic assumptions of anthropocentrism. Humanity's claim to ontological superiority over the animals and dominion over the natural world requires first of all a cosmology where humanity and nature are fundamentally distinct. The reconciliation of man and nature may be *the* crucial conceptual step for all radical environmentalisms: "Any attempt to correct or reverse the modern degradation of nature must involve a move away from dichotomizing the human and the nat-

ural, and appreciate the way in which humans are embedded in, and constituted by, their interaction with nonhuman nature."²¹

Rousseau may be the first thinker in the Western tradition to provide a systematic critique of human exceptionalism. He undermines the "dichotomy" between man and nature by portraying "natural man" as very much like all the other animals. While Rousseau's natural man has the innate *capacity* to exercise the power of will, the actual expression of this capacity is entirely contingent.²² Rousseau even leaves open the possibility that other animals may possess a similar latent capacity, even if it has not yet been manifested.²³ In rejecting all claims to the fundamental superiority of human beings, Rousseau argues that humans and other sentient animals are equally worthy of moral consideration.²⁴ Similarly, deep ecology relies on undermining concepts of humanity as an *essentially* special species to define one of its central platform principles: "the well-being and flourishing of human and nonhuman life on earth have value in themselves . . . independent of the nonhuman world for human purposes."²⁵

Rousseau reasons that humans in the state of nature had neither the inclination nor capacity to oppress others in the true sense of the word. Rousseau's "natural man," while seeking only to secure his own survival, acts in a way that is generally consistent with the continued well-being of both the natural systems and the other human beings around him. He is subject to no law other than his inclinations and yet poses at most a very limited threat to human or nonhuman others. Thus, Rousseau dismisses the old definitions of "natural law," insisting that any "law" or system of right that is operable in the "state of nature" must be understood by beings in the state of nature with only the equipment that they would have in that state.

The key to this system is his insistence that *pitié* is a natural sentiment in humans, and that this "first and simplest operation of the human soul . . . inspires in us a natural repugnance to see any sensitive being perish or suffer" (*SD*, 95–96).²⁶ Natural *pitié*, he argues, is "so natural that even animals sometimes show noticeable signs of it" (*SD*, 130). Based on his understanding of this passion, Rousseau claims that "[natural man] will never harm another man or even another sensitive being, except in the legitimate case where, his preservation being concerned, he is obliged to give himself preference." He then expands on this claim, arguing that

[A]s they [sensitive beings] share something of our nature through the sensitivity with which they are endowed, one will judge that they too ought to participate in natural right, and that man is subject to some sort of duties toward them. It seems, in effect, that if I am obliged to do no harm to my fellow man, it is less because he is a reasonable being than because he is a sensitive being: a quality

that, being common to beast and man, ought at least to give the one the right not to be uselessly mistreated by another. (*SD*, 96)

Whereas Aristotle had identified natural right as a “rule of reason,” accessible only to rational creatures (men and gods) and Hobbes and Locke had reserved “natural rights” to human individuals, Rousseau offers a new principle: “*Do what is good for you with the least possible harm to others*” (*SD*, 133, italics in original). In the state of nature, this principle compels all sensitive creatures to act *as if* they placed value upon others even though neither humans nor the other animals in the state of nature are conscious of the value that they respect. Only human beings, and only after the human soul has been fundamentally remade by “successive developments,” are capable of failing to obey this natural compulsion.²⁷

The combination of this “natural reluctance” to see, let alone cause, other beings to suffer and extremely limited desires makes Rousseau’s “natural” human race much less environmentally destructive than the one we find in the modern age. With a much smaller human population, moreover, the earth was plentiful enough for those who did inhabit it to meet their limited needs with ease, and without being compelled to struggle against each other or the natural environment around them (*SD*, 116).²⁸

The birth of the domination of nature and other human beings was simultaneous: [A]s soon as one man needed the help of another, as soon as one man realized that it was useful for a single individual to have provisions for two, equality disappeared, property came into existence, labor became necessary. Vast forests were transformed into smiling fields which had to be watered with men’s sweat, and in which slavery and misery were soon seen to germinate and grow with the crops. (*SD*, 151–152)

The expansion of the scope of human desire that this transformation effected ultimately led to the new technologies, growing populations, and human conflicts that have inflicted untold burdens on the natural world. In short, Rousseau argues that human beings have developed desires that the world—and as we might state it today, the planet’s resources—can never entirely fulfill. The “consumption dilemma” pondered by environmentalists—that our desires are infinite while the planet’s resources are finite—may in fact receive its most comprehensive historical explanation in the *Second Discourse*.

A more fundamental parallel with deep ecology, though, is Rousseau’s contention that no increase in our domination or production can make us happy. In fact, he even portrays the two as inversely related. Both Rousseau and proponents of deep ecology argue that human beings are estranged from

nature, and unhappy for it.²⁹ Deep ecology has contributed more than its share to the fast-growing literature that indicts the current economic model not merely on the basis of the intensive resource use it entails, but on its failure to engender human happiness.³⁰ As Arne Naess often repeated, “people will necessarily come to the conclusion that it is not lack of energy consumption that makes them unhappy.”³¹ Indeed, the “voluntary simplicity” movement, a deep ecological solution, follows from a Rousseauian recognition that exacerbated human wants are the source of both our environmental and existential problems.

The spontaneous adherence to the natural necessities that Rousseau characterizes as “natural law” collapsed (and human domination of self, other, and nature began) at the moment that human beings gained self-consciousness. This turning point of Rousseau’s philosophical anthropology, the awakening of the “sentiments of preference,” marks the accidental and contingent birth of the passion that dominates modern human beings, *amour-propre*. *Amour-propre* is related to but distinct from the simple love of one’s own immediate living (*amour de soi*) that was present in man in the “pure state of nature” and is present in all other animals.³² *Amour-propre* is at the root of the civilized man’s love of his own well-being, broadly defined as what is good for himself, his reputation, and those persons and objects that he would place in the category of “his own.”³³ This restless and malleable passion underlies Rousseau’s account of humanity’s transformation from a solitary being to a social one, and all of its consequences. “He who willed that man be sociable touched his finger to the axis of the universe. With this slight movement I see the face of earth change and the vocation of mankind decided.”³⁴

Deep ecologists never directly refer to Rousseau’s distinction between *amour-propre* and *amour de soi*, but they do accept something akin to the theoretical history that he constructs from the triggering mechanism of the birth of *amour-propre*.³⁵ *Amour-propre* can explain how a creature who was originally and naturally a “physical being unproblematically embedded in physical nature” could make the astonishing transition into “the tyrant of himself and nature” (*SD*, 115).³⁶ Rousseau’s account fills a troubling theoretical gap in the causal chain of events that must connect ecologically sustainable “primal peoples” to their modern descendents.³⁷ Whereas man in the state of nature was “scarcely profiting from the gifts nature offered him, far from dreaming of extracting anything from her” (*SD*, 143–144), with *amour-propre* awakened, human beings are increasingly interested in appropriating the natural world. With the developments of metallurgy and agriculture, humans effected a series of changes that undermined our connection to nature, but Rousseau insists that this transformation was guided by neither

biological need nor a conscious plan for human well-being so much as by amour-propre's unnatural and insatiable quest for esteem that the self enjoys in the eyes of others.³⁸

In his famous indictment of that "imposter" who first advanced the notion of private property (*SD*, 141–142), Rousseau certainly suggests, like Hegel, Marx, critical theorists, and most emancipatory environmentalist thinkers, that the political structure is constructed as a bulwark of privilege. Yet Rousseau looks "more deeply" by placing its origins before property and power in the *inclination to desire* any type of privilege. The expression of amour-propre causes people to seek to be "elites," more powerful and more admired than their neighbors. The machinations of these elites ultimately bring to fruition many of the problems associated with our environmental crises, but we ought not to allow ourselves to be too convinced that one group among human beings is alone responsible for the fall. Rousseau argues that it was the transformation of human nature itself that made possible the conspiracy of some elites among us, and thus is the true cause of the degradations that humanity inflicts on the planet.³⁹ As we will see in the discussion of the philosophy of ecological self-realization, deep ecologists, like Rousseau, focus on the rebuilding of a unified human self from the fragmented and conflicted wreckage left (and wreaked) by amour-propre in their efforts to cure modernity's pathologies.

Lest we think that the "fatal acquisition" of amour-propre is wholly tragic, Rousseau celebrates what he calls "the happiest and most durable epoch," as an era in human development that was both "the best for man" and "the veritable prime of the world" (*SD*, 150–151).⁴⁰ The early hunter-gatherers of this period, living in families and the first villages, were at a type of "golden mean." The self-consciousness rendered active by amour-propre provided an enhanced "sentiment of their own existence" beyond the simple feeling of satisfaction accorded by a full stomach, but their ability to harm each other or the environment was severely limited. The distinction between this period and the industrial ages, then, is primarily one of *scale*. The ugly side of amour-propre manifested itself even in these first societies, as they sometimes fought battles with neighboring villages or killed a neighbor over the love of a potential mate (*SD*, 149–150).⁴¹ Nevertheless, the damage was small until agriculture necessitated more complex social units, metallurgy provided more lethal killing machines, and technology facilitated greater control of the natural world.

