IS NATURE EVER UNAESTHETIC?

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Contemporary philosophers have wondered: Do virgin landscapes always possess beauty? Unsullied by human nature, is the natural world invariably aesthetic? Examples in support of a negative reply are not wanting; when lightning causes a ground fire, the burned out, blackened forest may be experienced as an aesthetic liability, for the expected sights, aromas and flavors of the woods, the creatures, the sounds and bird song are now gone. Again, a naturalist such as John James Audubon belittles one segment of nature in relation to another when he speaks of "the scrubbiness of the timber here, and the lofty and majestic trees of my dear country."¹ Moreover, as was demonstrated recently in the community of Ducktown, Tennessee, even an undefiled and unscrubby forest can be aesthetically criticized. Copper smelters destroyed trees and vegetation in the area, thereby creating a "desert."² Curiously enough, efforts at reforestation were attacked on the grounds that it would turn the "beautiful" landscape "into a dull, boring pine forest."³

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In response to such cases, one might argue that the natural landscape always exhibits, at least, some degree of beauty. The burned woods might evoke a feeling of stark sublimity or some other aesthetic quality — perhaps an austere beauty similar to that conveyed by the dead flowers which the Japanese fashion into striking arrangements. Holmes Rolston says of scorched landscapes, "No one would feature these places in landscape paintings, they are not picturesque."⁴ But might not a photographer or painter be moved to capture such scenes because they exhibit significant form? Surely Audubon is talking about degrees or varieties of aesthetic quality, not its presence versus its total absence. For may not trees that are lacking in grandeur possess the aesthetic appeal of diminutive charm, distinctive coloration, a characteristic spontaneity of lines, or some other appealing feature — however impoverished our discourse may be when we attempt to label it? Finally, although the pine forest undoubtedly differs from the human-produced desert in the quality and quantity of its aesthetic import, who would hold that it is wholly unaesthetic? Thus it is no wonder that twentieth century philosophers such as Bernard Bosanquet and Benedetto Croce have raised serious doubts about the prospect of invincible ugliness, i.e., ugliness that is unredeemed by any trace of the beautiful.⁵ While their discussions are largely in the context of art, I wish to pursue the notion of incorrigible ugliness exclusively in terms of nature.

Four models of aesthetic appreciation, each of which argues for a negative answer to our title question, will be explored. First, the contextual model, illustrated by Ronald Hepburn and the ecosystem of Holmes Rolston, is weighed. Here I critically analyze the argument that although certain features in a segment of nature may not be intrinsically aesthetic, they can contribute to an aesthetic gestalt. Next, Immanuel Kant's phenomenological model and the doctrine of the aesthetic attitude, which Kant anticipated, are evaluated. Third, Bernard Bosanquet's expressionist model, which assigns the ugly to a weakness on the part of the spectator, identifies the beautiful with the expressive, and identifies a kind of intentional fallacy in the attribution of ugliness to nature, is considered. Finally, I will argue that a metaphysical model, exemplified by such figures as Lao Tzu,

Thoreau, and Martin Buber, is the best orientation, since it provides a more inclusive account of aesthetic experiences of nature.

Ronald W. Hepburn represents a contextualist position when he declares, "Any aesthetic quality [including, of course, ugliness] is always provisional, correctable by reference to different, perhaps wider context or to a narrower one realized in greater detail."⁶ Consider the burned woods from the standpoint of a fresh perspective, for example, as enhanced by the elixir of moonlight. If the play of moonlight upon a building, such as the Taj Mahal, is an important aesthetic consideration for architects and appreciators of buildings, why not expect aesthetic significance in the moon's illumination of the gutted forest? The British painter John Constable is even more emphatic in repudiating the ugly:

I never saw an ugly thing in my life: for let the form of an object be what it may, — light, shade, and perspective will always make it beautiful. It is perspective which improves the form of this.⁷

Just as reason would caution us against judging a painting on the basis of seeing a single, small segment, common sense might warn us that it would be imprudent to judge a natural object apart from the larger setting in which it is rooted, i.e., the locus of various relations in which it participates. Not only can we apprehend beauty by considering a natural object in the gestalt of a wider setting, but we can encounter beauty by examining subsets within the object; adopting such a narrower, contextual perspective, one might, for example, appreciate the tracery of intricate veins within a stone. Could not even fecal matter, when viewed on the microscopic level, possess aesthetic properties? Chuang Tzu did not hesitate to locate the Tao even in piss and dung. It should be noted that the contextual perspective necessarily regards all beauty as relational. Moreover, the relations which confer beauty upon a whole are decidedly conceptual rather than perceptual.

