

Val Plumwood 1 and Richard Routley wish to question, like Peter Singer, some basic philosophic assumptions underpinning Western man's attitudes towards his role in the moral universe and his relationship to nonhuman animals.

1 ^Val ^Plumwood has done most of her work under her married name:

 ^Val ^Routley.

^In deference, however, to her wish to establish herself under

 ^Plumwood that name

will be used throughout this work.

In a passage reminiscant of Singer's call for the examination of unquestioned assumptions, they state:

..modern moral philosophers -- fulfilling their now established function of providing a theoretical superstructure to explain and justify contemporary moral sensibilities rather than questioning fundamental assumptions -- tend to argue that the bias toward human interests, which is an integral part of going ethical theories, is not just another form of class chauvinism which is both possible and desirable to eliminate, but is rather a restriction dictated by the logic of evaluative and moral concepts, and that

there is no coherent, possible, or viable alternative to the "human chauvinism" of standard ethical theories. 2

2 ^Richard ^Routley ^&and\& ^Val ^Routley.
 ^Against the ^Inevitability of ^Human
^Chauvinism. ^&In\& ^Goodpaster, ^K.^E. ^&and\& ^K.^M.
 ^Sayre, ^&eds\&. ^Ethic
s and ^Problems of the 21st ^Century.
^Notre ^Dame, ^University of ^Notre ^Dame ^Press, 1979: 36-7.

If class chauvinism "is substantially differential, discriminatory and inferior treatment (by sufficiently many members of the class) for items outside the class, for which there is not sufficient justification"³, then human chauvinism is the form of class chauvinism in which the species, *Homo sapiens*, substantially morally discriminates against everything nonhuman by an insufficiently justified assumption of human moral uniqueness.

3 ^R. ^Routley ^&and\& ^V. ^Routley. ^Human ^Chauvinism and ^Environmental ^Ethics.
^&In\& ^Mannison, ^D.^S., ^Mc^Robbie, ^M.^A., ^&and\&
 ^R. ^Routley,
 ^&eds\&. ^Environmental ^Philosophy.
^Canberra, ^A^N^U, 1980: 96.

The contention that man is the sole subject of value and

morality by definition runs aground on a definitional fallacy. This contention takes the definition of moral consideration being exclusive to the human realm to be self-validating and unchallengeable:

The fallacy of the definitional move is that of believing that by converting the substantive evaluative theses of human chauvinism to matters of definition they become somehow exempt from challenge or need for justification. This is comparable to justifying discriminatory membership for a club by referring to the rules, similarly conceived as self-validating and exempt from question or need of justification. 4

4 R. Routley & V. Routley. Against the Inevitability of Human Chauvinism: 38.

In this case the club rules define the Moral Club.

These definitions call upon either physical characteristics or a set of properties that are logically connected with qualification for moral consideration. It is obvious that the physical characteristics are not morally relevant:

It is impossible to restrict moral terms to particular species, when species distinctions are defined in terms of physical characteristics which are not morally relevant.

More generally, an attempt to derive a logically necessary connection between humanity itself and the applicability of morality is bound to fail. For creatures anatomically and zoologically distinct from humans which are identical with humans in terms of morally relevant features are logically possible, upsetting any logical linkage. 5

5 Routley and Routley. Against the Inevitability of Human Chauvinism: 39.

Therefore, the characteristics needed to support the definitional move have to be other than physical characteristics. However, if properties logically tied with moral considerations are examined closely, it is found that they do not support the exclusive eligibility of humans to the Moral Club. Three conditions of adequacy are set down for making the Club exclusive to humans:

1. The set of characteristics must be possessed by at least all properly functioning humans, since to omit any significant group usually considered subject to moral consideration, such as infants, young children, primitive tribesmen, etc., and to allow that it was permissible to treat these groups in the way it is considered permissible to treat non-humans, that is, as mere instruments, would certainly be repugnant to modern moral sensibilities and would offend common intuitions as to the brotherhood of man, the view that all humans are possessors of inalienable rights. Thus human chauvinism, if it is to produce a coherent theory which does not unacceptably rule out some groups of humans, must find some set of features common to the most diverse members of humankind.... (The Total Inclusion assumption)