As we will show in Part Two, deep ecology's approach to righting man with nature relies on the positive possibilities of uniquely human passions and capabilities. Many deep ecologists acknowledge the clear distinction between their project and a simple "return to nature." As Devall and Sessions

argue, we “seek not a revival of the Romantic version of primal peoples as ‘noble savages,’ but a basis for philosophy, religion, cosmology, and conservation practices that can be applied to our own society.”⁴² The nature of the deep ecology project, moreover, is not simply animated by the practical impossibility of return. As Arne Naess claims, “The rich reality is getting even richer through *our specific human endowments*.”⁴³ Both passages suggest that at least some deep ecologists recognize that being “human” in the developed sense gives us something wonderful that cannot be enjoyed by animals, namely the sentiment of our own existence, the self-conscious realization that we are whole and happy.⁴⁴ But while praising primal cultures and using them to develop self-conscious norms that are then to be applied to reforming (not simply destroying) contemporary societies, deep ecology is not as explicit about the fact that this involves accepting the developed human capacities that activated our misguided quest for control over nature. In this regard, the philosophy may not be particularly forthright with itself and its audience. We will discuss this possibility more thoroughly in Part Two.

Part Two: Rousseau’s Insight and the Paradoxes of Deep Ecology

Thus far, we have discussed the points of agreement between Rousseau’s account of humanity’s estrangement from nature and those offered by environmentalist thinkers. In doing so, we have paid particular attention to the root of the crisis that now pervades the human-nature relationship as Rousseau understands it—the development of *amour-propre*. In Part Two we will show how *amour-propre*, the very “villain” in the story of humanity’s estrangement from nature, is central to Rousseau’s proposed remedies. We suggest that Rousseau’s prescriptions for dealing with the problems posed by *amour-propre* can help us clarify some of the paradoxes that may be discerned in both the theory and practical plans of deep ecology.

As we have noted above, Arne Naess’s foundational distinction between the “shallow” and the “deep” environmental movements relies on the idea that the “environmental problem” is not contained in the sum of environmental degradation, but is essentially a crisis of the human spirit that must be addressed at the deepest levels of human identity and behavior.⁴⁵ In a similar way, we can say that Rousseau’s understanding of the fundamental transformation that *amour-propre* works on human beings’ thought and behavior is “deep”; any reform that is likely to be effective must be one that addresses the

destructive and unsustainable impulses that amour-propre awakens in us. This sentiment is echoed in Gary Snyder's insistence that "the real work" of deep ecology is to restore the unity within human beings that made it possible for them to live sustainably in the world. Human beings have set themselves at odds with all of nature in an attempt to satisfy the expansive and insatiable desires for luxury, fame, and public recognition (all products of amour-propre). Therefore, the correction of that which makes human beings unhappy will also result in the restoration of the environment, or at least the necessary preconditions for a restoration of an "ecologically harmonious balance of man in nature."⁴⁶

Any restoration of humanity's natural goodness requires returning the human soul to something like the "natural" prelapsarian unity that was destroyed by the ravages of amour-propre. As we have noted above, several recent attempts to reconcile the seemingly inconsistent elements of Rousseau's complex thought have focused on this very idea as the organizing principle that renders his work consistent.⁴⁷ Rousseau may conclude that amour-propre is with us forever, but that does not mean that we can never recover some semblance of our natural goodness and thus save ourselves *and* the planet. To explore the parallels between Rousseau's approaches to restoring this unity and the plans of deep ecology, we will begin by outlining Rousseau's own solutions to this problem, three "good lives" that he advances as restoring humans to something resembling their natural goodness. Each of Rousseau's models provides a formal imitation of the unity that characterized natural man, and yet each implicitly concedes that a substantive return to our original unity is no longer possible. We then explain how deep ecology's project of "ecological self-realization" relies on a similar approach—that is, one in which the reconciliation of humanity and nature is effected through a reorganization of the self-regarding passions. We will conclude by arguing that the careful study of Rousseau helps us to refine our understanding of how a more sustainable human life may be realized in practice.

Rousseau's "Good" Lives

Rousseau thought that modern humans might arrive at a new sort of unity within the self, even if they can never again enjoy the unproblematic unity that was possible when they had only one very limited, self-regarding passion, amour de soi, and no "sense of themselves in the eyes of others," amour-propre. One particularly fruitful way of exploring the connections between Rousseau's vision of a "post-natural" unity is to consider the relationship between "nature" and the four basic variants of the "good life" that recent commentators have identified in Rousseau's writings: the life of man in, or

very nearly in, the state of nature (discussed in our analysis of the *Second Discourse*), the life of the citizen (exemplified by the Spartans and the citizen of *The Social Contract*), the life of the “natural man in society” (exemplified by Emile), and the life of the solitary walker (exemplified by Rousseau himself, particularly in the narrative self-portrait of the *Confessions* and the *Reveries*).⁴⁸ A brief explanation of each will illuminate the possibilities that Rousseau envisioned for recreating the unity of the human soul, and help us to both understand and evaluate the deep ecological project.

We have already suggested that, for Rousseau, the life of “savage man,” a creature that lives sustainably in, or very nearly in, the state of nature is no longer an option. Rousseau does, however, offer a variant, “a savage made to inhabit cities.”⁴⁹ In *Emile*, Rousseau presents the testimony of a tutor named Jean-Jacques, who recounts how he educated a young man so that his amour-propre would be constructed in such a way as to parallel the dictates of the amour de soi. Even the most casual reader is immediately struck by the great amount of artifice that is necessary to contain and restrict Emile’s imagination, to shape and control his desires, and to channel and check his amour-propre. As his philosophic tutor notes, “One must use a great deal of art to prevent social man from being totally artificial.”⁵⁰ Emile’s life is one in which his tutor employs this art to channel amour-propre so that this conventional passion will reliably echo the small, quiet impulsion of nature. All of this is hidden from Emile’s view because he can never sense that he is subservient to another lest his amour-propre be offended by his subordination.⁵¹

Ultimately, Emile’s sense of himself, although artificial in its origins and its shape, is still importantly consistent with what it would have been in the forever lost “pure state of nature.” While he is not cruel and does no great harms, Emile lives for himself and his family more than others. His selfishness does not lead him to be destructive or dangerous to others because it is restrained by a certain type of compassion that is designed by his tutor to closely resemble the *pitie* of natural man and because his desires are few. The close connection between Emile’s amour de soi and his amour propre allows the latter to reinforce the former; the contradictions and tensions between them are minimized, and Emile can live peacefully in society while remaining nearly as whole as he would have been in the state of nature.

Among Rousseau’s archetypes of possible good lives, the person who can most actively and truly see himself as part of a “whole” is the “Spartan citizen,” the product of a society like that envisioned in *The Social Contract*. In fact, Rousseau’s citizen sees himself *only* as part of the whole and is willing to give himself for the whole because he believes in his heart of hearts that without the whole, he is nothing.⁵² Rousseau argues that such a person is in a particularly important sense no longer natural.⁵³ Rousseau admits that amour

de soi, the natural passion of the human soul, is self-regarding, and therefore, each human being in the “pure state of nature” treats his or her physical self as of primary importance. Teaching human beings to overlook themselves requires a thorough denaturing that must be accomplished through a highly regulated education that teaches children to see themselves *only* as part of the whole.⁵⁴ Thus, the citizen has few discernible vestiges of his amour de soi; he has only the amour-propre that the state’s civic education instills in him and only “sees” himself in terms of what others think of his citizenship.⁵⁵ The good citizen is therefore willing to die for the city without regret or fear.

This “artificial person” is a formal imitation of the natural unity of “natural man” in that the Spartan is never conflicted or confused by the contending passions of different types of “love of self” or different sources of duty.⁵⁶ The unity of a being that is entirely motivated by amour de soi is mimicked, paradoxically enough, by a being who has only one clearly defined and channeled conception of amour-propre and little remaining sense of amour de soi. This replacement of the latter with the former allows the citizen to avoid all the conflicts between inclination and duty that make virtue difficult and unpleasant to practice in most states. The citizen has become wholly virtuous at the price of ceasing to be at all natural.⁵⁷ This citizen, however, has definite limits to his expanded sense of self. His sense of duty is rigorously limited to the citizens of his own polity. He will always treat outsiders as though they were utterly alien because the impulse of “natural *pitié*” that operates in Rousseau’s “natural man,” making him adverse to seeing “any sensitive being perish or suffer,” is inactive. Such citizens will not weep for their enemies, because the lives of foreigners are nothing to them.