The rotting elk returns to the humus, its nutrients recycled; the maggots become flies, which become food for the birds ... Every item must be seen not in framed isolation but

framed by its environment, and this frame becomes part of the bigger picture we have to appreciate — not a 'frame' but a dramatic play. The momentary ugliness is only a still shot in an ongoing motion picture... The usefulness of a tree in the ecosystem is only half over at its death; as an old snag or a rotting hulk it provides nesting cavities, perches, insect larvae, food for birds, nutrients for the soil and on and on.⁸

Thus the decaying animal or plant, which is repulsive in the context of unreflective experience, becomes beautiful in the holistic context of biology. According to Rolston, to take up an ecosystemic perspective is to adopt an aesthetic outlook, for ugliness is thereby transmuted into something beautiful.

His account poses two basic questions: First, does it make sense to speak of an aesthetic appreciation of nature when the thematic phenomena are imperceptible? Rolston declares that myriad things occur underground or out of sight; hence, "they are not scenic at all, but an appreciation of them is aesthetic."⁹ Presumably he is thinking of the non-perceptual but unmistakably aesthetic sort of delight which accompanies "seeing" a mathematical solution, discovering a winning chess move and the like. Surely there is something aesthetic about the satisfaction that we derive from detecting relations between or among concepts, but if we remain in this zone, we are in the realm of abstractions, general principles, or universals. Here we reflect upon the "formula" which belongs to the life cycle of all moths, or the common denominators of all oak trees. Let us call this a conceptual, aesthetic appreciation of nature. But do not the paradigm cases of nature appreciation involve encountering particulars? Do nature lovers not seek a turn to individual phenomena rather than to nature in general? Roger D. Sorrell states that St. Francis of Assisi "never used the term 'natura' ... The Biblical literature Francis draws on is rich in specific terms for things in creation, but rarely indulges in abstract conceptualization."¹⁰ Consider Martin Buber's proposal for a shift to an I-Thou apprehension of nature: "Instead of considering nature as a single whole, as we usually do, we must consider its different realms separately."¹¹ We are

moved by *that* favorite oak tree in our front yard and *this* especially tangled and knotted banyan tree rather than its neighbors. Even in the negative encounter of Jean-Paul Sartre's novel, *Nausea*, the main character, Antoine Roquentin, recoils from a specific chestnut tree, not from cogitations about chestnut trees in general. Irrespective of whether or not concepts were central to a full-fledged aesthetic appreciation of nature, a point that Immanuel Kant denies, would they not need to be "instantiated," "enfleshed," or "enmattered" in specific, concrete forms if we are to have robust aesthetic experiences? Must not one's aesthetic appreciation of *nature* be grounded in perceptual experience, i.e., in a sensory apprehension — however much it may be augmented by concepts or intuitions? For Rolston, any ugly aspect of nature inevitably contributes to the whole complex of nature itself: "Yet this is not so much *viewed* as *experienced* after one reaches ecologically tutored understanding. It is not so much a matter of *sight* as of *insight* into the drama of life."¹² But if one delights in such conceptual, aesthetic experiences, may one not be neglecting the perceptual character of aesthetic experiences? Could not one derive conceptual, aesthetic pleasure simply by reading about the marvels of nature? To know the confluence of facts, laws, or principles that govern, say, the flight of the bald eagle is not to aesthetically behold the majestic movement of this bird. Also, if one finds conceptual beauty in a system or whole, she might, nonetheless, find perceptual ugliness with respect to a part. One may question the phenomenology implicit in Rolston's claim that the ugliness of the momentary scene is just a frame in a continuing motion picture. Is it phenomenologically accurate to say that "momentary ugliness is a still shot in an ongoing motion picture?"¹³ In discussing the problem of evil, Bertrand Russell argues that every act of cruelty remains what it is for all time and cannot become "good" by absorption into some mysterious whole.¹⁴ Similarly, one might argue that any appearance of ugliness, no matter how fleeting, remains what it is and cannot disappear into a whole. When any such ugliness "disappears" is it not a conceptual rather than a sensory evanescence? Also, for anyone who adopts Constable's formalist perspective (in which aesthetic experience is grounded upon an appreci-

ation of the relations which obtain between and among such elements as light, darkness, color, shape, line, tone, movement, or the play of forces which underlie equanimity) there is no ugliness, not even temporary ugliness.

