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Ecological Resistance Movements; Not Always Deep but if Deep, Religious: Reply to Devall

Bron Taylor

Ecological Resistance—Radical But Not Always Deep

In a series of articles¹ and in *Ecological Resistance Movements: the Global Emergence of Radical and Popular Environmentalism* (an edited volume reviewed by Bill Devall in the Fall 1995 *Trumpeter*) I show how Earth First! and much of the wider deep ecology movement can be understood as a religious movement. Some deep ecology supporters, including Devall, believe that to interpret deep ecology as a religious movement is inaccurate and/or counterproductive to its objectives.² I disagree. Attending to the religious dimensions in the perceptions and experiences of deep ecologists—and analyzing the myth, symbol, and rite emerging from the deep ecology movement—is neither harmful nor my creative invention. But before I pursue this point, I will respond to Devall's inaccurate and ad hominem review. Otherwise readers might be persuaded to restrict their readings regarding the nature of ecological resistance globally to those authors recommended by Devall.

Devall's review is flawed by mistakes and misrepresentations. In the first sentence he asserts that I claim to provide "the first scholarly look" at grassroots environmental resistance. I stand by what I actually said, that most of the movements scrutinized in the volume "have received . . . little scholarly attention" (p. 6) and that "one reason for this lack of attention is that many such groups have recently formed, or have only recently assumed an environmental agenda" (p. 3).³ Devall does not discuss the chapters describing several little-known movements that illustrate my point about the need for scholarly analysis.⁴

Devall also states that I do "not mention that some of the co-founders of Earth First . . . have been promoting conservation biology and scientific justifications for wilderness protection," and he complains that I neglected important visionary projects such as the Wildlands project. But under the heading "A Scientific Argument for Deep Ecological Urgency," I argued that one of three central pillars of Earth First!'s ethics is based on ecological science detailing the present anthropogenic extinction crisis and I point out that such extinctions are antithetical to the central moral pillar of the movement, namely the perception that all species are inherently valuable (p. 16). On the next page, while briefly summarizing the plural strategies pursued by Earth First! activists, I wrote that some of them "prioritize the use of scientific knowledge to argue for biological diversity in legal and policy-making venues, sometimes through Earth First! spin-offs such as . . . the Biodiversity Legal Foundation, or the

Wildlands Project." In a related note (pps. 18 and 29-30), I added, "The Wildlands Project, initiated by Dave Foreman (after disassociating himself with Earth First!) in close consultation with Reed Noss (who in 1994 became editor of *Conservation Biology*) is an innovative effort to develop a comprehensive wilderness recovery strategy for North America." I then referred the reader to my own encyclopedia entry describing this project.⁵ These quotes demonstrate glaring inaccuracies in Devall's review and underscore its unfairness.

Perhaps Devall is upset that our volume did not say enough about his own work. He complains that I and some of the book's contributors fail to mention his 1990s writings "and especially the social critique of industrial forestry and philosophical grounding for ecoforestry in *Clearcut: the Tragedy of Industrial Forestry*." I did, however, mention *Clearcut*, in an endnote that he acknowledges reading. I wrote that *Clearcut* "weaves together pictures of devastated landscapes, scientific analyses of the ecological impacts of clearcutting, and deep ecology poetry and philosophy" (p. 31, n. 30). He could have complained that I paid insufficient attention his work but it is wrong to imply that I ignored it.

Devall also states that I and my collaborators "ignored" the "social analysis by the International Forum on Globalization," an organization sponsored in part by the Foundation for Deep Ecology. This is an unfair criticism because this Forum's initial position statement was issued in January 1995, several months after the volume went into production. The Forum's kick-off "teach-in" occurred in November of 1995, more than a month after the volume's publication. It is absurd to expect the volume's co-authors to be aware of this initiative before it had gone public. Furthermore, since most of the contributors to the volume were not writing about the deep ecology movement in the first place, this criticism is over broadly targeted. I am thankful that Professor Devall has made me aware of this Forum. But since "to ignore" means "to refrain from recognizing or noticing,"⁶ which implies a wilful slight, his criticism of our inattention to it is fundamentally unfair. Moreover, since he approves of the Forum's critique of economic globalization (the planetary extension of industrial market society), I am all the more dumbfounded by his drubbing of the entire *Ecological Resistance Movements* volume. Many of its chapters, and my own conclusions, provide data and arguments supporting the Forum's analyses and agenda.