The last “good life” that Rousseau discusses is that of the “solitary walker,” as exemplified by Rousseau himself toward the end of his life and elaborated most clearly in Rousseau’s autobiographical writings. The solitary walker may be said to have developed his amour-propre to a stage in which this passion transcends attachment to particular persons and objects. Through his direct and open experience of the natural world, the solitary walker aspires to the sense of “an outright union, with either nature or existence” that Arne Naess and others have since celebrated as a “mature” sense of self.⁵⁸ The solitary walker’s sense of the world is characterized by a paradoxical dynamic between intuition and profound thought, a peculiar blend of the “high and low.”⁵⁹ In the *Reveries of the Solitary Walker* and the *Confessions*, we see Rousseau himself struggling to reach this remarkable position. These works contain Rousseau’s most beautiful nature writing and considerable evidence that he ought to be considered among the founders of that genre. Rousseau appears to offer an intuitive approach to knowing philosophical truths about the nature of man in the world that now figures very

prominently in the writings of many deep ecologists as the most direct route to the discovery of man's proper place in the world. Like subsequent and more well-known works such as Thoreau's *Walden*, Abbey's *Desert Solitaire*, and Aldo Leopold's *Sand County Almanac*, the *Reveries* features a sojourner whose felt experience of nature confirms the ecological conception of the world and thus produces an integrated vision of the human-nature relationship.⁶⁰

The experience of knowing nature through such intuition is best exemplified in several astonishing passages from the *Reveries of the Solitary Walker* in which Rousseau gives himself over to the rhythms of nature and allows his very being to settle into these motions.⁶¹

The more sensitive the soul of the observer, the greater the ecstasy aroused in him by this harmony. At such times his senses are possessed by a deep and delightful reverie, and in a blissful self-abandonment he loses himself in the immensity of this beautiful order, with which he feels himself at one. All individual objects escape him; he sees and feels nothing but the unity of things. His ideas have to be restricted and his imagination limited by some particular circumstances for him to observe the separate parts of this universe, which he was trying to embrace in its entirety.⁶²

Like proponents of Naess's "ecosophy T," which postulates the substantively interconnected nature of all living things, Rousseau is resolutely critical of an atomistic approach to the world.⁶³ He criticizes those who "fail equally to see the whole because they have no idea of the chains of relations and combinations, which is so marvelous that it overwhelms the observer's mind."⁶⁴ Rousseau claims that his study of nature is that which is appropriate for "anyone . . . who only wants to study nature in order to discover ever new reasons for loving her."⁶⁵ In some cases, the transport is so palpable that he exclaims, "Oh Nature! Oh my mother! I am here under your sole protection!"⁶⁶ Such reflections account for Rousseau's being considered the father of the Romantic movement.⁶⁷

It is easy to see that there are points of connection between the "good life" represented by the solitary walker and the ideals that are expressed by deep ecologists, but we can only make sense of them if we recognize that the solitary walker is in one crucial respect like the citizen of the *Social Contract* and Emile. None of these archetypes, not even the solitary walker, is a "natural human being" in the original and purest sense. There are two ways that even the solitary walker is *unnatural*. First, the solitary walker has amour-propre, the passion that separates conventional human beings from "man in the pure state of nature."⁶⁸ It is only the sublimation of Rousseau's amour-propre that enables him to "extend his being" to human and nonhuman others, thus mak-

ing his experience of the oneness of things possible.⁶⁹ Second, Rousseau, or at least the literary character that he presents as himself in the *Reveries* and the *Confessions*, is a construction and an ideal. Rousseau presents this constructed ideal of himself in an intricate narrative that constantly demonstrates the limits that constrain the realization of this ideal.⁷⁰ Thus, we are forced to recognize that the life of the solitary walker is one that is necessarily limited to a very few persons who can participate fully in the experiential insight of the solitary walker only under very peculiar conditions, and only for limited periods of time.

Rousseau's "Good" Lives and the Paradoxes of Deep Ecology

If each of these "good lives" relies on our acquired amour-propre, a passion absent from human beings in the state of nature, we must draw the conclusion that nature alone is not *in our present circumstances* a sufficient guide to point humans toward a good life. We would argue that deep ecology is in agreement with Rousseau on this very important point: Nature cannot be understood as providing normative guidance for human beings who have acquired the problematic passion of amour-propre and live in social environments that relentlessly encourage the dominance of that passion. "[N]ature, as Rousseau conceives it, is not teleological. It does not comprehend ends. Consequently, it does not prescribe any particular way of life for human beings once they have departed from their original state."⁷¹

"Natural human beings" did not have to be told to live in an ecologically sustainable fashion. Even if we can now exercise our reason to understand what natural impulses would have dictated in the "pure state of nature," we cannot easily follow the path that we have discovered in our species' rear-view mirror. We are saddled with desires that exceed the simple limits that amour de soi and natural pitié set for us. We now need a normative standard, a law, by which to govern our lives, and the grounds for this law will not be simply those prescribed by the pure state of nature. We are, in effect, forced to legislate one for ourselves. As Robyn Eckersley concedes, "Nonhuman nature knows no human ethics, it simply is . . . Appealing to the authority of nature (known as ecology) is no substitute for ethical argument. It can inform, inspire, redirect our ethical and political theorizing, but it cannot justify it. *That* is the task of ethical and political theory."⁷² Arne Naess may appear to contradict Eckersley's claim when he says that "people will *necessarily* come to the conclusion that it is not lack of energy consumption that makes them unhappy,"⁷³ but we argue that deep ecologists are not simply relying on a spontaneous recognition of our attachment to nature to guide all human beings to a more ecological way of being in the world. They are work-

ing to make it happen. As Eric Reitan argues, “We do not become the kind of people who spontaneously care about the environment just like that.”⁷⁴

Naess insists that the key to a conscious project of recovering a sort of unity is a reconfiguration of the human understanding of “self.” This is thoroughly in keeping with the Rousseauian paradigm we have outlined because Rousseau also thought that any attempt to provide humans with new modes of and motives for action must proceed from an effort to alter their self-conceptions.⁷⁵ The reconfiguration of our understanding of self that deep ecology promotes is one in which human beings will come to see themselves as thoroughly embedded in the world. Naess claims that this insight is characteristic of all human beings who have developed “allsided maturity” and thus the capacity to identify “with all living beings.”⁷⁶ When human beings have completely “matured,” they will cease to think of themselves as being discrete individuals and will see themselves as parts of an all-encompassing ecological whole.⁷⁷ Only then, humans will recognize that the conservation of the world is the conservation of themselves, and they will participate fully in this conservation without reservation or sense of painful duty.⁷⁸ The task of “self-realizing” is not a challenge to cultivate the moral integrity to think of others but rather to conceive of the world so broadly that we see ourselves as a part of everything.⁷⁹ Like Rousseau’s natural man, who was not *virtuous* per se but merely innocent, the self-realized individual leads an ecologically sound life by force of instinct rather than moral choice. Through ecological self-realization, such persons expand their sense of self to include the other human and nonhuman members’ ecological systems in which we live. But unlike “natural man,” we must choose to cultivate this “instinct.” We must recalibrate our intuitions so that they work like an ecological conscience. An investigation of the means by which deep ecology proposes to develop this intuition reveals key connections between Rousseau and deep ecology.

According to Naess, it is “empathy” that leads us to the level of “identification” at which “deep-seated respect, or even veneration, for ways and forms of life” becomes our infallible guiding principle.⁸⁰ The primacy of “empathy” in human “maturity” suggests that an instinctual desire to avoid inflicting pain is crucial to the development of the sense of ourselves in the world that deep ecology hopes to teach (or to lead us to rediscover).⁸¹ Consider his “paradigm” of “a situation in which identification elicits intense empathy.” He tells the story of his empathizing with the death throes of a flea that he watched through a microscope as it died in an acid solution. He identifies with the flea’s pain and claims that he could see himself in the flea.⁸² This is the very process through which *pitie* operates in the human soul according to Rousseau; it is the process of identifying the pain of others in yourself.⁸³

In essence, Naess argues that human beings can, through “maturity” of “identification,” regain on a conscious level the reactions that we, according to Rousseau, once followed unconsciously. The return to nature is not a material recreation of the conditions of primal peoples, but a reconstituting of the impulses that guided human beings in the pure state of nature, now consciously adopted as “ways of being.” Whereas natural man acted as he did because he was entirely within himself (in the bodily sense), we will now choose to act as though we are entirely outside ourselves. “[I]t is this basic sort of crude monism that we are working out anew, not by trying to be babies again, but by better understanding our ecological self.”⁸⁴ While natural man was wholly physical, Naess’s “new ecological man” wholly transcends his physical existence. Similarly, the restoration of the human individual’s inner unity is recovered by the solitary walker himself who enters into natural settings with the express purpose of overcoming the division between himself, as man, and nature.⁸⁵

Naess treats this progress as an inevitable maturing, speaking of it as “the supremacy of environmental ontology and realism over environmental ethics.”⁸⁶ But this is not “realism” in the same sense (“the crude monism”) that it is experienced by human beings in the state of nature, who need not think and cannot help but follow the dictates of the “maxim of natural goodness” without reflection or meaningful choice.⁸⁷ In a revealing final comment, Naess speaks of “the rich reality getting even richer through our specific human endowments; we are the first beings we know of which have the potentialities of living in community with all other living being.” He expresses his “hope” (but not his confidence) that these “potentialities” will be realized.⁸⁸

We would argue that the “allsided” and “mature” sense of self and the “specific human endowments” that Naess and the other proponents of deep ecology seek to promote would be understood by Rousseau as a product of amour-propre and not as an outgrowth of the naturally occurring passion in human beings, amour de soi. This can be shown by reconsidering the relationship between pitié and compassion in Rousseau’s *Second Discourse*. Rousseau argues that human beings are naturally possessed of a certain sense of pitié that allows us to empathize with creatures that are in pain.⁸⁹ It is true that deep ecology extends the sphere of moral relevance to encompass beings and systems that cannot feel pain in the same sense that a person or even a flea can. However, they build this extension on empathy, on the insistence that there are forms of what could be called “pain” involved in the disruption of any life form or system and that we as human beings can come to associate that pain with our own type of pain, thus developing and sensing empathy for their suffering.⁹⁰