Second, how can Rolston, or other contextualists — including Constable, make room for the beauty of any simple entity? Since antiquity, contextualists have described beauty in terms of a unity amidst variety. This unity is variously spoken of as an order, an arrangement of parts, a synthesis of elements, a balance, a proportion, a symmetry, a harmony, or an interdependence of components. But how can this view accommodate the beauty of a single, isolated phenomenon such as an unbroken stretch of blue sky that fills one's field of vision, unmodulated by variations of hue or the leavening influence of any clouds. Contextualism, by definition, requires that beauty be a function of relations and becomes mute before the simple beauty of, say, a pure tone. For contextualists, there is always the beauty of a system, but not the intrinsic beauty of any part which contributes to the whole.

Rolston does identify one sense in which a negative answer fits the question: Is nature ever unaesthetic? "Neither aesthetic experience ... nor mathematical experience exists prior to the coming of humans."¹⁵ Without humans or without granting aesthetic sensitivities to nonhuman animals, nature itself would be neither aesthetic nor unaesthetic but anaesthetic. The present essay, however, presupposes that humans are beholding nature when it asks if nature, free from human intervention, is ever unaesthetic. Neither will the present study adopt the Augustinian perspective from which one can argue that any ugliness in nature is unreal in that it pertains to a privation of form, i.e., an absence rather than an existing presence. For all such approaches fail adequately to address perceptual ugliness. One further reason can be added to the grounds for asserting that nature is never unaesthetic: To say that a thing is good or bad, beautiful or ugly presupposes that it could have been otherwise, but if the natural universe proceeds from the nature of God or the Tao, then nature could not be any different.

Agreeing with David Hume that reasoning is needed to appreciate some kinds of beauty,¹⁶ Rolston's ecosystem model clearly depends upon

conceptualization. By contrast, Immanuel Kant distinguishes between pure and dependent beauty, the former being independent of concepts.¹⁷ Thus one could appreciate a stunted or underdeveloped bonsai tree for its own formal properties rather than in terms of how well it compares to the established paradigm. To use standards of perfection is, after all, to intellectualize or conceptualize. Kant holds that the person who appreciates the beauty of the parrot is freer than the ornithologist who appreciates the bird because it compares favorably with similar birds. There is no discursive reason at work in judgments of pure beauty; instead, there is the free play of our cognitive powers. Taoists and Buddhists would agree with Kant that discursive reason is not necessary for the enjoyment of natural beauty, but they would substitute *prajna*, i.e., intuition, for his "free play."

Just as Kant maintained that apprehending pure beauty depended upon the sort of consciousness one brought to the aesthetic object, proponents of the "aesthetic attitude" theory hold that a disinterested perspective is a prerequisite for aesthetic experience. A suspension of self regard, i.e., the practical relevance of the aesthetic data for the individual, is illustrated in Edward Bullough's famous discussion of a fog at sea.¹⁸ The beholder's feelings can alternate between anxiety toward the dangers posed by the fog and aesthetic delight in the otherworldly apparitions conjured up by it. Here the ugly might be said to be constituted, not by the perceptual features of the fog as such, but by the menacing or intimidating powers of the fog — conceptual considerations which Kant's appreciation of free beauty rules out. Bullough states that the shift from an apprehensive perception of the fog to an aesthetic perception takes place as a sort of mental distance puts "the phenomenon, so to speak, out of gear with our practical, actual self."¹⁹ Returning to the ugliness of Rolston's decaying elk, it is not just that we fail to see the rotting animal in a broader context of the ecosystem, but that we do interpret it in terms of our selves. Purged of reference to oneself, would the beholder still find the moose to be ugly? Through their suppression of the merely practical, Kant and the aesthetic attitude theorists encourage the aesthetic appreciation of nature. They do, however, face two problems. They are sometimes subject to the same criticisms which

apply to contextualists; and, without the appropriate metaphysics, they may find nature to be categorically unaesthetic.

