

Lecture 05, 10 Sep 2003

finish Conservation Ethics, Values, and Rationale

Leopold Readings

begin Legislation

Conservation Biology

ECOL 406R/506R

University of Arizona

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1. VanDyke Ch3,  
Meffe and Carroll (Callicott) Ch2

## Leopold Readings

2. VanDyke Ch2

- no office hours today

1. Should conservation biologists explain the value of biodiversity in purely instrumental terms or should they also include reasons invoking intrinsic value?
2. How respond to the question of “What good is it?” (e.g. Forbush’s lousewort)
3. How do we know that humans, or anything, have intrinsic value?
4. Discuss Leopold’s quote: “ Perhaps our grandsons, having never seen a wild river, will never miss the chance to set a canoe in singing waters.”

5. How does this quote from Leopold: sit with the idea of intrinsic value?

*For one species to mourn the death of another is a new thing under the sun. The Cro-Magnon who slew the last mammoth thought only of steaks. The sportsman who shot the last pigeon thought only of his prowess. The sailor who clubbed the last auk thought of nothing at all. But we, who have lost our pigeons, mourn the loss. Had the funeral been ours, the pigeons would have hardly mourned us. In this fact . . . lies objective evidence of our superiority over beasts (Leopold 1966:117).*

“a thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise”

## Aldo Leopold Land Ethic

-social evolution (social disapproval for wrong actions)

-evolutionary and ecological biology

-human as plain member and citizen, not ruler

-lifestyles

-processes

-scale of perturbation (temporal, spatial)

-What is “land-health?”

# Leopold

“In our attempt to make conservation easy we have made it trivial” (p.246)

- Property vs. propriety
- Land ethic enlarges the community  
to include biota
- Land Pyramid
- Role of land in human history  
(Diamond Guns Germs and Steel)
- Sacrifice
- Obligation of private landowner
- Livestock, Violence

## Leopold

“Objectivity only possible in matters too small to be important, or in matters too large to do anything about.” (p. 226)

Thinking like a mountain.

“ a mountain lives in mortal fear of its deer”

Escudilla  
progress?

The planet will survive, will we?

# Van Dyke Ch.2 Laws and Regulations

Con Bio:

Regulatory Science?

Legally Empowered Discipline?

END