PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

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Courses in ETHICS at MDH

All information about the courses at:

Research Ethics and Professionalism: http://www.idt.mdh.se/kurser/ethics/

Professional Ethics in Science and Engineering: http://www.idt.mdh.se/kurser/cd5590
ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS
"We have not inherited the Earth from our fathers. We are borrowing it from our children."

Native American saying
Environmental Ethics and Philosophy
Are There Universal Ethical Principles?

- **Universalists**: Plato, Kant believe that fundamental principles of ethics are universal, unchanging and eternal
- **Relativists**: Sophists- everything contextual. Believe that moral principles are always relative to a particular person
- **Nihilists**: Schopenhauer- arbitrary survival. Claim that the world makes no sense at all and that everything is completely arbitrary
- **Utilitarians**: Bentham - greatest good for greatest number of people
Values, Rights, and Obligations

- Moral agents. Some philosophers believe that only humans are moral agents
- Moral subjects. Children are considered moral subjects not moral agents
- Inherent, instrumental value
- Non-living things, do they have value?
Modernism and Postmodernism

- Descartes, Bacon: hope for universal laws of morality
- Derrida, Lyotard, Foucault: Environmental ethics is arbitrary and shifting and there is no universal philosophy
Worldviews and Ethical Perspectives

- Individual beliefs towards ecology depend on ethical perspectives
- Most people have set of core values or beliefs
- Environmental concerns are a source for comparisons among different values and perceptions
Worldviews and Ethical Perspectives

Domination

- Interpretation of some religious values has lead in past to anthropocentric (human-centered) ecological principles which believe that humans are the focus of creation
- Current movement in religious organizations to fight for ecological concerns
Worldviews and Ethical Perspectives

Stewardship

- Responsibility to manage our ecosystem. To work together with human and non-human forces to sustain life

*steward* intendent, skattmästare, [gods]förvaltare, förtroendeman
Worldviews and Ethical Perspectives

Biocentrism (life-centered), Animal Rights, and Ecocentrism (ecologically-centered)

- Biocentrism: biodiversity is the highest ethical value in nature
- Animal rights supporters focus on the individual
- Ecocentrism: whole is more important than individual animal

Ecofeminism

- Warren, Shiva, Merchant, Ruether, and King
- A network of personal relationships
# Worldviews and ethical perspectives

A comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Philosophy</th>
<th>Intrinsic Value</th>
<th>Instrumental Value</th>
<th>Role of humans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anthropocentric</td>
<td>Humans</td>
<td>Nature</td>
<td>Masters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stewardship</td>
<td>Humans &amp; Nature</td>
<td>Tools</td>
<td>Caretakers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biocentric</td>
<td>Species</td>
<td>Abiotic nature</td>
<td>One of many</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal rights</td>
<td>Individuals</td>
<td>Processes</td>
<td>Equals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecocentric</td>
<td>Processes</td>
<td>Individuals</td>
<td>Destroyers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecofeminist</td>
<td>Relationships</td>
<td>Roles</td>
<td>Caregivers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Environmental Justice

- Combination of civil rights and environmental protection that demands a safe, healthy life-giving environment for everyone

- Most people of low socio-economic position are exposed to high pollution levels
Environmental Racism

- Unequal distribution of hazardous waste based on race
- Black children 2-3 times more likely to have lead poisoning

Dumping Across Borders

- Toxic colonialism: targeting third/fourth world countries for waste disposal
- Polluting industries move to poor countries
- Environmental Justice Act (1992)
Global interaction

Understanding living systems

Individual choice

Corporate influences

Societal needs
Is Nature Fragile or Resilient*?

- Nature seen as powerful in past
- Nature seen as a delicate balance as technology increases our ability to disrupt

*resilient - som har lätt för att återhämta sig (komma igen) elastisk, spänstig
Attitudes toward nature.