Although Rousseau famously insists on the naturalness of *pitie*, a careful reading shows that a principle of compassion or empathy does not necessarily follow from the experience of natural *pitie*. Speaking of the “identification” that stimulates “natural *pitie*,” Rousseau claims that “it is evident that this identification must have been infinitely closer in the state of nature than in the state of reasoning” and that the human ability to identify with other creatures is “a sentiment that is obscure and strong in natural man, developed but weak in civilized man” (*SD*, 132).⁹¹ His language here suggests that two changes take place in our natural *pitie* as we become self-conscious beings. First, it is weakened because it has more competition in the human soul. We convince ourselves that the pain that we see suffered by, or inflicted upon, others is distinct from any harm to ourselves or our interests. Indeed, we often think that it might enhance our interests, and we can learn to watch things that by nature should torture us without shedding a tear. This ability to avoid feeling *pitie* frees us from the adherence to our natural sentiments (*SD*, 133).⁹²

But Rousseau also notes that *pitie* is “developed” in civilized man while it is “obscure” in natural man. The “development” of this sentiment is the ability to “cultivate” our sense of pity and use it to form what Rousseau would call a “sensibility.” This development is necessary because “compassion” or “empathy” and “natural *pitie*” are not the same things; the former is a transformation of the latter. As Rousseau makes clear in his discussion of the origins of language in the *Second Discourse*, natural man, like other animals, knows only particulars. We can have pity for particulars at the very moment that we see them suffering, but a generalized sense of compassion, not to mention the intellectual act of using such a sense as the basis for a normative orientation to the world, requires both rational thought and the ability to conceive of oneself as one being among other selves. Thus, the potentially enlarged “*pitie*” that we call “empathy” or “compassion” is a hybrid sentiment that is achieved by the alchemy of our natural *pitie* and our acquired *amour-propre*. This suggests that the passion by which we can feel connected in the natural world actually reinforces the distinction between the human and nonhuman self.⁹³

Thus, the shape and extent of our compassion also proves to be quite malleable and indeterminate, just as *amour-propre* is malleable and indeterminate. By contrast, Rousseau conceives of *amour de soi* as a rather static concept. Our “natural” sense of self cannot easily be altered in its fundamental shape even though its expression can be masked or mutilated by the actions of *amour-propre*.⁹⁴ Only the archetype of the solitary walker appears to be capable of consciously transforming her/his *amour de soi* to make it something more than the natural expression of our animal, physical self-interest,

but as we noted above, this transformation of amour de soi from a physical sentiment to a spiritual one requires that one experience the open-ended and expansive sense of self associated with amour-propre.⁹⁵ Rousseau's sublime transports require conscious sentiments, intellectual skills, and even scientific knowledge that can be gained only by human beings in the state of civil society.⁹⁶ Rousseau appears in the *Reveries* as simultaneously the person closest to and yet furthest from the state of man in the pure state of nature, and even he is only occasionally able to reach these levels of transport. When it is time to eat, his hunger calls him back to the more elementary sense of amour de soi that requires that we give our bodies preference.⁹⁷ He can hardly imagine that many people could ever reach such a level of transport because they are "so preoccupied by other ideas that their mind only lends itself surreptitiously to the objects that strike their senses."⁹⁸

A final understanding of the applicability of Rousseau's solitary walker to modern human beings and ecological transformation in an industrial age certainly requires a far more careful study than the preliminary thoughts offered here, but while Rousseau and the deep ecologists might disagree about the precise character of the solitary walker's accessibility, we can perhaps point to two crucial points of agreement. First, they both suggest that the broad ecological sensibility that Naess characterizes as the "mature sense of self" requires development and is not entirely accessible at a "primal" level. It is a stage that one "progresses" toward through less-developed stages.⁹⁹ Second, there is evidence that the deep ecologists also suspect that few can truly recognize the overpowering sentiment of self at one with the whole. Naess states, "Some of you who never would feel it meaningful or possible that a human *self* could embrace all living things . . . [w]e shall then ask that your *mind* embrace all living beings, and that you realize your good intention to care and feel with compassion."¹⁰⁰ In other words, at a crucial juncture in explaining the all-important concept of identification, Naess offers a directive for those who are incapable of the direct, experiential sense of universal compassion.¹⁰¹

Furthermore, if we assume that there is some truth in Rousseau's psychological evaluation of the evolution of mankind, as deep ecology appears to do, grounding Naess's "mature self-realization" in something like Rousseau's amour-propre raises fundamental questions about the character of the vision of deep ecology, and what such a realization would require. In short, if the "ecological self" that Naess talks about is a *naturally occurring* form of self-perception and self-love, a spontaneous and inevitable way for humans to see themselves, then there is little place for "art" in the evolution of a more ecological way of life. If, however, the "ecological self" is an *unnatural* or constructed imitation of the (now lost) natural that must be

taught and learned, then we must think about the means needed to effect such a change in consciousness and whether those means are acceptable to us as proportionate to the ends achieved. The most trenchant critics of deep ecology have attacked it precisely on this point.¹⁰²

We have noted that according to the model that Rousseau offers in the *Reveries*, amour de soi can be sublimated only occasionally, only by a few, and only with difficulty. On the other hand, amour-propre is very malleable. As an acquired passion, it can take on very different shapes depending on the circumstances in which a given individual acquires it. We hold that the self-realization that deep ecology wants to promote is an attempt to shape and mold the amour-propre of human beings in such a way as to make it more consistent with the requirements of human happiness and environmental sustainability. The primary means for bringing people to this understanding is education. In some contexts, proponents of deep ecology clearly argue that children should be taught in a way that stimulates this sense of self as a part of the whole by impeding the birth of even the slightest hint of atomism that might undermine the claim that all things are interrelated. Sessions cites approvingly the statement of Aldous Huxley's narrator in *Island*, "Never give children a chance of imagining that anything exists in isolation. Make it plain from the very first that all living is relationship."¹⁰³ Most ecotopias rely on education to cultivate a broad sense of self from early childhood, insulating children and others from any people who might conceive of "self" differently and enforcing behaviors consistent with that sense of self by social pressure; that is, by manipulating amour-propre.¹⁰⁴

The *Emile* is subtitled "On Education," but it may not provide the ideal model for the "ecological self" that the deep ecologists propose. As we noted earlier, Emile does no great harms, but neither does he labor to do great goods.¹⁰⁵ He lives for himself and his family and only considers others when they immediately present themselves to him. Emile's sense of amour de soi, reinforced by his carefully constructed amour-propre, keeps him closely tied to his person. Therefore, he may not be inclined to think of the world as an interconnected whole in which we are all parts. His sense of self mirrors that of the "natural man in the pure state of nature," who is still very much tied to his physical and animal existence, as much as he can be within the requirements of living, albeit on the margins, in a political society. We might suggest that a world of "ecological Emiles" would never have reached our current situation but that our current crises (numerous, acute, and steadily deteriorating) cannot be solved by educating a race of "ecological Emiles," even if the education of Emile were reproducible on a large scale.¹⁰⁶

If we are in search of a more active "ecological citizen of the whole," we might consider seriously whether some of deep ecology's long-range plans

envison a more denaturalized use of amour-propre. It is possible that deep ecology's programs can be understood, at least in some sense, as attempts to create an ecological Sparta in which amour-propre is used to completely suppress the remaining amour de soi in human beings, therefore making it possible for them to be personally whole by being wholly selfless, at least in the immediate physical-biological sense. The citizen of such a "green Sparta" might more closely resemble the picture of "complete maturity" of the "ecological self" that Naess paints. This "new ecological man" would live not only for his fellow persons but for all the members of his "mixed community" as equal parts of "himself" with his bodily "self."¹⁰⁷ Rousseau appears to suggest that such a reform is possible if a city has a "Great Legislator" "who dares to undertake the founding of a people" and "who is capable of changing human nature, so to speak." Such legislation can transform "each individual . . . into a part of larger whole from which this individual receives, in a sense, his life and his being."¹⁰⁸ In such a case, no actions taken for the good of the whole could be viewed as "self-sacrificing" because if it served the whole it would, by definition, serve the self.¹⁰⁹ In fact, many deep ecologists have argued that ecological consciousness must be so deeply ingrained that it ceases to require any particular moral choices. "'Self-realization' is essentially nonmoral."¹¹⁰ Among Rousseau's proposed models, only the citizen acts decisively for the good of a greater whole without a trace of confusion, regret, or self-conflict. Naess's directive to those who do not feel a sense of universal compassion may remind us of Rousseau's insistence that the power of the "Great Legislator" is his ability to convince people to see things "as they should appear to be."¹¹¹ In this context, we should think about *why* Devall and Sessions chose for the subtitle of their most programmatic book on the "deep ecology perspective" the ambiguous phrase "Living as if nature mattered" (emphasis added).

We must not forget that Rousseau argues that the citizen is not at all substantively natural.¹¹² But this irony should not lead us to the conclusion that the Spartan model cannot be accepted as a means to a "nature-friendly" end. The best hope for the happiness of humankind and the integrity of the planet may in fact lie in a formal, but artificial, reconstitution of our original unproblematic relationship to nature. The program of deep ecology, like Rousseau's suggestion of the "citizen," may be a paradoxical solution not unlike that which Rousseau describes in the *Geneva Manuscript* text of the *Social Contract*: "[T]he primitive state can no longer subsist and the human race would perish if art did not come to nature's rescue."¹¹³ We should not immediately reject such a proposition, however paradoxical it might sound.¹¹⁴ As Todorov suggests, "If there is a contradiction, it is in the human

condition; there is nothing contradictory in the act of observing and describing a contradiction.”¹¹⁵

But if this is the case, then there is a special danger in deep ecology’s critique of the dichotomization of man and nature; in light of what we have suggested, we must be especially suspicious of any suggestion that we might erase that distinction altogether. Insofar as deep ecologists appear to insist that the only alternative to the complete alienation of humanity and nature lies in absorbing the former “back” into the latter, it rejects the value of “our specifically human endowments” and obscures the necessarily conventional character of any human project that might address the roots of our environmental crises. If deep ecology is hiding such a conventionalist assumption, forgetting that assumption risks palpable dangers.