2. In order for human chauvinism to be justified, this set of characteristics must not be possessed by any non-human. (The Total Exclusion assumption)

3. The set of characteristics must be not merely morally relevant but sufficient to justify, in a non-circular way, the cut-off of moral consideration at exactly the right point. If human chauvinism is to avoid the charge of arbitrariness and unjustifiability and to demonstrate its inevitability and the impossibility of alternatives, it must emerge from the characteristics why items not having them may be used as mere instruments to serve the interests of those which do possess them. 6 (The Instrumental Justification assumption)

6 "Routley and "Routley. "Against the "Inevitability of "Human "Chauvinism:
39-40.

But the properties usually assumed to give humans exclusive entry into the Moral Club when tested against these conditions of adequacy either admit nonhumans or exclude humans. Thirty-two such properties are tested by Plumwood, and Routley inter alia, using tools, using language, self-awareness, being aware of the inevitability of one's own death, being able to answer questions about moral issues such as human chauvinism, having interests, having projects, belonging to a social community, being morally responsible for one's actions, etc., and all are found wanting on at least one count.

However, the conditions of adequacy might be challenged as too stringent. Yet, if the Moral Club is to be exclusive to humans and neither arbitrary nor unjustified, then condition 1 -- that all functioning humans possess the property -- must apply, otherwise the requirements for Club membership are drawn too narrowly and some humans are excluded. Against this condition it might be argued that human is too broad in scope and it is only persons (where person is defined by some morally relevant parametre) who should be considered. This would mean that those humans who did not qualify as persons would not be eligible for treatment as members of the Moral Club or if they were treated as members that eligibility was arbitrary and unjust. If it is the case that all humans (persons) must possess this property, then it must also be the case that no nonhuman possesses it, otherwise an Argument From Analogy and Anomaly applies. If some nonhumans possess the property or properties then the requirements for Club membership are drawn too broadly and some nonhumans are eligible. Finally, it is not enough to separate the eligible from the ineligible (or perhaps the edible from the inedible), it must be shown why the ineligible are not only ineligible for membership, but why they cannot even be considered for membership, otherwise the difference in treatment is not justified. To carry the Club metaphor a little farther, perhaps too far, while members may have certain privileges, this does not necessarily mean that in addition to not enjoying these special privileges, nonmembers can also be unwarrantably deprived of benefits common to members and non-members. Why should membership devalue nonmembers and put them at the disposal of members? It is by this condition that human chauvinism must show why humans are the exclusive subjects of intrinsic value and the value of nonhumans can be handled in terms of instrumental value to humans.

If these conditions of adequacy stand, then the definitional necessity of exclusiveness falls. Yet another approach at making the realms of value and morality exclusive to humans is to examine how values are thought to operate. A prototype argument for this is laid out as follows:

A. Values are determined through the preference rankings of valuers (the ~~no detachable values assumption~~). B. Valuers' preference rankings are determined through valuer's interests (the ~~preference reduction thesis~~). C. Valuers are humans (persons) (the ~~species assumption~~). D. Therefore, values are determined through human interests (through the interests of persons). 8

8 Routley and Routley. Against the Inevitability of Human Chauvinism: 42-3.
The use of persons in this quotation is a reference to arguments aimed at

saving the exclusiveness of the Moral Club by limiting membership to humans with some given capacity, characteristic or excellence or combination of these. While this argument may succeed in preventing non-humans from consideration, it is at the cost of non-paradigmatic humans.

From this argument it is sometimes concluded that "not only is it perfectly acceptable for humans to reduce matters of value and morality to matters of human interest, but moreover there is no rational or possible alternative to doing so; any alternative is simply incoherent." 9 However, if this argument is dismantled it is shown to rest on a set of false assumptions that even charitable manipulation cannot save.