(a) Early history
- Wilderness chaos, domain of evil spirits and wild beasts
- Middle distance
- Garden city oasis, paradise, civilization

(b) Present
- Protected wilderness, remnant, paradise, endangered wildlife
- Despoiled or damaged forest
- Industrialized farmland
- Modern metropolis, chaos, danger, evil, uncivilized people
# TABLE 1.2  The United States, with 4.5 Percent of the World’s Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONSUMES</th>
<th>PRODUCES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26 percent of all oil</td>
<td>50 percent of all toxic wastes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 percent of aluminum</td>
<td>26 percent of nitrogen oxides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 percent of copper</td>
<td>25 percent of sulfur oxides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 percent of nickel</td>
<td>22 percent of chlorofluorocarbons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 percent of steel</td>
<td>26 percent of carbon dioxide</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Data from World Resources Institute 1998–99.*
Science as a Way of Knowing

A Faustian Bargain?

- Technology can create power to save and destroy life
- Dr. Faustus sold his soul to the devil in exchange for power and wealth (youth)
Management Theory and the Environment

- **Anthropocentric Theories**
  - Ethics
  - Economic
  - Corporate Social Responsibility
    - Stakeholder
    - Normative
    - Social Contract

- **Green Management Theories**
  - Ecocentricism
  - Adjusted Stakeholder
  - Sustainability
  - Resource Based Theory
Global Environmental Ethics

Growing Disparities in Incomes among Regions
Per Capita Income by Region, 1970–2000

Environmental Ethics and Business

- Western Society - Objectifies Nature
  - Locke - “Something in a state of nature has no economic value and is of no utility to the human race”

- Ethics - a concern with actions and practices directed to improving the welfare of people.
Economic Fundamentalism and Ethics

The corporate social responsibility of a business is to increase profit. - M. Friedman

- Those things that cannot be traded on the market have no value.
- Where does the environment fit in these definitions for environmental ethics?
- Will people and corporations do environmentally responsible things on their own? What happens if they do?
Corporate Social Responsibility

- By doing socially responsible things, businesses better human life.
- Hopefully ..good ethics is good business.

- Is this true?
- Is enlightened self interest a good way?
Incorporating Environment into Management Theory

- Environmental Ethics is a starting point
  - Expanding ethics to include nature.
  - What is the difficulty in doing this?
  - What does the Biocentric ethic say (Goodpaster?)

- Biocentrism
  - Natural objects have intrinsic value and morally considerable in their own right.
  - Deep Ecology nature has an ethical status at least equal to humans.
Green Management Theories

- Ecocentricism views industrial relationships in a cycle, and a whole set of philosophies. How radical is this?

- Sustaincentric - going beyond sustainability of “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.
  - Human and economic relationships inextricably linked with natural systems.
Current Environmental Conditions

- Half the world’s wetlands were lost in the last 100 years.
- Land conversion and logging have shrunk the world’s forests by as much as 50%.
- Nearly three-quarters of the world’s major marine fish stocks are overfished or are being harvested beyond a sustainable rate.
- Soil degradation has affected two-thirds of the world’s agricultural lands in the last 50 years.
Population Growth

- More than 6 billion people now occupy the Earth, adding about 85 million more each year.
- In the next decade, most population growth will be in the poorer countries - countries where present populations already strain resources and services.
More than 1.3 billion people live in **acute poverty**, with an income of less than $1 per day. These people generally lack access to an adequate diet, decent housing, basic sanitation, clean water, education, medical care, and other essentials.

**Four out of five people** in the world live in what would be considered poverty in the U.S. or Canada.

The world’s poorest people are often forced to meet short-term survival needs at the cost of long-term sustainability.
Resource Extraction and Use

- Burning of fossil fuels
- Destruction of tropical rainforests and other biologically rich landscapes
- Production of toxic wastes
Environmental Science

Environment - the circumstances and conditions that surround an organism or a group of organisms

Environmental science - the systematic study of our environment and our place in it
What ought I to do?

Intention ➔ Action ➔ Consequence

Duty

Deontological Ethics
What ought I to do?

Intention → Action → Consequence

Consequentialist Ethics
http://www.envirolink.org/

- Agriculture
- Air Quality
- Climate Change
- Ecosystems
- Energy
- Environmental Disasters
- Environmental Economics
- Environmental Education
- Environmental Ethics
- Environmental Legislation and Policy
- Ground Pollution
- Habitat Conservation
- Human Health
- Natural History
- Oceans
- Outdoor Recreation
- Population
- Sustainable Business
- Sustainable Development
- Sustainable Living
- Transportation
- Urban Issues
- Vegetarianism
- Waste Management
- Water Quality
- Wildlife