Bernard Bosanquet holds that "there is no such thing as invincible ugliness;" instead, the unaesthetic is always a function of human weakness.²⁰ Eventually Bosanquet discusses "insuperable ugliness" in terms of "insincere and affected art," finding in the latter "the very root of ugliness — the pretension to pure expression, which alone can have clear and positive failure."²¹ Bosanquet's mentor, Croce, had declared that beauty was synonymous with the realization of expression and that ugliness is unrealized expression or "unsuccessful expression."²² As Bosanquet commented in his history of aesthetics: "False characterization seems then to be the essence of ugliness."²³ Similarly, Wassily Kandinsky, a father of modern painting, has asserted that the ugly pertains to an unattained expression of an inner need; whereas, "everything which adequately expresses the inner need is beautiful."²⁴ John James Audubon raises an interesting question for the expressionist theory of art when he speaks of being put off by the sight of stuffed birds: "I cannot bear them no matter how well mounted they may be."²⁵ Is he disturbed because the "life" being expressed is a pseudo-vitality or because the birds' true, spiritless nature is not being expressed?

Representing the expressionist theory, which sees the artist as one who bodies forth inner states, Bosanquet argues:

If the intentional attempt at beauty is the main condition of ugliness, then in nature the main condition of ugliness is certainly absent, while immeasurable stores of form and order are as certainly present for those who can elicit them.²⁶

Concerning nature there can be no aesthetic failure, since this would require unfulfilled intentions. Since we cannot impute to nature any conscious attempt at beautiful expression, any so-called natural ugliness must follow from our own "mis-selection," i.e., failure to select beautiful form from nature's "infinite wealth of appearances and contexts."²⁷ Consider the epistemological problems involved in a) knowing God's aesthetic intentions and b) knowing whether or not they have been realized. Bosanquet's contextualism becomes manifest when he discusses how apparent ugliness becomes a part of beauty. Taking the amusing case of a dachshund's ear, Bosanquet claims that even if you cannot make a silk purse out of a sow's ear, you can make a work of art from the dachshund's ear. Attached to a human head, the dog's ear is ugly, but if the dog-eared man is subordinated to the beauty of a fairy tale, the dog-eared human is transmuted into something enchanting rather than repugnant.²⁸ The ear is not expressive by itself but only as a part of the dramatic whole. Thus beauty has to do with expressiveness and expressiveness with compounds. Naturally, this renders Bosanquet vulnerable to the same criticism that applies to Rolston: How can a contextualist make room for the beauty of any simple entity?

Several versions of the metaphysical model of aesthetic appreciation will not be reviewed. In Plotinus, nothing is categorically ugly, since the beautiful is what symbolizes reason and everything, in one way or another, does so. "We know of nothing in which law is not revealed."²⁹ Again, in classical Taoism, the Tao or Ultimate Reality is lawful and law-giving; it is the way by which things operate naturally or the Law of laws. To go against the grain of nature would be to act unaesthetically or unharmoniously, but any such "ugliness" would pertain to human nature rather than the natural

landscape. Thus one version of the metaphysical model equates the aesthetic with the lawful. This version, which calls to mind the regularity, order, proportion, form or balance emphasized in Greek aesthetics, can be contrasted with Nietzsche's view of nature as offensive:

Imagine a being like nature, wasteful beyond measure, indifferent beyond measure, without purposes and consideration, without mercy and justice, fertile and desolate and uncertain at the same time...³⁰

But those with a religious metaphysics cannot fail to see nature, in all its manifestations, as pervaded by the spiritual. Hence a second version of the metaphysical model associates the aesthetic with the spiritual as opposed to the physical. In a Taoist exchange, one figure who has lost his leg, speaks to another about their Master:

I have been with him nineteen years without being aware of my deformity. Now you and I are roaming in the realm of the spiritual, and you are judging me in the realm of the physical. Are you not committing a mistake?³¹

In the same text there is a discussion of deformities — which would seem to be paradigms of ugliness — in which Confucius is quoted as follows:

From the point of view of their sameness all things are one. He who regards things in this light does not even trouble about what reaches him through the sense of hearing or sight, but lets his mind wander in the moral harmony of things. He beholds the unity in things, and does not notice the loss of particular objects. And thus the loss of his leg is to him as would be the loss of so much dirt.³²

An ethical model of beauty, a third version of the metaphysical model, is evident in the above reference to "moral harmony." Again we see a form of contextualism, but one in which all lesser unities dissolve into the unity of all things. The perceptual mysticism of visions and apparitions has been transcended in a higher intuitive realization which denigrates "the superficialities of sight and sound."³³ But the aesthetic as metaphysical model need not entail an aversion toward particularity, for if the