9 Routley and Routley. Against the Inevitability of Human Chauvinism: 43.

An ambiguity resides in the use of 'determined through' in premise A. If 'determined through' means 'have to be determined', then Plumwood and Routley feel, that it is modally upgraded "to reveal the sheer necessity of conclusion D." 10

10 Routley and Routley. Against the Inevitability of Human Chauvinism: 43.

However, this involves a similar modification of premise C or else a modal fallacy is involved. The stronger necessary sense is preferable in forcing the conclusion, as shall be seen shortly when premise C is considered, but the more charitable move for the argument is to weaken the use of 'determined through' to something like 'reflect' or 'are a matter of'. Despite either modification to resolve the ambiguity of 'determined through' premise A is still susceptible to the charge:

Value rankings cannot however be cashed in for preference rankings since, as is well-known, preference rankings and value rankings can diverge; a valuer can prefer what has less value and can value what is not preferred. 11

Premise A is, therefore, modified to read:
All values are determined through the value rankings of (appropriate) valuers. 12

11 Routley and Routley. Against the Inevitability of Human Chauvinism: 44.

12 Routley and Routley. Against the Inevitability of Human Chauvinism: 44.

Bypassing premise B for a moment, premise C, the species assumption, can be seen as a "circular way of reintroducing the logical version of human chauvinism by restricting the class of valuers a priori to humans" and at

best contingently true. 13 It is essential to the argument for premise C to be a necessary condition that humans are the only valuers. Without that the argument does not support the human chauvinistic conclusion. If persons is used instead of humans, then it becomes more defensible, since not all humans are valuers, but not all valuers are human. If not all valuers are human or persons, then to sustain the human chauvinistic conclusion it becomes necessary either to reject all non-human (person) values or to make a move in premise B such that 'interests' are limited to human (person) interests.

13 Routley and Routley. Against the Inevitability of Human Chauvinism:
43-4.

It is just such a move at premise B, that makes it, for them, the most objectionable of the premises. Premise B is a group selfishness argument. To show that the conclusion and particularly premise B is little more than an argument for group egoism in an environmental setting, they display it against an argument baldly for egoism. If premise A is recast replacing 'preferences' with 'values' as above then premise B also has to have 'preferences' replaced by 'values'. The centre of attention in B is now shifted to 'interests'. 'Interests' can be used either in a weak and trivial sense so that anything the valuer values is in the valuer's interest or in stronger, but false sense that is intended to support interests as being in the valuer's advantage:

to sum up the dilemma for the argument then: when "interests" is used in its weaker sense premise B may be accepted but the argument does not establish its intended conclusion or in any way support human chauvinism. For the intended effect of the argument in the crude form is this: in determining values it is enough to look at human advantage; nothing else counts. If the argument were correct, then one could assess values by checking out the local (selfish) advantage of humans, or, more generally, the advantage of the base class somehow assembled. If, on the other hand, "interests" is used in its strong sense, the conclusion would license a form of human chauvinism, but premise B now false. 14

14 Routley and Routley. Against the Inevitability of Human Chauvinism:
46.

This argument has a second aspect to it which they explore. If the argument is not acceptable as it stands, then supposedly, neither is the alternative of rejecting its conclusion. Premise A is opposed to the conclusion D ($\sim A$ or $D \rightarrow \sim A$) to show:

either one accepts the conclusion, with its consequent instrumentalist account of value, or one is committed to an intrinsic or detached value theory which takes values to be completely independent of valuers, and no way determined by them. But, it is assumed, the latter theory is well known as untenable, and may even be seen as involving mysticism or as being irrational. Thus, it may be concluded, there is no real alternative to human chauvinism. 15

15-----Routley and Routley. Against the Inevitability of Human Chauvinism: 47.

But this choice is rejected as a false one:

To reject the instrumentalist conclusion D is by no means to be committed to A, or to the view that the valuers and their preference rankings play no role in determining values, and that values are a further set of mysterious independent items in the world somehow perceived by valuers through a special (even mystical and nonrational) moral sense. 16

16-----Routley and Routley. Against the Inevitability of Human Chauvinism: 47.