There is a fundamental unfairness in reviews like Devall's which paint an inaccurate portrait and then attack it. Such straw-man tactics hinder reasoned discussion of environmental values, strategies, and tactics. Moreover, it is either haste or unfairness to miss the stated purpose of my introductory chapter on Earth First!, which does not purport to be a history of this movement. I have discussed in more depth elsewhere the history of this movement, initially in an *Ecologist* article that was viewed as fair by the competing movement activists it characterized. In another book, I am writing in more detail about the tributaries to and distributaries from this movement. But in my chapter introducing Earth First!, my stated purpose was typological not historical. I summarized the central moral and spiritual premises that animate the movement, its typical ecological and political analyses, and the correspondingly diverse strategies and tactics employed by movement activists. My stated purpose was to pose a variety of scholarly and existential questions for the reader to ponder while reading the subsequent case studies, not to provide a detailed historical analysis.

I would be unsurprised if some deep ecology activists feel that my introduction slighted important people and efforts. But a scholar like Devall should acknowledge the stated genre and purpose of this chapter, and recognize that it is impossible to acknowledge every good person and accomplishment. This impossibility is a hopeful sign—there are too many passionate movement activists experimenting with innovative tactics for each of them to be known, let alone recognized. Still, I stand by my portrait of Earth First! and other kindred groups: it provides a fair-minded description of their moral sentiments, ecological claims, political analyses as well as a good overview of their strategies and tactics as they defend cultural and biological diversity.

Devall complains, however, that the volume's contributors were "so intent on expounding their own interpretation of deep ecology that they don't allow [my emphasis] participants to reflect on their own actions" and they "frame their analyses in terms of their own definition of 'the movement' [sic] rather than [in] the frames defined by movement participants." In several ways these statements are problematic. First, saying we did not "allow" participants to speak for themselves is nonsense; and worse, it subtly implies an ulterior motive, as if offering scholarly interpretation constitutes censorship of the views of movement participants. Second, it seems to imply that, to depict fairly the various perspectives, one must quote individuals verbatim. Third, Devall's desire that we begin with "frames defined by movement participants" seems to imply that only insiders are qualified to interpret their movements. That Devall would have us eschew "outsider" interpretation seems clear when he declines to recommend *Ecological Resistance Movements* and rather urges people "to read the original essays in the growing body of literature of the deep, long-range ecology movement." These are certainly valuable sources and I argue strongly in *Ecological Resistance Movements* that such voices deserve serious consideration.

But observers cannot take seriously Devall's desire that they ignore one of the few books exploring the global diversity of Ecological Resistance.

Fourth, Devall's statements conflate the diverse movements discussed in the volume. In one sentence he refers to all of these movements as "the deep, long-range ecology movement," in another he refers to the diverse movements discussed in the book in the singular tense. Combined with his recommendation that readers interested in deep ecology should stick to deep ecology literature, these statements mislead the reader into thinking that the volume is all about deep ecology movements. These statements also demonstrate that Devall missed a central volume finding: Not every radical environmental group in the world can be considered a kindred branch of the international deep ecology movement. Indeed, these statements show that Devall failed to discern that the volume is not about deep ecology *per se*, but rather is about the diverse forms that ecological resistance movements are assuming.

Early in *Ecological Resistance Movements* I noted that some Earth First!ers "project their own presuppositions and hopes onto movements that . . . are neither deep ecological or even self-consciously environmentalist" (pps. 25-26). Devall's review may provide an example of this tendency. In my concluding chapter I argue that, despite their great diversity, it is possible to view the described groups as kindred movements, yet without making the descriptive error of projecting deep ecological motivations upon them.