Tao or God interpenetrates and suffuses all things, then even the smallest of these is pervaded by the invisible beauty of the Divine. Dr. C.Y. Chang would prefer to speak of the Tao as the "origin of beauty."³⁴ It follows from the metaphysical model that no natural object can be unmitigatedly ugly. The model is also related to chapter two of the *Tao Te Ching*, in which we read that "When people know beauty as beauty, ugliness arises." One is to have an intuitive, aesthetic appreciation of nature, not a conceptual grasp in which distinctions or discriminations prevent her from enjoying a holistic grasp of the natural world. Nature is never ugly or unaesthetic for the Taoist, because her intuitive appreciation of nature transports her beyond any superficial distinctions between the beautiful and the ugly. When one makes no intellectual classifications of the ugly versus the beautiful, one transcends all such relative distinctions and can enjoy the invisible beauty of the Tao as well as the beauty of all things which shimmer with its beauty.

The metaphysical model has the virtue of being able to explain why every thing, no matter how small, simple or homely, can be an object of aesthetic satisfaction. How else could one explain the fact that every object in nature has the potential to be the subject of an aesthetic experience? If the spiritual hypothesis is true, then the Absolute is omnipresent together with its attendant aesthetic value. Traditionally, the Absolute has been regarded as the confluence or ground of truth, beauty, and goodness. The Taoist or Zen Buddhist savors a spiritual or transcendent beauty:

If heaven and earth, with all the manifold objects between them, issue from the one root which you and I also come from, this root must be firmly seized upon so that there is an actual experience of it; for it is in this experience that Nansen's flower in its natural beauty appealed to his aesthetic sense.³⁵

Note that with the metaphysical model, a flower petal can be a microcosm, with the whole of nature discernible in this single, fragile object. This makes the metaphysical model the most comprehensive sort of aesthetic encounter in which one can participate. Moreover, it involves the irony of beginning with the isolated beauty of a tiny fragment of nature, rather than a contextualist's

perspective, but ending with the most far-reaching sort of contextual appreciation, for the smallest part is like a monad which represents all that lies outside it. Because a microcosm represents all that there is, it made sense for Thoreau to go to Walden Pond in order to find himself, for his self was there, waiting to be detected in the woods, clouds, pond water, and surrounding creatures. Just as he could discover his true self in nature, he speaks of discovering nature within himself. Discussing the signs of Spring in a letter, Thoreau concludes "that there are as many within us as we think we hear without us."³⁶

Jean-Paul Sartre's atheistic metaphysical model eliminates the possibility of aesthetically appreciating nature. For him, nature has no purpose; there is no teleology at work, no intelligibility to be found. Nausea or disgust is evoked by the fact that sheer existence is absurd; we cannot explain why there are things rather than mere nothingness. Existence itself is repulsive. As Alfred Stern remarks, "The absurd is that which cannot be deduced logically. Thus Sartre has to include all nature in his absolute absurdity."³⁷ But, even if human nature and nonhuman nature are equally inexplicable givens, the natural landscape (which Sartre speaks of as "being-in-itself") is alien from human nature (which Sartre characterizes in terms of consciousness or "being-for-itself"), since man is never exactly what he is; instead, he is forever in the process of realizing new possibilities or making himself. Nature or being-in-itself "coincides with itself, is what it is."³⁸ Early in the novel *Nausea* Antoine Roquentin experiences a "sweetish sickness" when he picks up a stone.³⁹ He later remarks, "The very existence of the world [was] so ugly that I felt comfortable, at home."⁴⁰ Looked at in terms of its existence, a thing is meaningless, without foundation, a nothingness at base.