Parallel to this dichotomy between A and D is the dichotomy between instrumental and intrinsic values so central in the division and treatment of members from nonmembers in the Moral Club:

The dichotomy frequently presented between instrumentalist accounts of value, on the one hand, and detached theories (or what are mistakenly taken to be the same, intrinsic theories) is, for the same reason, a false one. Instrumental theories are those which attempt to reduce value to what is instrumental to or contributes to a stated goal. Typically such theories take the goal to be the furtherance of the interest of a privileged class; for example, the goal may be taken to be determined in terms of the interests, concerns, advantage, or welfare of the class of humans, or of persons, or of sentient creatures, depending on the type of chauvinism. In particular, human chauvinist theories are, characteristically, instrumentalist theories. In contrast, an item is valued intrinsically where it is

valued for its own sake, and not merely as a means to something further; and an intrinsic-value theory allows that some items are intrinsically valuable. Intrinsic theories then, contrast with instrumental theories, and what "intrinsic" tells us is no more than that the item taken as intrinsically valuable is not valued merely as a means to some goal, i.e., is not merely instrumentally valued. Accordingly detached value theories, since disjoint from instrumental theories, are a sub-class of intrinsic value theories; and they are a proper subclass since intrinsic values need not be detached. Something may be valuable in itself without its being detached from all valuing experience. 17

17-----Routley and Routley. Against the Inevitability of Human Chauvinism: 47-8.

Because detached value theories are only a subclass of intrinsic value theories the dichotomies between A and D and between instrumental and intrinsic theories are false. Since detached theories cannot be maintained and totally instrumental value theories lead to an infinite regress, which is manifest if, consistent with the theory, the goals of a valuer are taken as instrumental, then neither of these extremes is acceptable. But values do exist, so some other view besides those offered in the dichotomy must be advanced. Plumwood and Routley advance one view that denies the dichotomy, yet does not limit valuers to humans and does not limit the value of objects to human instrumental values: A person is the source of value-judgments and values in one sense, i.e. s/he is the valuer; but not in another, namely s/he is not responsible for a valued item having its valued properties. Nor is there any licence for reducing the values assigned to those that serve the interests of the valuer. 18

18-----Routley and Routley. Human chauvinism and Environmental Ethics: 158.

This solution seems to do little more than shift the detached value argument back one step. Why should the qualities of an item be valued except that a valuer places some value on them? That is to say, all items (objects of moral concern) have qualities, but that some of these qualities are valued and some are not indicates the (instrumental) choices of a valuer (unless a theory of detached values, which has just been rejected, is adopted.) The intent behind this value theory is to avoid positing detached values, yet to maintain some basis for intrinsic values that cannot be cashed in for instrumental values. To

do this requires that the intrinsic value of the qualities not be seen also as instrumental values. It is not, therefore, a matter of assigning intrinsic values to the goals of instrumental value theories. It is a matter of finding a way in which a particular goal or item or being is capable of possessing value that is neither detached from the notion of a valuer nor, if connected in some manner to a valuer, merely a means to another end. Asserting the valued qualities are resident in the item is intended to separate it from the valuer's evaluation and denying the reduction of values to the interests of the valuer is intended to provide for an intrinsic worth in items and separate intrinsic values from purely instrumental values. If the intrinsic value of an object is conceptually different from its instrumental value, then the intrinsic value must be taken into consideration separate from its instrumental uses and instrumental judgments about the item. Therefore, the item (object of moral concern) is granted respect in, of and for itself and this is the ultimate goal of the Plumwood/Routley position.

An item can have an intrinsic and an instrumental worth, but this does not in and of itself remove the human bias towards instrumental values or towards the properties valued. For this the denial that humans (persons) are the only valuers is needed:

It is simply a (common) mistake to think that values and rights do not have a meaning, or an application, outside the human context or situation: to establish this point (on which Moore rightly insisted) it is enough to point out again that (hypothetical) valuers, not necessarily human or persons, can assign values with respect to situations and worlds devoid of humans and of persons altogether.
19

19-----Routley and Routley, "Human Chauvinism and Environmental Ethics: 157-8.

It can now be asserted that items in the environment have a value beyond those assigned to them by humans (persons) and that beings other than humans can be valuers, but what is left to do is to establish the relative ranks or "pecking order" of valuers. In this regard the greater value assumption "that even though other things may have intrinsic value, people or humans are more valuable than anything else, and rank more highly (no matter how large their number)" must be denied. 20

20-----Routley and Routley, Human Chauvinism and Environmental Ethics: 171.