Ecological Resistance—When Deep, Religious

Rather than limiting my comments to a rejoinder, I will turn to examine a more substantive issue raised by Devall's reaction to *Ecological Resistance Movements*. Devall is among those deep ecology supporters who believe that consciousness change, from anthropocentrism to biocentrism, is the central variable upon which hinges the changes needed to halt environmental destruction and produce environmentally sustainable lifeways. This is the clear message of much of Devall's work, including his 1988 book, *Simple in Means, Rich in Ends: Practising Deep Ecology*, in which he argues that anthropocentrism is the most important variable producing environmental degradation and that this is why "anthropocentrism remains the central concern of deep ecology."⁷ Elsewhere Devall argues that "the development of [deep] ecological consciousness is . . . prior to ecological resistance."⁸

Ecological Resistance Movements suggests, on the contrary, that there is no single idea or attitude change upon which turns the needed ecological transformations. At first glance, this may seem compatible with the diversity of "ultimate premises" that Arne Naess, George Sessions, and Devall believe can yield "second" level deep ecology positions.⁹ But it can be misleading to focus exclusively on the plurality of possible ultimate premises. The "second level" deep ecology platform includes the assertion of the intrinsic value of all species, asserts that such a perspective is a moral imperative, and by implication views the rejection

of anthropocentrism in favor of biocentrism as a prerequisite to ecological restoration. Devall's modification of Naess's four level schematic even more clearly reveals that "self-realization" and a corresponding biocentrism is the form of consciousness change envisioned and viewed as essential.¹⁰ Scrutiny of the logic of "level two" statements suggest that Naess, Sessions and Devall strongly believe that only biocentric orientations can provide an adequate basis for environmental sustainability.

Ecological Resistance Movements, however, describes anthropocentric Christian peasants influenced by liberationist Catholicism striving toward sustainability in ways barely if at all distinguishable from politically radical deep ecology activists. Consequently, I note in my concluding reflections that some of the volume's case studies contradict the belief held by many deep ecologists that ecological restoration ultimately depends on overturning anthropocentric value premises in favor of biocentric ones. That my conclusion contradicts this key tenet of deep ecological faith accounts for some of Devall's hostility toward the volume. Specifically, I concluded that in the global context, the "defense of livelihood" (p. 335) and the striving for "basic human needs provide the most decisive [though not exclusive] impetus to ecological resistance" (p.336). I an-



icipated that this might offend and moreover, would probably

"surprise those radical environmentalists who believe that a transformation of consciousness, from anthropocentrism to biocentrism, is a prerequisite to ecological resistance and the eventual reconciliation of humans and nature. Our examination of the factors animating ecological resistance, however, demonstrates the inadequacy of blaming anthropocentrism as the primary cause of human indifference to environmental deterioration—because many on the front lines of such resistance movements are fundamentally anthropocentric in orientation" (p. 335).

Because my analysis here is unorthodox to the main intellectual streams of the deep ecology movement, Devall would like to ban *Ecological Resistance Movements* from the deep ecology canon and from the shelves of deep ecology supporters.

Despite my empirically-based doubts about this tenet of deep-ecological faith, I applaud contemporary efforts to promote and evoke biocentric values. I have participated in and written about "newly invented ritual processes [within the deep ecology movement, and have found them to be] powerful means of evoking and deepening affective and spiritual connections to nature" (p. 335-36).¹¹ I have seen salutary results eventuating from efforts to deepen affective connections to the land community. Consequently, I do not refer to deep ecology mysticism as "misguided" as did Jerry Stark's contribution to my volume. I do agree with him, however, that affectively and intuitively grounded values, however noble and compassionate, do not provide a sufficient basis for public discussion of environmental issues. Such value systems cannot escape relativism—the bane of all intuitionism. They may provide a basis for personal action, but they cannot provide a footing for arbitrating between incompatible, competing intuitions. For this we need a language and process for discussing environmental issues with those who do not share our intuitions and ultimate premises. I cannot imagine a better way to promote such a process than by attending to "the pragmatic foundations of rational discourse," as Stark suggested.