In Rousseau’s account, the teacher/legislator must recognize that the use of amour-propre to give a person an “expanded sense of self” necessarily plays upon those passions of the soul that stimulate pride and vanity. As such their use is always risky. The passions that are aroused may be the source of all virtuous or “beautiful” (to use the word that Naess borrows from Kant, the great student of Rousseau) behavior, but they are also the source of great evils. While Rousseau offers visions of “good human types” in which amour-propre is active, persons corresponding to these types are far outnumbered by those in which amour-propre is uncontrolled, leading to competition, environmental degradation, and the domination of both human and nonhuman others. Amour-propre is governed with difficulty.

Furthermore, we ought to consider thoroughly the consequences of a solution that might, quite ironically, have to kill nature in order to save it. While Rousseau’s thought has seemed too complex and contradictory to serve as the basis for programmatic ecological philosophies, its very complications may serve to elucidate paradoxes that any such philosophy must ultimately address. The critics of deep ecology have regularly attacked its thinkers as contradicting themselves by replacing nature with a new convention masquerading as an ontological fact, and these discussions often lead to charges of eco-fascism or worse.¹¹⁶ Rousseau himself has also been charged with authoritarian sympathies. But his account of the “deep” roots of our troubled relationship with the natural world may explain why addressing our environmental problems *demand*s that we learn to live “*as if* nature mattered.” “Natural man” could not live otherwise and did not require any instruction to follow “the simplest impulses of nature,” but if contemporary human beings are to imitate this simple unity and sustainability, we must adopt a more subtle and complex approach that takes certain risks. If so, we must be conscious of those risks and the necessities that lead us to them.

These dangers are only magnified if we hide these difficulties in the interest of providing a simpler or more actionable plan.

Rousseau presented his own vision of the intractable contradiction in the human predicament through a “system” of works that always reveal both the promise as well as the limitations and perils of his tentative solutions. The confusion that many readers find therein may reflect their heartfelt desire for simple and actionable plans that will resolve all our problems, but wishing for such a plan does not make such a plan possible. We would argue that only a frank acknowledgement of these paradoxes and an identification of their treatment in a *corpus* as comprehensive and thoughtful as Rousseau’s may, with informed argument, justify arguments that would otherwise appear to be dangerous folly or only wistful optimism.

Conclusions

In Part One, we outlined some of the key elements of Rousseau’s account of humanity’s fall from nature and the conceptual ties that link this account of the fall to modern ecological thought, particularly that of the deep ecologists. In Part Two, we suggested that if Rousseau’s account of the “illness” that makes humanity’s relationship with nature so troubled is congruent with that of radical environmentalism, we might be able to understand the programs of deep ecology in light of Rousseau’s own hypothetical “cures” for humanity’s illness. Based on this brief consideration of some key problems in deep ecology, we would suggest that reading radical environmental thought *through* Rousseau reveals that deep ecology follows Rousseau’s suggestion that humanity’s transformation from a “good,” “happy,” and integrated participant in the natural whole to “the tyrant of himself and of nature” leads to the paradoxical conclusion that human beings can only recover their prelapsarian unity by constructing a solution that concedes a certain intractable separation from nature. Each of Rousseau’s proposed “remedies” employs amour-propre, the very passion that animates the insatiable desires that are the source of our environmental predations. We have suggested that deep ecologists implicitly accept Rousseau’s view that this reliance on something like amour-propre is necessary. Rousseau’s paradoxical suggestion is that we must create artificial models that imitate the natural wholeness that we have lost. Rousseau was not hopeful that any of his solutions could be practically employed on a large scale, but this is not to say that such a solution is not possible. We would submit, however, that any solution would have to take adequate account of the complexities raised in Rousseau’s thorough and remarkable consideration of these problems.

Notes

1. Stephen Bronner, *Ideas in Action: Political Tradition in the Twentieth Century* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers Inc., 1999), 266.
2. George Sessions and William Devall describe deep ecology as being oriented around the question, "How can the individual self maintain and increase its uniqueness while also being an inseparable aspect of the whole system wherein there are no sharp breaks between self and the other?" in *Deep Ecology, Living as if Nature Mattered* (Salt Lake City: Gibbs M. Smith, Inc., 1985), 65.
3. Introduction to *The Deep Ecology Movement: An Introductory Anthology*, ed. A. Drengson and Y. Inoue (Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books, 1995), xvii–xxvii. The term "transpersonal ecology" comes from Warwick Fox's *Toward a Transpersonal Ecology* (Boston: Shambhala, 1991).
4. Arne Naess, "The Shallow and the Deep," in *The Deep Ecology Movement*, 3.
5. Naess, "The Shallow and the Deep," 4–5.
6. *Earth House Hold* (New York: New Directions, 1957), 120. Compare Murphy, "Environmentalism, Anti-Modernism, and the Recurrent Rhetoric of Decline," *Environmental Ethics* 25(2003): 79–98, 84–86.
7. This is not to say that it is *entirely* unexplored. A number of recent studies have tried to trace Rousseau's influence on environmentalist thought with various degrees of success. These include Marcel Schneider, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau et L'Espoir Ecologisme* (Paris: Editions Pygmalion, 1978); Gilbert LaFreniere, "Rousseau and the European Roots of Environmentalism," *Environmental History Review* 4 (1991): 41–72; and Kenneth Singer, "Rousseau and Modern Environmentalism." (unpublished master's thesis, University of British Columbia, 1991). Other works, including David Boonin-Vail, "The Vegetarian Savage: Rousseau's Critique of Meat Eating," *Environmental Ethics* 15 (1993): 75–84; Andrew Biro, *Denaturalizing Ecological Politics: Alienation from Nature from Rousseau to Marcuse and Beyond*, forthcoming, University of Toronto Press; Steve Vanderheiden, "Rousseau, Cronon, and the Wilderness Idea," *Environmental Ethics* 24 (2002): 169–188; and Keith Shaw, "The Shores of Saint-Pierre: Rousseau, Deep Ecology, and the Reconstitution of Humanity" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the Midwestern Political Science Association, Chicago, Illinois, April 2004), have looked to Rousseau's work to explicate particular concepts or issues of concern to environmentalist thinkers. This essay fits both descriptions to some degree. Although we disagree with him on some key points about the evolutions of Rousseau's thoughts and the character of Rousseau's environmentalist commitments, we would like to thank Steve Vanderheiden for helpful suggestions and citations. Shaw independently arrives at a similar method to that contained in this essay for exploring connections between Rousseau and deep ecology but reaches much narrower conclusions.
8. For very different versions of this critique from a number of ideological perspectives, see Michael Zimmerman, *Contesting Earth's Future: Radical Ecology and Postmodernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994); Murray Bookchin, "Social Ecology v. Deep Ecology," *Socialist Review* 18 (1988): 9–29 and "Recovering Evolution: Reply to Eckersley and Fox," *Environmental Ethics* 12 (1990): 253–274; Ariel Salleh, "Deeper Than Deep Ecology: The Eco-Feminist Connection," *Environmental Ethics* 6 (1984): 339–345 and "The Ecofeminism/Deep Ecology Debate: A Reply to Patriarchal Reason," *Environmental Ethics* 14 (1992): 195–216; W.J. Lines, "Is 'Deep Ecology' Deep Enough?" *Earth First!* 7, no. 5 (May 1, 1987): 31; Charles Rubin, *The Green Crusade: Rethinking the Roots of Environmentalism* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, Inc., 1994) 175–211; and Tim Luke, "Dreams of Deep Ecology," *Telos* 21 (1988): 65–92.

9. Three recent works that aim to vindicate Rousseau's work from the charges that it is completely self-contradictory are Tzevetan Todorov, *Frail Happiness*, trans. J. T. Scott and R. D. Zaretsky (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001); Laurence Cooper, *Rousseau, Nature, & the Problem of the Good Life* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999); and Arthur Melzer, *The Natural Goodness of Man: On the System of Rousseau's Thought* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990). We are particularly indebted to these analyses of Rousseau's thought and have adopted many of our interpretations from them. For an account of earlier attempts to reconcile the various contradictions in Rousseau's work, see discussion in Melzer, *The Natural Goodness of Man*, 4–9.

10. Melzer, *The Natural Goodness of Man*, ix, ff.

11. *The Selected Letters of Voltaire*, trans. and ed. R. A. Brooks (New York: New York University Press, 1973), 179.

12. These are notes that Rousseau explicitly says not everyone ought to read. See the "Notice on the Notes," *SD*, 98. Masters points out in his notes to the "Notice" that in the *Confessions*, Rousseau insisted that his works must be read twice to be understood, thus suggesting that the Notes are indispensable to the deciphering of the *Discourse*. The paradoxical effect is to put the radical teaching that society is illegitimate and ought to be rejected in the foreground while hiding the practical reservations about that teaching. As we suggest in Part Two, deep ecology may imitate this odd juxtaposition of emphases.