The greater value assumption, a weaker form of human chauvinism, is open to most of objections made against human chauvinism and to examples contrasting morally repugnant humans with morally non-repugnant nonhumans illustrating the

unacceptable outcomes of this assumption, such as:
 if there is only room in one's life boat for
 one and one must choose between saving Adolf
 Hitler and a wombat which has lived a decent
 life and never harmed a living creature, one
 is morally obliged to choose the former. 21

21-----Routley and Routley. Against the Inevitability of Human Chauvinism:
 57.

Having set aside the arguments for value being
 exclusive to humans they now focus on arguments for morality
 being exclusive to humans. One such argument is the
 contractual argument:

- J. The only justification of moral
 principles (only X) is a contractual one,
 i.e., the entry into contracts of agents
 (Zry).
- K. Agents only enter into contracts (only Z)
 if it serves their own interests. (The
 egoist assumption)
- L. Humans (persons) are the only agents that
 enter into contracts (that Z).
- Therefore, by K and L:
- M. Humans (persons) only enter into
 contracts (only Z) if it serves their own
 interests.
- Therefore, from J and M:
- N. The only justification for moral
 principles (only X) is the (selfish)
 interests of humans (persons). 22

22-----Routley and Routley. Against the Inevitability of Human Chauvinism: 52.

This entire contract argument can be faulted as a
 strawman, but the general effect of the argument and the
 conclusion still carry the intention of human chauvinistic
 arguments based on the exclusiveness of morality to humans.
 Thus this prototype is illustrative and descriptive of the
 sorts of conclusions in force and the sorts of premises used
 to support them. Therefore, the counterarguments used
 against the contractual argument and its close relatives
 designate the sorts of attacks that can be launched against
 arguments for human chauvinism and moral exclusiveness.

It is assumed that conditions other than contractual
 ones, e.g. community based, can be substituted into
 premise J and with appropriate modifications to the rest of
 the argument the same conclusion can be reached. Premise J
 purports to set the parameters of the argument by selecting
 an activity with moral relevance that does not violate the
 second condition of adequacy previously set down. In an

attempt to describe an exclusively human moral context, premise J's use of the word 'only' to support entry into contracts, a purely human (person's) endeavour, makes it obviously false. Furthermore, in supporting the contract making as a purely human (person's) endeavour, however, "premise J imports the very chauvinism that is at issue in the conclusion." 23

23-----Routley and Routley. Against the Inevitability of Human Chauvinism: 53.

Premise J is found to be faulty on several points. If moral obligation is taken to be a moral principle then premise J is not sufficient to include all moral obligations. "There is no actual contract underlying the principle that one ought not to be cruel to animals, children, and others not in a position to contract." 24 If this too narrow scope were not enough to condemn the theory, then:

The social contract account of moral obligation is defective because it implies that moral obligations can really only hold between responsible moral agents and attempts to account for all moral obligation as based on contract. But of course the account is correct as an account of the origin of some types of moral obligation; there are moral obligations of type that can only hold between free and responsible agents and others which only apply within a social and political context. Yet other types of obligation, such as the obligation not to cause suffering, can arise only with respect to sentient or preference-having creatures -- who are not necessarily morally responsible -- and could not significantly arise with respect to a nonsentient such as a tree or a rock. 25

24-----Routley and Routley. Against the Inevitability of Human Chauvinism: 54.

25-----Routley and Routley. Against the Inevitability of Human Chauvinism: 55.

-----A moral agent could have a moral obligation to a being incapable of being or becoming a moral agent. Even when premise J is amended to something besides a contractual foundation, it still comes to grief on the sticking point of obligations.

Premise K, the egoist assumption:

is faulted on the same grounds as egoism itself. For agents sometimes enter into contacts that are not in their own interests but are in the interests of other persons or

creatures, or are undertaken on behalf of, for instance to protect, other items that do not have interests at all, e.g., rivers, buildings, forests. 26

26-----Routley and Routley. Against the Inevitability of Human Chauvinism: 53.