Of course, many pragmatic deep ecologists realize this and consequently their arguments unfold in two-tracks, sometimes appealing rationally to an ecologically enlightened self-interest, other times attempting to draw out and evoke in others the "wider-sense-of-self" so often mentioned by deep ecologists. Devall, however, is deeply ambivalent about such pragmatism:

In practical political debates, arguments based on reform and deep perspectives are both appropriate in certain situations. But the weaknesses of reform arguments should also be noted. In particular I am concerned with the dilemma of environmental activists who feel they must use reform arguments in order to be understood by political decision-makers and who reject using deep ecology arguments because they are seen as too subversive. In using reformist arguments, however, activists help to legitimate and reinforce the human-centered (anthropocentric) worldview of decision makers.¹²

This statement contains a contradiction. Deep ecology intuitions do not provide a basis for making *rational* arguments. The expression of them may move people and contribute to changes in their overall moral orientation. But sometimes supporters of deep ecology express their moral intuitions as if these were and should be a sufficient basis for others to support deep ecology-based prescriptions. Moreover, too often such activists then demonize those who do not share their intuitions. Not a few environmentalists are tired of the "holier than thou" attitudes they encounter in such radical environmentalists.

Finally, I return to the claim with which I began these reflections, that it is possible to understand Earth First! and most of deep ecology as a religious movement. I understand the fear of some that such a representation will cause people to dismiss deep ecology. In a December 1995 letter to me, Bill Devall commented,

Arne Naess selected the term "deep" rather than "spiritual" ecology because of the historic baggage in Western civilization and particularly [because of] criticisms of Christianity from modern philosophers. The 'intuition' of deep ecology was specifically stated in a somewhat vague way so that any notions that the deep long-range ecology [movement] was 'new age' could be avoided. That of course, has not kept deep ecology from being labelled by some misguided critics as just another 'new age' movement. We have consistently said that people could come to a kind of deep ecology position from various religious and philosophical positions including a 'deep' Christianity, Buddhism, native American spirituality, and possibly Hindu religious thought.¹³

Devall's insistence that deep ecology not be equated with nature mysticism is also the preference of Gary Snyder. In a 1993 letter commenting on a draft of an article I had sent to him in which I referred to deep ecology as "pagan environmentalism," he stated that he would prefer I use the phrase "deep ecology environmentalism" instead, partly because of the negative connotations of the word "pagan" in U.S. culture. Then he stated that the term deep ecology was developed precisely to avoid the negative connotations (such as Devil worship) often associated with pagan religions. George Sessions has voiced a corresponding concern, that "to reduce the Deep Ecology movement to religious/spiritual cult status is to insure its social/political marginalization."

I have two lines of response to such concerns. First, it is true that people come to a deep ecology position [platform] from various religious and philosophical premises. But it is possible to recognize this and still view deep ecology as a new religious movement. Recognizing that this movement has plural tributaries is compatible with my view that, nevertheless, deep ecology has a religious center that makes it possible to speak of it as an emerging religious tradition.

Indeed, in field research conducted since 1990, I have yet to find an active participant in Earth First! who is not animated by one form or another, one experience or an-

other, of what can fairly be labelled "nature mysticism." By this I mean that, deep ecology activists conceive of the natural world as a sacred place, as the source of all meaning and value. A central and ubiquitous exhortation by movement activists, consequently, is that humans must "resacralize" their perceptions of the Earth if they are to reharmonize human lifeways with the rest of the natural world.