Nausea epitomizes the response of some existentialists to the radical contingency of nature. Roquentin exclaims, "I see it, I see this nature ... I know that its obedience is idleness, I know it has no laws: what they take for constancy is only habit and it can change tomorrow."⁴¹ It is the lawless, gratuitous, irrational character of nature which renders it ugly. With the religious metaphysical model, God, the Tao, or Brahman as lawgiver insures that nature will be lawful; no absurdity or radical con-

tingency is possible. This model avoids the anything-can-happen threat of Sartre's existentialism and the nature-as-uncertain denouncement by Nietzsche. For Sartre, who sees nature as being so ugly that it is obscene, this world affords us no aesthetic experiences, these being reserved for the domain of art rather than life as such. Only art can substitute the intelligible and the stable for the absurd contingency of nature. But defenders of the religious metaphysical model can assert that the supposedly irreducible grotesqueness of Sartre's chestnut tree in *Nausea* is actually a variety of what Bosanquet calls difficult beauty.⁴² He argues that apparent ugliness is actually difficult beauty and that such beauty depends upon three circumstances: (1) Intricacy — the spectator is often confronted with so much that he cannot "take it all in." (2) Tension — few have the capacity to undergo and savor "feeling at a high tension." (3) Width — some are too narrow to see, for example, the humor as well as the sublime in religion. From the religious perspective no natural object is actually ugly, for it is sustained by and continuous with the invisible beauty of the Absolute. Nevertheless, one always encounters difficulty in penetrating the superficial features of seemingly obnoxious objects in order to reach the aesthetic quality which coincides with their metaphysical essences.

Martin Buber is famous for his distinction between I-Thou and I-It relations. In the former kind of relationship we regard the other as a free person; with the latter we view the other as a determined thing. Buber contributes to the religious metaphysical model for the aesthetic appreciation of nature when he speaks about having an I-Thou relation with a tree.⁴³ This is possible because the tree as a Thou participates in the personhood of the Eternal Thou or God. Buber also holds that it is impossible to fully hate a Thou, since every Thou resonates with the personhood of its own individuality and is also a conduit for the personhood of the Eternal Thou. Thus a St. Francis of Assisi, who adopts an I-Thou stance toward all of creation, can neither hate nor be repulsed by any thing, for every object is radiant with the personhood of a Thou, every object possesses spiritual beauty. Ben Ami Scharfstein comments on Carl Jung's experience of sitting on a stone and imagining the stone saying "he is sitting on top of me."⁴⁴ When

he stone becomes a Thou, one can neither hate it nor ignore its aesthetic value. Martin Buber reports that, as an eleven year old, his aesthetic rapport while petting a horse was broken when he attended to the sensation on his own hand and forgot about the Thou of the horse.⁴⁵ In extreme cases the person merges with the other. Chuang Tzu wakes up having dreamt that he was a butterfly and wonders: "Am I a man who dreamt that he was a butterfly or am I a butterfly who is dreaming that he is a man?" The point of the anecdote is to underline the interpenetration between the two. Jung himself asked: "Am I the one who is sitting on the stone, or am I the stone on which he is sitting?"⁴⁶

The religious model of aesthetic appreciation does not culminate in a pantheism which enjoys nature as an end in itself.⁴⁷ Instead, besides appreciating all beauties in their individuality, one participates in the further aesthetic pleasure of beholding them as emergents from the invisible, spiritual beauty of God or the Tao. To consider the sum total of natural objects as exhaustive of beauty is to affirm pantheism, but to appreciate them in the context of their origin is to affirm transcendentalism, i.e., the existence of a higher, ultimate reality. Pantheism involves the savoring of perceptual and conceptual beauty, but in transcendentalism such enjoyment is deepened, because it is tinged by a sense of the awe-inspiring, spiritual beauty from which all earthly beauties flow. From this perspective nature is neither a substitute for nor a mere conduit to the Absolute. In artistic terms, nature is the medium through which the Absolute is expressed, but just as the artist's medium and content are inseparable, nature and Ultimate Reality interpenetrate. When one's aesthetic receptivity incorporates a spiritual perspective, her aesthetic experience is enriched by the infusion of the purposiveness, intelligibility, or teleological significance which Roquentin so desperately craved.

Notes

¹ John James Audubon, *Audubon and his Journals*, Volume One, ed. Maria R. Audubon (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1986, a republication of the first edition originally published by Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1897), p. 155.

² Wilton Barnhardt, "The Death of Ducktown," *Discovery Magazine*, October 1987, pp. 35-43.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

⁴ Holmes Rolston III, *Environmental Ethics* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988), p. 242.

⁵ See Bosanquet's *Three Lectures on Aesthetic* (Indianapolis & New York: Bobbs-Merrill, Co., Inc., 1963), Lecture III and Croce's *Aesthetic*, (New York: Noonday Press, 1968).