What is not pellucid here, is that entering into a contract on behalf of another is not, or cannot, be in the interests of the contracting agent and therefore a denial of premise K. Entering into a contract that protects something that is itself incapable of interests may indirectly be in the interests of the contracting agent even though the agent's interests are not directly recognized by the contract. By example, an agent may enter into a contract that protects a virgin forest and the river that flows through it, in order to protect the agent's access to water downstream of the forest. Or perhaps even more indirectly, an agent may sign over his land as a wildflower sanctuary because his neighbour, who he hates, is allergic to wildflowers. It would seem that what has to be shown is that an agent would enter a contract on behalf of another when the interests of the other are directly opposed to the interests of the contracting agent. Opposition to the contracting agent's interests may be, however, too stringent a condition. If breaking the premise rests in showing that an agent will act outside his selfish interests, then it is only necessary to show that an agent would enter into a contract when his selfish interests were not involved. In such a case, entering a contract to protect a river, building, or forest could be sufficient.

Premise K can be amended to reflect the ability to enter into contracts for beings or things other than the contracting agent:

However even if premise K were amended to admit that agents may enter into contracts on behalf of nonhuman items, it would still result in a form of human chauvinism given familiar assumptions, since nonhuman items will still be unable to create moral obligations except through a human sponsor or patron, who will presumably be able to choose whether or not to protect them. 27

27-----Routley and Routley. Against the Inevitability of Human Chauvinism: 53.

But if this modification is made and nonhuman items are unable to create a moral obligation on the agents (agents being under moral obligations only where they choose to be), then this premise assumes the conclusion N. It is only the interests of the humans involved that justify the moral obligation imposed by the contract.

Premise L is strengthened by the use of 'person' "for otherwise premises such as L and its variations are suspect, since there is nothing, legally or morally, to prevent consortia, organizations, and other nonhumans from entering into contracts (and these items are appropriately counted as persons in the larger legal sense)." 28

28 Routley and Routley. Against the Inevitability of Human Chauvinism:

53.

While premise L may be the better by this move premises J and K are both the worse. J remains false and K is either false or assumes the conclusion if modified to allow for conditions that would save the human chauvinistic elements of it. Thus contractual arguments (and alternatives of the same form as this prototype) for the substantiation of a human chauvinistic-based environmental ethics are lost. The assumptions underlying the premises are simply not equal to the task of supporting the conclusion. Further modification of the premises is at the expense of violating the conditions of adequacy for exclusive human membership in the Moral Club. If the restrictions (such as 'only') on premises like J (or variations of it) are removed, then leeway is left for including some nonhumans or excluding some humans. On the other hand, restrictions may be retained and the contractual portion is modified but the result is the same. The more vital premise for establishing the human chauvinistic conclusion, premises like K that link the exclusive human justification of moral actions to human interests, either assume the conclusion or may be countered by examples that show them to be false.

Plumwood and Routley conclude:

it is not possible to provide criteria which would justify distinguishing, in the sharp way standard Western ethics do, between humans and certain nonhuman creatures, and particularly those creatures which have preferences or preferred states. For such criteria appear to depend upon the mistaken assumption that moral respect for other creatures is due only when they can be shown to measure up to some rather arbitrarily-determined and loaded tests for membership of a privileged class (essentially an elitist view), instead of upon, say, respect for the preferences of other creatures. Accordingly the sharp moral distinction, commonly accepted in ethics by philosophers and others alike, between all humans and all other animal species, lacks a satisfactory coherent basis. 29

29 ^Routley and ^Routley. ^Human ^Chauvinism and ^Environmental ^Ethics:

103.

Having broken the exclusiveness of value and morality to humans and having disconnected the link of values and morals to solely human interests, what alternatives are there to human chauvinistic systems? Given the analysis just made of value and morality, Plumwood and Routley maintain:

What emerges is a picture of types of moral obligation as associated with a nest of rings or annular boundary classes, with the innermost class, consisting of highly intelligent, social, sentient creatures, having the full range of moral obligations applicable to them, and outer classes of such nonsentient items as trees and rocks having only a much more restricted range of moral obligations significantly applicable to them. In some cases there is no sharp division between the rings. But there is no single uniform privileged class of items, no one base class, to which all and only moral principles directly apply, and moreover the zoological class of humans is not one of the really significant boundary classes. The recognition that some types of moral obligation only apply within the context of a particular sort of society, or through contract, does nothing to support the case of human chauvinism. 30

30 Routley and ^Routley. Against the Inevitability of Human Chauvinism:

55.