In my own fieldwork I have sought to interview all deep ecology activists described by others as unreligious. But with one exception where an activist shyly declined to discuss spiritual matters, I have found that deep religious feelings and experiences animate movement activists, connecting them with the more-than-human world. During in-depth interviews I have found that, virtually without exception, these activists rely on metaphors of the sacred to describe their perceptions and feelings. The presence of such nature mysticism will not surprise religious studies scholars or anthropologists because such religious perceptions and experiences can be found animating people from widely scattered and diverse religious traditions (sometimes as mystical traditions within broader traditions).

It is ironic that deep ecology proponents like Devall and Snyder, whose own work is laced with appeals for people to seek a personal and intimate spiritual encounter with a sacred landscape, would downplay the religious dimensions of their own traditions. One cannot read Devall's *Simple in Means, Rich in Ends*, for example, without being impressed with its religiosity.¹⁴ He decries the "disenchantment" of the world (p. 48), stresses the importance of self-realization (p. 53-54), argues that "we need earth-bonding experiences" and pilgrimages to "sacred" wilderness places if we are to become authentic and mature (p. 57, 62). He approves of Everett Ruess' pantheistic, perception of the desert as Gaia-like and alive, arguing that "Ruess' story exemplifies the universal discovery of self as part of a greater Self" (p. 60). He approves of the emergence of new "eco-spiritual cultures" (p. 45), calls logging "desecration" (p. 63), criticizes the secular anthropocentrism of the US Forest Service (p. 63-64), and argues that "rediscovering sacred places in our own bioregions is one of the most important aspects of our work" (p. 63). He argues that it is "most important" that the deep ecology movement promote the ecological self in order to "contribute to the flourishing of self-realization in the whole biosphere" and that the vital place of humans "in the natural order . . . is realized . . . through participation in rituals and emotions, thoughts, [and] prayers" (p. 70).

Such statements make me wonder what Devall is talking about when he says "the deep ecology movement is not a new religion." In my judgment, the religious dimensions of the deep ecology movement in general, and Earth First! in particular, becomes clear in its diverse appropriation and invention of religious myth, symbol and rite.¹⁵ In many ways this emerging religion is beautiful. Why deny it exists? The bumper sticker "Give me that Earth First! religion" is but one amusing piece of evidence.

My argument that deep ecology and Earth First! are best understood as an evolving religious tradition finds further support in Dan Deudney's provocative contribution to *Ecological Resistance Movements* entitled, "In Search of Gaian Politics." Deudney suggests that deep ecology may well be playing a role in fostering the emergence of a new "planetary civic religion" that might offer an "escape from [the] bleak choice between ecological destruction and authoritarian government" (p. 291).¹⁶

We have seen that some advocates of deep ecology resist efforts to label deep ecology a religious movement, in part because they fear such a characterization will reduce its effectiveness. My first response has been that honesty requires we understand it precisely in this way.

My second response is to argue that it need not be politically counterproductive to make explicit the religious dimensions of this movement. Acknowledging such dimensions will only be counterproductive if bigots succeed in demonizing earth-revering activists. Descriptive accuracy will only be counterproductive to the extent that movement enemies succeed in making the fear-inspiring "cult" label stick in the minds of the public.

When deep ecology activists obfuscate their religious convictions they cede the opportunity to attack the bigotry that makes them fear "coming out of the religious closet" in the first place. Ironically, they may even fuel fear by giving the impression that they have something to hide. It is not, after all, difficult to discern the religious nature of deep ecology movements. Downplaying the religious perceptions that animate deep ecology activism needlessly gives ground. There is nothing wrong or to be feared in deep ecological or "pagan" spiritual sentiments and perceptions—whether pantheistic or animistic, Gaia-based, or grounded in ancient mystical traditions. Such spiritualities are part of the human religious experience and people who share them should be free, within culturally negotiated constraints, to express and promote them.¹⁷

My argument can be taken even further. Those who wish to resacralize human perceptions of the Earth should consider incorporating as religious bodies. They could then argue in judicial contexts, as have Native Americans, that commercial development desecrates land and violates religious freedom. There is no reason, when deep ecology activists view environmental degradation as desecration, that Native Americans should be the only ones seeking standing in the courts and opposing such destruction as a threat to religious freedom. Of course, U.S. jurists rarely rule in favor of sacred place claims; even after *The American Indian Religious Freedom Resolution of 1978* was enacted. But legal principles often take many years to be established. The legal strategy I am suggesting would serve a pedagogical purpose as well as provide novel movement publicity!