13. *Rousseau, Judge of Jean-Jacques: Dialogues*, III, as quoted in Cooper, *Rousseau, Nature, & the Problem of the Good Life*, 18.

14. Dave Foreman of Earth First! coined this phrase, and Paul Shepard echoed it in the title of his final book, *Coming Home to the Pleistocene*, ed. F. Shepard (Washington, DC: Island Press, 1998).

15. This phrase is the subtitle to Naess's seminal essay on self-realization in *The Deep Ecology Movement*, 13–30.

16. All references to the *Second Discourse* are to the text and notes in *The First and Second Discourses*, ed. R. D. Masters, trans. R. D. and J. R. Masters (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1964). References are placed directly in the text, abbreviated *SD* and page number.

17. Masters, *The Political Philosophy of Rousseau* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1968), 111–112; Cooper, *Rousseau, Nature, & the Problem of the Good Life*, 53.

18. "Environmentalism, Anti-Modernism, and the Recurrent Rhetoric of Decline." Murphy cites Rousseau's *First Discourse* in his introductory survey of "declinist narratives," but fails to mention the more obvious *Second Discourse* or its close conceptual relationship to the environmentalist narratives that he discusses.

19. We use "streams" to refer to the many different groups of environmentalist thought following the practice of Robyn Eckersley in *Environmentalism and Political Theory: Toward an Ecocentric Approach* (Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1992). For ecofeminist decline narratives, see Carolyn Merchant, Introduction to *The Death of Nature* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1980), and Val Plumwood, *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature* (London: Routledge, 1993). For eco-Marxist ones, see Donald Lee, "On the Marxian View of the Relationship between Man and Nature," *Environmental Ethics* 2 (1980): 3–16, and James O'Connor, *Natural Causes: Essays in Ecological Marxism* (New York: Guilford Press, 1998). Murray Bookchin's master-narrative of decline is *The Ecology of Freedom: The Emergence and Dissolution of Hierarchy* (Palo Alto, CA: Cheshire Books, 1982). For decline narratives from thinkers associated with deep ecology, see Paul Shepard, *Nature and Madness* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1982); Max Oelschlaeger, *The Idea of Wilderness: From Prehistory to the Age of Ecology* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1991); and Ken Wilber, *Up from Eden: A Transpersonal View of Human Evolution* (Boston: Shambhala, 1996).

20. See John T. Scott, "The Theodicy of the *Second Discourse*: The 'Pure State of Nature' and Rousseau's Political Thought," *American Political Science Review* 86 (1992): 696–711.

21. Murphy, "Environmentalism, Anti-Modernism, and the Recurrent Rhetoric of Decline," 86–87.

22. Rousseau's argument that human beings changed because of an indeterminate combination of historical circumstances, evolutionary pressures, and chance rather than some plan or providence is crucial to his insistence on avoiding admitting an essential difference between humans and other animals. See note j of the *Second Discourse* and discussion thereof in Marc F. Plattner, *Rousseau's State of Nature: An Interpretation of the Discourse on Inequality* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 1979) 23–25.

23. Rousseau suggests as much in note j of the *Second Discourse* where he proposes that future anthropologists might confirm that the developed human species is virtually identical to less-developed primates by performing an unspeakable experiment (*SD*, 208–209). See Cooper, *Rousseau, Nature, & the Problem of the Good Life*, 43–47.

24. He anticipates the reasoning of Peter Singer (e.g., *Animal Liberation: A New Ethics for our Treatment of Animals* [New York: Avon, 1975]) and other "animal rights" environmentalists. See discussion in Eckersley, *Environmentalism and Political Theory*, 42–45. Boonin-Vail uses Rousseau's discussion of *pitie* to make a broader argument about the moral consideration due to animals, "The Vegetarian Savage," 76–78.

25. See Arne Naess and George Sessions, "The Basic Principles of Deep Ecology," *Earth First!* 4 (June 20, 1984): 19, and Arne Naess, "The Shallow and the Deep, Long-Range Ecology Movement," 3–4. Also see discussion in Eckersley, *Environmentalism and Political Theory*, 28. On deep ecology's approach to the meaning of "rights" see Tim Luke, "The Dreams of Deep Ecology," 70–71.

26. Consider the discussion that begins: "Hobbes saw very clearly the defect of all modern definitions of natural right" (*SD*, 129, ff.), and the discussion in Masters, *The Political Philosophy of Rousseau*, 136, ff. Rousseau adopts fundamental elements of the "liberal project," which he opposed, and his modern intellectual descendents in the ecology movement also tend to do the same thing. For two very different discussions of ecology's roots in the thought of thinkers associated with the roots of liberalism, see Robin Eckersley, *Environmentalism and Political Theory*, 22–31 and Tim Hayward, *Ecological Thought: An Introduction* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), 130–144.

27. See Melzer, *Natural Goodness of Man*, 143–36n. Although Rousseau himself speaks of this condition as "natural right," it is important to recognize that it was less a normative rule of action than simply what natural human beings (and all other creatures) did. It is as description rather than rule that Melzer speaks of it as "natural order." We will later discuss more thoroughly the similarities and differences between Rousseau's understanding of the natural sentiment of *pitie* and the generalized sense of "identification" and "empathy" (or "compassion") that are cited by deep ecologists as the source of our moral obligations to the other entities in the natural world. At this point, it is sufficient to point out that both "natural *pitie*" and "empathy" are animated by an innate desire, grounded in identification, to see no other being suffer and that, as Pierre Force has argued, Rousseau is the first thinker to use such a sense as the basis for a system of natural right grounded in something like "pity" or "compassion." Force argues that Rousseau uses "identification" as the operative force in "natural *pitie*." See "Self-love, Identification, and the Origins of Political Economy," *Yale French Studies* 92(1997): 46–64, especially 46–51. On the importance of "identification" as the source of the "Deep ecology perspective," see Arne Naess, "Self-Realization: An Ecological Approach to Being in the World," 17; Devall and Sessions, *Deep Ecology*, 66–67; Luke, "The Dreams of Deep Ecology," 66; and Lewis and Sandra

Hinchman, "Deep Ecology and the Revival of Natural Right," *Western Political Quarterly* 42 (1989): 201–228.

28. See Rousseau's claim that "[Hobbes] improperly included in the savage man's care of self-preservation the need to satisfy a multitude of passions which are the product of society and which have made laws necessary" (*SD*, 129). For a particularly clear example, see Rousseau's argument that there would be no arguments over sexual partners in the state of nature: "Any woman is good for him" (*SD*, 135). Natural man had no sense of beauty or preference, no self-esteem that could be offended. For the same reason, relations between the sexes could not be relations of power until the first stirrings of amour-propre (*SD*, 148–149). Thus, Rousseau's account reinforces the ecofeminist argument that there is a fundamental kinship between the impulses that breed patriarchy and those that cause environmental degradation. See discussion in Plattner, *Rousseau's State of Nature*, 73–77.

29. One of Rousseau's most poignant reflections on the "progress paradox" is found in note i: "It is not without difficulty that we have made ourselves so unhappy. When, on the one hand, one considers the vast labors, of men, so many sciences fathomed, so many arts invented, and so many forces employed, chasms filled, mountains razed, rocks broken, rivers made navigable, land cleared, lakes dug out, swamps drained, enormous buildings raised upon the earth, the sea covered with ships and sailors; and when, on the other hand, one searches with a little meditation for the true advantages that have resulted from all this for the happiness of the human species, one cannot fail to be struck by the astounding disproportion prevailing between these things, and to deplore man's blindness, which, to feed his foolish pride and an indefinable vain admiration for himself, makes him run avidly after all the miseries of which he susceptible, and which beneficent nature had taken care to keep from him." (*SD*, 193).

30. Examples of this literature include Alan Durning, *How Much is Enough? The Consumer Society and the Future of the Earth* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1992); Gregg Easterbrook, *The Progress Paradox* (New York: Random House, 2003); Tibor Scitovsky, *The Joyless Economy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976). In the widely viewed video series hosted by Scott Simon, this problem is characterized as "Affluenza."

31. Devall and Sessions, *Deep Ecology*, 11. Compare this passage to that cited in note 29 above. Also note discussion in Melzer, *Natural Goodness of Man*, 138–139.

32. Rousseau's clearest account of the distinction between these two concepts is found in note o to the *Second Discourse* (221–222). For two different discussions of this fundamental distinction between amour de soi and amour-propre, see Cooper, *Rousseau, Nature, & the Problem of the Good Life*, 150–160, and Pierre Force, "Self-Love, Identification, and the Origin of Political Economy," 51.

33. *SD*, 149: "Each one began to look at the others and to want to be looked at himself, and public esteem had a value." See also Cooper, *Rousseau, Nature, & the Problem of the Good Life*, 154.

34. As quoted in Todorov, *Frail Happiness*, 8.

35. Contrast Murphy, "Environmentalism, Anti-Modernism, and the Recurrent Rhetoric of Decline," 84. Murphy notes that many environmentalist-decline narratives place the "fall" at the Enlightenment, but while it is true that the scientific revolution marks a crucial transformation of the human-nature relationships, many environmentalist thinkers place the roots of this transformation much earlier. Environmentalist suggestions that this is the case may be found in Lynn White, "The Historical Roots of our Ecological Crisis," *Science* 155 (1967): 1203–1207; William Ophuls, *Requiem for a Modern Politics: The Tragedy of the Enlightenment and the Challenge of the New Millennium* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1997); and Oelschlaeger, *The Idea of Wilderness*. The importance of the relationship between the "first fall" of humanity and the special problems raised by the Enlightenment is actively considered in both

Rousseau and environmentalist thought. It deserves far more exploration than we can offer here. Suffice it to say that Rousseau's works can be seen as identifying two distinct but related falls.