This notion of nested zones or an annular picture of classes may be diagrammed as in Diagram 1. 31

31 ^Routley, ^Richard. ^In ^Defense of ^Cannibalism. ^Unpublished paper.
^Canberra, 1981: 2.

The labels for the rings or zones represent:

respectively different sorts of objects -
such as, objects of moral concern,
welfare-having objects, preference-havers
(and choice-makers), right-holders,
obligation-holders and responsibility-
bearers, those contractually-committed- and
the different sorts of obligations that can
significantly apply to such objects. Not all
the types of objects indicated are distinct,
nor is the listing intended to be exhaustive
but rather illustrative. For strictly the
labels given should be expanded, as the
distinctions are categorical ones, so that
what matters is not whether an object is, for
instance, contractually committed in some
fashion but whether it is the sort of thing
that can be, whether it can significantly
enter into or be committed by arrangements of
a contractual kind. 32

32 Routley and Routley. Human Chauvinism and Environmental Ethics: 107-8.

Moreover, the categorical distinctions that demarcate the
various rings or zones are morally relevant categories. The
annular picture does not reject traditional ethical
categories, but does reject the limitation of categories to
one species or base class. Also it rejects unjustified
distinctions that are not "...categorical distinctions which
tie analytically with ethical notions...." 33

33 Routley and Routley. Human Chauvinism and Environmental Ethics:
108.

This being the case:

It is certainly in no way species chauvinist or human chauvinist. For none of the zones of the annular picture comprises the class of humans (or its minor variant the class of persons); for this class is not of moral relevance. 34

34 Routley and Routley. Human Chauvinism and Environmental Ethics: 108.

Returning again to the metaphor of the Moral Club, under the annular ring picture membership in the Club is automatic to all objects of moral concern, but the privileges within the Club are limited by moral capacities to use the facilities of the Club. The obligations and the extent of those obligations of human members to nonhuman members rest upon the type of moral object the nonhuman is and on its capacities (illustrated by its overlay on the annular rings) not upon a comparison of the nonhuman to the human. For example a being capable of contractual obligation could justifiably discriminate against a being unable to make contracts with reference to contractual obligations, regardless of the species of the two beings. By the same token, it would be unjust of a preference-haver to discriminate against another preference-haver solely because the two preference-havers were of different species.

Too it should be noted that Diagram 1 illustrates the position of humans as a species and not that of a particular human. Any given human, as with any given object of moral concern plotted on the annular rings, would not necessarily match in each detail the plot of the species to which it belongs:

Just as there are relevant divisions beyond the class of preference-havers, so there are within the class. Thus the suggestion that the class towards which moral obligations (and a corresponding sort of moral concern which takes account of creatures' states) may be held is bounded by the class of preference-havers, does not of course imply that no distinctions can be made within the class of preference-havers with respect to the kind of behaviour appropriate to them. For example, contractual obligations -- which by no means exhaust obligation -- can only be held directly (as distinct from by way of representative) with respect to a much narrower class of creatures, from which many

humans are excluded. 35

 35 Routley and Routley. "Human Chauvinism and Environmental Ethics:
 107.

The shift from determining moral regard by a comparison of nonhumans to humans to a determination by an examination of categorical distinctions expands the range of nonhuman objects of moral concern. By rejecting the base class assumption, value as determined by use or production by the base class is also rejected. This does not mean that human values will be rejected, but that values will no longer be judged solely in human terms and that human values will no longer automatically take precedent over all other values. Thus a particular ecosystem, e.g. a swamp, is recognized as having value other than the possible location of an oil-bearing geosyncline or a salt dome. It is seen to have value as the home of a number of various flora and fauna species with a complex set of inter-relationships and as a system in itself that is not reducible to the interests of one species or even group of species within it.