My argument that deep ecology pagans and nature mystics should be public with their spirituality is compatible with my desire for greater attention to the pragmatic foundations of rational discourse. The history of religion suggests that religious mysticism is a minority perception

within groups; therefore, promoting such perceptions ought not be considered a central environmental strategy. My experience as a teacher of environmental ethics and politics, however, is that a number of people in each class are drawn to deep ecology spirituality. So it does make sense for deep ecology advocates to forthrightly promote the perceptual experiences that they find meaningful. But they would be wise to learn to discern the contexts where their effectiveness will be enhanced if they "bracket" such perceptions. They would be wise to argue that their objectives cohere with the interests and affective concerns of ordinary people who love their children and wish them a fulfilling future.

Most people are not and will not be religious virtuosos (as Max Weber called the most religiously inclined in all cultures). If the construction of environmentally sustainable lifeways depends on a widespread spiritual transformation toward the mystical experience of the expansive ecological self, then there is little evidence or hope that the human species will construct sustainable lifeways.

Perhaps deep ecology could emulate Roman Catholicism which, while not downplaying faith, has effectively entered into public debates on the basis of reason and common interests. Catholicism's natural law tradition insists that reason is a sufficient moral guide. Emphasizing reasoned debate is a good strategy because reason (and science) is a more prevalent parlance in the world than is any particular faith.¹⁸ Too often, however, activists with insufficient grasp of ecological science and without facts related to specific issues erode the credibility of their causes.

I hope the preceding reflections illustrate that *Ecological Resistance Movements*, while challenging certain orthodoxies, provides provocative voices and perspectives. The reader can decide whether the volume's stories of resistance inform and inspire.¹⁹ Of this I am certain: Bill Devall's review—based on a selective and inaccurate reading that includes presumptuous ad hominem claims that the volume's contributors lack compassion—does not promote an appropriate tone for a reasoned discussion of the issues posed by the global emergence of ecological resistance.

Notes

1. *Ecological Resistance Movements: the Global Emergence of Radical and Popular Environmentalism* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1995). See also "The Religion and Politics of Earth First!" in *The Ecologist*, 21 (6) (November/December, 1991), 258-66, which is expanded in "Earth First's Religious Radicalism" in *Ecological Prospects: Scientific, Religious, and Aesthetic Perspectives*, ed., Christopher Chappel (State University of New York Press, 1994), 185-209, and is anthologized in an abridged and updated form in "Earth First: From Primal Spirituality to Ecological Resistance" in *This Sacred Earth*, ed. Roger Gottlieb (New York/London: Routledge, 1996), 545-557. For an extended argument that the pillars of North American environmentalism are animated by "pagan" spiritual perceptions, see "Resacralizing Earth: Pagan Environmentalism and the Restoration of Turtle Island" in *American Sacred Space*, eds. David Chidester and Edward Linenthal (Indiana University Press, 1995), 97-151. For an article focusing on art and ritualizing in the movement, see "Evoking the Ecological Self: Art as Resistance to the War on Nature" in *Peace Review*, 5(2):225-230, June 1993.

2. For example, Devall writes, "The deep ecology movement is not a new religion or cult" in *Simple in Means, Rich in Ends: Practising Deep Ecology* (Layton, Utah: Gibbs Smith, 1988), 12. Devall prefers the terms ecosophy and deep ecology rather than other referents such as panecology and spiritual ecology, see 10-11. George Sessions, in a letter dated 15 April 1993 that he sent to *Outside* magazine

in response to an article linking Earth First! and Deep Ecology with the Council of All Beings, expressed a similar view "the Deep Ecology movement is not essentially ecospiritual psychotherapy, a religious cult, nor Earth First! any more than ecofeminism is to be identified with Goddess worship . . . [rather it provides] a spiritually neutral statement of the intrinsic value of all beings. . . To reduce the Deep Ecology Movement to religious/spiritual cult status is to insure its political marginalization." (I thank Sessions for sending me a copy of this letter.)