36. John T. Scott, "The Theodicy of the *Second Discourse*," 697. Andrew Biro provides a valuable genealogy of the idea that humanity is "alienated from nature" in his forthcoming book *Denaturalizing Ecological Politics*. He traces the outlines of this idea from its origins in Rousseau through the subsequent accounts of Marx, Adorno, and contemporary deep ecologists (among others).

37. See Ruth Grant, *Hypocrisy and Integrity: Machiavelli, Rousseau, and the Ethics of Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997) 146–147.

38. See Roger D. Masters, "Rousseau and the Rediscovery of Human Nature," in *The Legacy of Rousseau*, ed. C. Orwin and N. Tarcov (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997) and "Jean-Jacques is Alive and Well: Rousseau and Contemporary Sociobiology," *Daedalus* 107 (1978): 93–105. On the importance that environmentalist thinkers attach to the development of agriculture in marking the turn in human history, see Oelschlaeger, *The Idea of Wilderness*, 24–53 and especially William Ophuls, *Requiem for a Modern Politics*, 15–17. "In sum, the Neolithic Transition [from hunter-gatherers to fixed agricultural communities with private property] was the decisive event in human history. The ecological and social forces unleashed by the agricultural revolution ignited a vicious struggle for economic survival, political hegemony, and military supremacy that launched humanity on a tragic course toward civilization."

39. This may appear to suggest that Rousseau sides with the proponents of deep ecology in their dispute with Murray Bookchin and ecofeminists who insist that some human beings are more guilty than others in perpetrating our crimes against nature, but in fact, Rousseau's account encompasses both views. The accidental and contingent development of amour-propre makes the environmental "fall" of humanity possible, perhaps inevitable; elites' ruthless pursuit of objects coveted by the misshapen manifestations of amour-propre makes it worse. The latter view emerges in the *Second Discourse* in the fraudulent character of the offer that results in the first social contract (*SD*, 157–161) and the scathing critique of the unnatural character of social hierarchies (*SD*, 180–181).

40. See Cooper, *Rousseau, Nature, & the Problem of the Good Life*, 120–122.

41. Luke and others criticize deep ecologists for failing to explain their position on warfare among tribal peoples or the potentially environmentally destructive practices of their religions. "Dreams of Deep Ecology," 75–76 and 87.

42. *Deep Ecology*, 96–99. See also Sessions' praise of Aldous Huxley's "smart technology" utopia in *Island*. "Ecophilosophy, Utopias, and Education," *The Journal of Environmental Education* 5 (1983): 27–42.

43. Naess, "Self-Realization," 30 (emphasis added).

44. Cooper discusses the value of this specific type of self-consciousness as "the love of harmony" in *Rousseau, Nature, & the Problem of the Good Life*, 183–184.

45. See Eckersley, *Environmentalism and Political Theory*, 17–21 and 26–27.

46. George Sessions, "Ecophilosophy, Utopias, and Education," 30. Also see Arne Naess, "Self-Realization," 30 *ad finem*. On how these inseparable goals meet in Rousseau's "naturalism," see Cooper, *Rousseau, Nature, & the Problem of the Good Life*, 183–184 and 186.

47. Here again, we refer particularly to the works of Cooper, Melzer, and Todorov noted in note 9 above.

48. This typology of "good lives" in Rousseau is suggested in Melzer, *Natural Goodness of Man*, chapter 6, "Curing Humanity: Rousseau's Solutions." It is articulated somewhat more fully in Cooper, *Rousseau, Nature, & the Problem of the Good Life*, especially chapter 1, "The Goodness of All Good Lives," and the section of chapter 2 "Five Human Types, Three Natural Men, One Civilized Savage," 51, ff. Tzvetan Todorov suggests a somewhat different way of looking at

the same typology, placing *Emile* as a moderated “third way” between the “human” solitary and the “denatured” citizen. *Frail Happiness*, 18–19 and 55, ff. Cooper insists that Rousseau thought that all of these “good lives” were equally worthy and ought not to be considered hierarchically.

49. Rousseau, *Emile*, translated by Allan Bloom (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1979), 205.

50. Rousseau, *Emile*, 317. Also see Melzer, *Natural Goodness of Man*, 92–94 and 244–249. Our reading of the *Emile* is largely based on that in Cooper, *Rousseau, Nature, & the Problem of the Good Life*.

51. See particularly telling examples of this principle at Rousseau, *Emile*, 48, 67, ff., and 83–84.

52. *On the Social Contract with the Geneva Manuscript and Political Economy*, trans. J. R. Masters, ed. R. D. Masters (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1978), especially I. vii. 54–55.

53. Cooper, *Rousseau, Nature, & the Problem of the Good Life*, 52–53; Melzer, *Natural Goodness of Man*, 94–96.

54. See Rousseau, *Emile*, 39–40: “Good social institutions are those that best know how to denature man.”

55. Rousseau modeled much of his discussion of the citizen on Plutarch's description of the Spartans. Plutarch uses the analogy of an artificial imitation of a natural community to describe the educational plan of Lycurgus: “[H]e trained his citizens to have neither the wish nor the ability to live for themselves; but like bees they were to make themselves always integral parts of the community . . . almost outside of themselves with enthusiasm and ambition to belong wholly to their country.” *Life of Lycurgus*, trans. B. Perrin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1928), 25.

56. On the distinction between “formal” and “substantive” nature in Rousseau, see Cooper, *Rousseau, Nature, & the Problem of the Good Life*, 183–187; Melzer, *Natural Goodness of Man*, 90.

57. See *Social Contract*, II. vii. 68.

58. Cooper, *Rousseau, Nature, & the Problem of the Good Life*, 175.

59. Cooper, *Rousseau, Nature, & the Problem of the Good Life*, 172, ff.

60. In fact, in his *Confessions*, Rousseau describes the composition of the *Second Discourse* as an intuition that he received in the wilderness. *The Confessions*, trans. J. M. Cohen. (London: Penguin Books, 1953), VIII: 362. Compare the deep ecologists' accounts of “Experiencing the Wilderness.” See Devall and Sessions, *Deep Ecology*, 7–9 and 109–113; Arne Naess, “The Shallow and the Deep,” 4.

61. For instance, Rousseau, *Reveries of the Solitary Walker*, trans. P. France, (London: Penguin Books, 1979), Fifth Walk: 81–82 and 86–87.

62. *Reveries of the Solitary Walker*, Seventh Walk: 108.

63. Arne Naess, “The Shallow and the Deep,” 3.

64. *The Confessions*, XII: 592.

65. *Reveries of the Solitary Walker*, Seventh Walk: 115.

66. *The Confessions*, XII: 594.

67. This is the only context in which we find any sustained discussion of Rousseau in the writings of the major, theoretical figures of the deep ecology movement. Devall and Sessions, *Deep Ecology*, 18 and 82–84 and George Sessions, “Spinoza and Jeffers on Man and Nature,” *Inquiry* 20 (1977): 481–528, 481, and 497. Although Rousseau is mentioned in this context as being opposed to “the over-civilized vision of the Enlightenment” and as beginning a movement that is a source of deep ecology, he is not included as one of the “tenuous thread of thinkers” who constitute the “minority tradition” of which Deep Ecology is said to be the ultimate fruition. LaFreniere has traced Rousseau's influence on and through Romanticism into contemporary environmental thought. See “Rousseau and the European Roots of Environmentalism,” especially 54–66.

68. Melzer discusses the elements of amour-propre in Rousseau's own character and their relationship to his “mission” in *Natural Goodness of Man*, 256–258.

69. See Cooper's powerful essay on this topic, "Between *Eros* and Will to Power: Rousseau and 'the Desire to Extend our Being,'" *American Political Science Review* 98(2004): 105–120.

70. Both Cooper and Melzer suggest that Rousseau presents these portraits in a way that draws attention to the constructed character of his own idealization and thus the unlikelihood of its actual occurrence and the limits of our human possibilities. See Melzer, *Natural Goodness of Man*, 92: "One major purpose of Rousseau's voluminous autobiographical writings . . . is to describe the character of this most unified and natural of civilized ways of life. They also describe the bizarre and *unnatural* conditions that were needed to create it" (emphasis added). Compare Cooper, *Rousseau, Nature, & the Problem of the Good Life*, 193, n7.

71. Cooper, *Rousseau, Nature, & the Problem of the Good Life*, ix.

72. *Environmentalism and Political Theory*, 59–60 (emphasis in the original).

73. Cited in Devall and Sessions, *Deep Ecology*, 11 (emphasis added).

74. Eric Reitan, "Deep Ecology and the Irrelevance of Morality," *Environmental Ethics* 18 (1996): 411–424.

75. See Naess on the importance of altering "inclinations" as opposed to "behaviors." "Self-Realization," 26. To demonstrate the depth of this transformation as Rousseau, as well as Naess, might understand it, consider Daniel Mornet's startling suggestion that if Rousseau's heirs came to love wild nature, Rousseau should be credited with having given them "new souls." LaFreniere, "Rousseau and the European Roots of Environmentalism," 56.

