

PHIL 224
Environmental Ethics, Week 5
 Paul Thagard

- Use of laptops (tablets, etc.) is discouraged, and limited to the last two rows.

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Assignment 2, Oct. 27

- Do value map for either carbon tax or Keystone XL.
- Additions from assignment 1:
 - Nodes must be simple, e.g. CARBON TAX or KEYSTONE XL.
 - Marker of *C* for consequences or *R* for rights for all positive and negative concepts.
 - Conclusion, 50-100 words, on why you think the yes map or the no map is ethically superior.

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DO NOT

1. Confuse emotionally positive and negative concepts, or complimentary and conflicting links.
2. Have the same node both positive and negative.
3. Have nodes that are completely unconnected to other nodes.
4. Have connections that don't make sense, e.g. having LOVE OF ANIMALS linked supportively with ANIMAL SUFFERING.
5. Present both the pro and con side in the same map.

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Anti-GMO value map

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Genetically Modified Organisms

Consequentialist arguments against

1. Health dangers
2. Control of agriculture by a few large companies, e.g. Monsanto
3. Loss of genetic diversity leading to future disasters

Rights argument against: farmer's right to buy seeds

Consequentialist arguments for

1. Reduce world hunger
2. Increase profits for farmers

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Is nature a resource?

Yes: humans need to make optimal use of nature for current and future generations. Resourcism.

No: nature needs to be protected for its own sake.

Practical consequences?

Should environmental ethics come from the heart or the mind?

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Discussion Question

- Is nature a resource for people, or good in itself?
- Please close laptops.

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Connectivity

- Leopold: "A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the biotic community."
- Treat nature as a whole, not just a bunch of parts to be exploited.
- Holism vs. reductionism vs. multilevelism.

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Ethics for Parks

- Ethical dilemma: reconcile ecocentric and anthropocentric views.
- Should provincial and national parks be preserved for their own sake or for future generations?
- Does it matter?
- Does having a code of ethics help or hinder environmental protection?

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Government tools for conserving natural heritage

1. Acquire lands
2. Regulate private landowners
3. Use tax measures to provide incentives

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Ethics of Markets

Advantages

1. Liberty
2. Fairness
3. Economic efficiency.

Disadvantages

1. Side-effects: externalities.
2. Inequalities: asymmetries of power.
3. Tragedy of the commons: Everyone is worse off.
4. Freedom from control by others vs. freedom to do things.
5. Nature is unpriceable.

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Discussion Question

- Are markets an effective way to conserve nature?
- Please close laptops.

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