3. Other language I used in this regard is that there is a "dearth of scholarly attention paid to" popular ecological resistance movements (p. 2-3).

4. The deep ecology movement, of course, has received more attention than most of the movements discussed in the volume. Yet there is still room for further scholarly analysis.

5. See "The Wildlands Project" in *Conservation and Environmentalism: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Robert Paelke (New York: Garland, 1995), 687. I suggested this entry to the editor because I believe the effort deserves wider attention and support.

6. *Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language*, 1983.

7. *Simple in Means* . . . , 57.

8. "The Deep Ecology Movement," *Natural Resources Journal* 20 (April): 299-302, 1980. Here Devall clearly argues that a spiritual/religious change toward self realization and deep ecological consciousness is a necessary prerequisite to ecological resistance. E.g., he summarizes approvingly various writers who argue that "the development of ecological consciousness is . . . prior to ecological resistance" (p. 302).

9. In his review, Devall stresses this idea, that was originally put forth by Naess, and developed further with George Sessions. He then criticizes many of our contributors for ignoring it.

10. Further evidence that for Devall, mystical experiences of identification with nature are central to deep ecology can be found in "Deep Ecology and Radical Environmentalism" *Society and Natural Resources* 4:247-258, 1991. Devall clearly views as central to deep ecology the mystical experience of "ecocentric identification" that produces a wider self-identification and a deeply felt solidarity whereby one's defense of nature is simultaneously self-defense. He calls biocentrism/ecocentrism the "second ultimate norm of deep ecology" (p. 248). Finally, he faults reform environmentalism for failing to develop "any type of 'humans-in-nature' spirituality" (p. 256) and applauds "the ecocentric worldview and strong spiritual identification with the natural world represented by many people in the deep ecology movement [which provides] a potent source of inspiration for radical environmentalism" (p. 257). (This article is reprinted in *American Environmentalism: the U.S. Environmental Movement, 1970-1990*, eds. R.E. Dunlap and A.G. Mertig (Philadelphia: Taylor and Francis, 1992), 51-62.

11. See especially my "Evoking the Ecological Self . . ." article.

12. *Simple in Means* . . . , 5.

13. See note #2 for the complete quotation.

14. In another letter that I received in December 1995, responding to my assertion that Earth First! is a religiously motivated group, Devall stated that at the 1988 Earth First! rendezvous that he attended, "many of the macho types made fun of the 'spiritual' types. We did a Council of All Beings and tried to do some Zen sitting . . . but most of the people at the [gathering] were more into drinking and partying."

I have witnessed similar dynamics. But I did not assume, as Devall apparently did, that the partiers and those lampooning the overtly spiritual activists were themselves unreligious. Instead, I sought out the partiers and satirists and asked them to explain their activism. I discovered that both partiers and satirists were also motivated by perceptions and experiences that can accurately be labelled nature mysticism. Some of these activists prioritize partying over ritualizing because they rarely get to play with their widely-scattered movement friends. Others satirized the ritualizers because they dislike or disapprove of overt religious expressions, or because it reminds them of organized religion which they have rejected. Still others eschew overt ritualizing not because they are hostile to nature-based spirituality, but rather, because they do not think public ritualizing is powerful. Yet the partiers, satirists, and others who eschew movement ritualizing nevertheless find meaningful spiritual experiences in wild places—whether alone or among intimate groups of friends.