76. Compare Naess, "Self-Realization," 13.

77. Naess, "Self-Realization," 14.

78. Naess, "Self-Realization," 17.

79. See Peter Reed, "Man Apart," 54–55 for a discussion of the two possible ways that this identification can work: seeing "humans as part of nature" (associated with E.O. Wilson, Joseph Meeker) and seeing "nature as a part of humans" (the "self-realization" approach of Warwick Fox and Arne Naess discussed more fully below).

80. Naess, "The Shallow and the Deep," 6.

81. See Luke, "Dreams of Deep Ecology," 66.

82. Naess, "Self-Realization," 15–16. Compare Naess's story to Rousseau's account of the anguish of the "helpless observer" (*SD*, 130–131). Rousseau says of such emotional responses to seeing pain inflicted upon others: "Such is the pure movement of nature prior to all reflection." The role of "empathy" and "identification" as the crucial element in Naess's sense of the human self is unarguable, but its manifestations in his thinking are complex and difficult. Consider his use of the story of the wolf and the elk in *Ecology, Community, and Lifestyle: Outline of an Ecosophy*, ed. and trans. D. Rothenberg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989) 198–199. For a critical commentary on "self-realization" in deep ecology, see Zimmerman, *Contesting Earth's Future*, 21–22.

83. Compare Pierre Force's argument that Rousseau was the first to use "identification" as a concept describing how a subject might place himself in the position of an object to Naess's discussion of the concept of "identification." "Self-love, Identification, and the Origin of Political Economy," 46–51. For "identification" as the basis for the recognition of biotic equality, see Naess, "Self-Realization," 17, and Devall and Sessions, *Deep Ecology*, 66–67.

84. Naess, "Self-Realization," 20.

85. Compare *Reveries*, First Walk: 32–33 and Seventh Walk: 108, as cited above.

86. Naess, "Self-Realization," 26–27.

87. See *SD*, 128 and 132–133 as well as Melzer, *Natural Goodness of Man*, 136 and 249, n19.

88. Naess, "Self-Realization," 29–30.

89. *SD*, 95–96. Also see Force, "Self-love, Identification, and the Origin of Political Economy," 46–51.

90. Consider Naess's descriptions of "killing a place" and of conceiving of life in a "broader" sense that encompasses systems and other natural phenomena, "Self-Realization," 15–16, 19–20, and 24. There are many more explicit statements of this "broadening" of life in the writings of those allied with deep ecology. See Anthony Weston, *Back to Earth* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994) chapter 4, "The Land Sings." Also see Luke's pointed critique, "Dreams of Deep Ecology," 66 and 79–81: "One must ask if humanity is naturalized in such self-realization or is Nature merely humanized."

91. For a fuller explication of the double meaning of this passage, see Clifford Orwin, "Rousseau and the Discovery of Political Compassion," in *The Legacy of Rousseau*, eds. C. Orwin and N. Tarcov (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1997) 296–320, especially 300–301. Also see the discussion of pitie in Plattner, *Rousseau's State of Nature*, 82–87.

92. "It will dissuade every robust savage from robbing a weak child or an infirm old man of his hard-won subsistence if he himself hopes to be able to find his own elsewhere." Contrast the behavior of Alexander (*SD*, 131) and "the philosopher" (*SD*, 132) who can say "in secret," "Perish if you will, I am safe."

93. See Cooper, *Rousseau, Nature & the Problem of the Good Life*, 125–126. Orwin claims that a natural man's pity can only result in his watching a fellow creature in pain in "self-absorbed horror." "Rousseau and the Discovery of Political Compassion," 300. Richard Boyd has recently provided a very persuasive account of the limitations of sentiments like empathy in democratic theory, basing his analysis on Rousseau's treatment of pitie. "Pity's Pathologies Portrayed: Rousseau and the Limits of Democratic Compassion," *Political Theory* 32 (2004): 519–546. Although the point is beyond the scope of this essay, we would suggest that much of his critique of the uses of compassion in democratic theory could be applied to its use in ecological political theories. It is analogous to some degree with the ecofeminist critique of deep ecology. See Zimmerman, *Contesting Earth's Future*, chapter 6.

94. See Cooper, *Rousseau, Nature, & the Problem of the Good Life*, 43.

95. Consider the setting of the *Reveries* and Rousseau's ambivalent attitude toward his expulsion from society. First Walk: 27–34. See also Cooper, *Rousseau, Nature, & the Problem of the Good Life*, 173–176.

96. Arne Naess praises a representative of the Lapps, an indigenous people, for expressing a sentiment that echoes "the philosophy of the wider and deeper self," but ultimately points out that this "spontaneous" sentiment would be more precise if it were informed by the more advanced philosophical formulation that Naess offers. "Self-Realization," 18–20. The connections and tensions between scientific knowledge and the ability to become absorbed in nature is a theme that is explored in the *Reveries*. See Paul Cantor, "Metaphysics and Botany: Rousseau and the New Criticism of Plants," *Southwest Review* 70 (1985): 362–380.

97. *Reveries of the Solitary Walker*, Fifth Walk: 87.

98. *Reveries of the Solitary Walker*, Seventh Walk: 109.

99. See Naess's discussion of the Lapps' sense of self, "Self-Realization," 19–20, and Devall and Sessions's characterization of the uses of primal peoples as a "source for the Deep Ecology perspective," *Deep Ecology*, 96–97.

100. Naess, "Self-realization," 24. Compare Boyd's account of the limitations and perverse reactions that might accompany "required displays of compassion" in "Pities Pathologies Portrayed," 533.

101. Peter Reed's argument for replacing Naess's ethic of seeing "nature as a part of humans" is largely based on this "weakness of an intuitionist ethic," namely "that there is no guarantee that everyone will have the same intuition." "Man Apart," 68. Reed hypothesizes that the "intuition" of awe and wonder at the great mystery and power of "Nature the Other" might be more widely felt than the intuition of "identification of self in nature." Naess insists that his approach is more

consistent with a mature self-understanding, but is hard to determine how such a finding itself could be anything other than subjective. "Man Apart and Deep Ecology: A Reply to Reed," *Environmental Ethics* 12 (1990): 185–192.

102. See the citation of major critiques of deep ecology in note 8 above.

103. Cited in George Sessions, "Ecophilosophy, Utopias, and Education," 35. Note how Huxley's language echoes Rousseau's in the *Emile* where the tutor provides a negative education by preventing the child from learning problematic lessons. See *Emile*, 68, 92–93, 96, 172, 178, et al. Huxley does not discuss the fact that not everyone at the beginning of such a society will be a child. Any adult entering such a society will have already imagined, probably already firmly believed, that he or she is a distinct individual apart from the natural whole. Shepard frankly proclaims that anyone who is old enough to read may be impeded if not prevented from experiencing the desired "perception of the world." *The Tender Carnivore and the Sacred Game* (New York: Scribner's, 1973), 259. Consider Socrates's suggestion in Plato's *Republic* that no one over the age of ten should be admitted to the city and those over this age who are already there should be "removed," 540e–541a.

104. Naess, *Ecology, Community, and Lifestyle*, 144 and 159. Also see Sessions, "Ecophilosophy, Utopias, and Education," and Arne Naess and Rob Jankling, "Deep Ecology and Education: A Conversation with Arne Naess," *Canadian Journal of Environmental Education* 5 (2000).

105. Grant notes that *Emile* is characterized by the "ordinariness of his tastes and habits." *Hypocrisy and Integrity*, 162. On the likelihood that *Emile*'s relationship with his neighbors and country will be very constrained and minimal, see *Emile*, 457 and 472–474.

106. See *Emile*, 94–95.

107. Naess, "Self-Realization," 14.

108. *On the Social Contract with the Geneva Manuscript and Political Economy*, II, vii: 68. Melzer discusses the similarities between the Legislator of the *Social Contract* and Jean-Jacques the tutor (as well as Wolmar in *Julie*) in a particularly revealing section of *Natural Goodness of Man*, 244–249. Compare Andrew W. Dobson, *Green Political Thought*, 2d ed. (London: Routledge, 1995), 123.

109. Naess, "Self-Realization," 17 and 26.

110. Reitan, "Deep Ecology and the Irrelevance of Morality," 411.

111. See Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, II, vii. 66–69. Compare again Dobson, *Green Political Thought*, 123. Note that Naess concedes that some people will be asked to live *as if* they have felt something that they have not felt but that others have told them *can be* and *should be* felt. Similarly, Rousseau claims that the Legislator must be able to transform the citizens' sense of their very pleasures and pains. Christopher Kelly provides a very enlightening discussion of this process in "'To Persuade Without Convincing': The Language of Rousseau's Legislator," *American Journal of Political Science* 31 (1987), 321–335.

112. See *Social Contract*, II, vii. 68: "The more these natural forces are dead and destroyed, and the acquired ones great and lasting, the more the institution as well is solid and perfect." Also see Cooper, *Rousseau, Nature, & the Problem of the Good Life*, 52–53.

113. *On the Social Contract with the Geneva Manuscript and Political Economy*, I, iii: 163.

114. Paul Shepard's utopian proposal in *The Tender Carnivore* claims to be just such a re-creation.

115. Todorov, *Frail Happiness*, 19.

116. See the critiques cited in note 8 above.

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