⁶ Ronald Hepburn, "Aesthetic Appreciation of Nature," in *Aesthetics in the Modern World*, ed. Harold Osborne (New York: Weybright and Talley Inc., 1968), p. 53.

⁷ C. R. Leslie, *Memoirs of the Life of John Constable*, ed. by Jonathan Mayne (London: Phaidon Press, 1951), p. 280.

⁸ Rolston, p. 239.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Roger D. Sorrell, *St. Francis of Assisi and Nature: Tradition and Innovation in Western Christian Attitudes toward the Environment*, (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), pp. 7-8.

¹¹ Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1970), p. 172.

¹² Rolston, p. 241.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 239.

¹⁴ Bertrand Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1945), p. 580.

¹⁵ Rolston, p. 235.

¹⁶ David Hume, *An Inquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals* (Indianapolis & New York: Bobbs-Merrill, Co., Inc., 1957), p. 6.

¹⁷ Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, trans. J.H. Bernard (New York: Hafner Publishing Co., 1951), pp. 55-56.

¹⁸ Edward Bullough, "'Psychical Distance' as a Factor in Art and an Aesthetic Principle," *British Journal of Psychology*, 5 (1912), p. 88.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Bernard Bosanquet, *Three Lectures on the Aesthetic*, p. 53.

²¹ Bosanquet, p. 56.

²² Croce, p. 79.

²³Bosanquet, *A History of Aesthetic* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1892), p. 355.

²⁴Wassily Kandinsky, *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, trans. M.T.H. Sadler (New York: Dover Publications, 1977), p. 36.

²⁵Audubon, p. 279.

²⁶Bosanquet, *Three Lectures*, p. 57.

²⁷*Ibid.*, p. 56.

²⁸*Ibid.*, p. 54.

²⁹Bosanquet, *History*, p. 115.

³⁰Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Random House, 1966), p. 15.

³¹Lin Yutang, *The Wisdom of China and India* (New York: Random House, Inc., 1942), p. 653.

³²*Ibid.*, pp. 651-652.

³³*Ibid.*, p. 652.

³⁴C.Y. Chang, *Tao: A New Way of Thinking* (New York: Harper & Row, 1975), p. 211.

³⁵D.T. Suzuki, *Zen and Japanese Culture* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1959), p. 353.

³⁶August Derleth, *Concord Rebel: A Life of Thoreau* (New York: Avon Books, 1962), p. 143.

³⁷Alfred Stern, *Sartre: His Philosophy and Existential Psychoanalysis*, second ed. (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1967), p. 33.

³⁸Stern, p. 63.

³⁹Jean-Paul Sartre, *Nausea*, trans. Lloyd Alexander (New York: New Directions Publishing Corporation, 1964), pp. 2, 11.

⁴⁰Sartre, p. 174.

⁴¹Sartre, p. 158.

⁴²Bosanquet, *Three Lectures*, pp. 46-52.

⁴³Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons), p. 173.

⁴⁴Ben-Ami Scharfstein, *Mystical Experience* (Indianapolis: Bobs-Merrill, 1973), p. 84.

⁴⁵Martin Buber, "Autobiographical Fragments," *The Philosophy of Martin Buber*, ed. Paul Arthur Schilpp and Maurice Friedman (LaSalle, Illinois and London: Open Court Publishing Co., 1967), p. 10.

⁴⁶Scharfstein, p. 84.

⁴⁷Edward A. Armstrong, *St. Francis: Nature Mystic* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1973), p. 17.

Campfire Talk

Birds don't need opinions
because they have pinions.
What is the opinion of the piñon pine
on whether Christianity is
for or against homosexuality?
A flower doesn't need a savior
to be able to bloom.
A waterfall doesn't need a guru
in order to gush.
A caterpillar doesn't need a Bible
to become a butterfly.
A lake doesn't need a Ph.D.
to become a cloud.
A rainbow doesn't need a fresh coat of paint
every year.
Worms don't need to study existentialism
to exist.
Mountaintops don't need to kneel
and ask forgiveness for their sins.
Capitalism and Communism mean nothing
to every tree that alchemizes light.
No whale will ever know who Christ is.
No chipmunk will ever follow Buddha.
No eagle gives a shit about Mohammed.
No grizzly will ever consult a priest.
No seagull will ever become a Mormon.
No dolphin has to learn computers
if it wants to get along
in the modern world.
No sparrow needs insurance.
No gorilla needs a God.

—Antler