15. See especially "Earth First!'s Religious Radicalism."

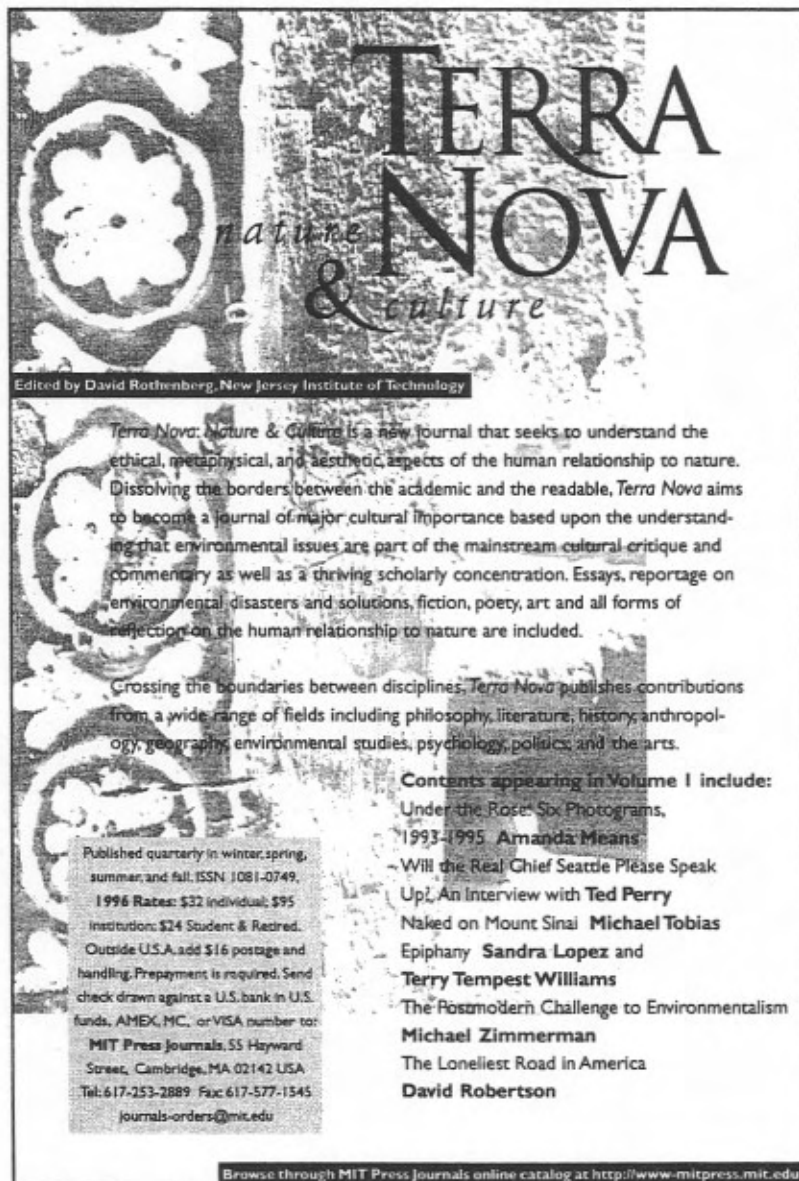
16. This article was unmentioned in Devall's review, but it is sympathetic to deep ecology and provides an interesting counterpoint to Jerry Stark's argument that we should jettison nature mysticism.

17. I believe that by writing about these movements, by explaining how they are religions sharing the same characteristics of all religions, that I humanize the people involved in them, and that consequently it is more difficult for such folks to be demonized and suppressed.

18. For this latter argument, see J. Baird Callicott, *Earth's Insights* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), esp. ch. 9. Fortunately, many activists are ecologically literate, well-informed, and make their appeals in appropriately diverse ways.

19. The authors examine indigenous resistance in the U.S., journey to the Philippines, Thailand, and India, visit women's peasant cooperatives in Central America and river dwellers in Amazonia, examine at the role of cultural resurgence in ecological resistance movements in regions as varied as the Scottish Highlands and Southwestern Africa, and discuss radical environmentalism in Norway as in the context of the contemporary controversy over whaling. Moreover, the contributors reflect on the strategies, significance, impacts of, and prospects for these important movements. The reader will find much to ponder.

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