This last point that the value of an ecosystem, or any similar complex of values, interests, preferences, etc., is not reducible to the values, interests, or preferences of either the individual components or the whole, ignoring the individual components, is called by them the "no-reduction position". This position permits a middle ground between the extremes of particularistic and holistic views and thereby provides a locus for what they term "the ecological outlook":

In a closely related way, the no-reduction position can provide a suitable metaphysical base for an ecological outlook or worldview, in which man is seen as part of a natural community, part of natural systems seen as integrated wholes and with welfare and interests bound up with the whole, and not as, in the typical Western view, a separate, self-contained actor standing outside the system and manipulating it in the pursuit of self-contained interests. 36

 36 Routley, Val and Richard Routley. Social Theories, Self Management, and Environmental Problems. "In" Mannison, D.S., McRobbie, M.A. "and" R. Routley, "eds". Environmental Philosophy. Canberra, ANU, 1980: 319.

One of the offshoots of this no-reduction position is a policy of respect for the system, its parts, and for the inter-relationships between parts and the parts and the whole:

The no-reduction position can thus provide a natural foundation for a genuinely environmental ethic, one which allows human actions to be guided by respect, care and concern for the natural world and rejects the "Human Egoist" thesis that the only constraints on human action concerning nature arise from the interests of other humans. For such relations of interdependence between man and nature must give rise to constraints on human action in the same way that appropriate relations of interdependence between men do, so the thesis that action can and must be unconstrained by any concerns other than human ones fails, as does the thesis that nature is no more than a means to human ends, a mere tool. 37

37 Routley and Routley. Social Theories, Self Management, and Environmental Problems: 319.

The respect position is based on one or more of three general obligation principles:

1. The general principle of respect for preference-havers (formerly applied only to human preferences) is transferred to the larger arena of all beings or items that can be placed in a dispreferred state:

..the requisite, important and non-arbitrary distinction is to be drawn which marks out the class of creatures towards which obligations may be held; that is, the usually recognised principles of consideration towards others (of the privileged class) properly extend or should be generalized to consideration for other creatures having preferences, and the corresponding general defeasible obligation principle is not to put others (other preference-havers) into a dispreferred state for no good reason. 38

38 Routley and Routley. Human Chauvinism and Environmental Ethics: 104.

2. Preferences alone, however, are still too narrow to develop an environmental ethic or ecological outlook. So the second principle applies to beings or items with an 'interest' or 'welfare', where "...an 'interest' or 'welfare' in the broad sense is a ~~telos~~ or life-goal, as possessed by living things, or an equilibrium or system goal, as possessed by living ecosystems." 39

39 Routley and Routley. Human Chauvinism and Environmental Ethics: 106.

Therefore, the second principle is:

that the welfare or wellbeing of animate objects and also such biological items as ecosystems can be affected in one way or another, e.g. increased, decreased, upset. For instance, the wellbeing of a coastal community and of the individual trees in it can be reduced to zero by sandmining, and it can be seriously threatened by pumping waste detergent into the nearby ocean. There is a general obligation principle corresponding likewise to this more comprehensive class of welfare-bearers, namely, not to jeopardise the wellbeing of natural objects or systems without good reason. 40

40 Routley and Routley. Human Chauvinism and Environmental Ethics: 106-7.

3. Beyond preference-havers and beings or systems with interests or welfares, the environment contains items, such as rocks, soils and waterways that have value, but no preferences or interests:

Unlike higher animals such items cannot literally be put into dispreferred states (and in this obvious sense, as opposed to the wider sense of 'interests' tied to welfare, they have no interests), but they can be damaged or destroyed or have their value eroded or impaired. 41

41 Routley and Routley. Human Chauvinism and Environmental Ethics: 109.

The three generalizable obligation principles are parallel in their structure and application and vary only in what rings of the annular picture that they cover. Exclusiveness of the principles to a particular ring, however, should not be assumed. The principle of not damaging or destroying the value of an object of moral concern could extend across the entire annular picture. Thus the overlay of a particular object of moral concern will indicate which principle(s) of obligation may be applied to a particular case. An object of moral concern, e.g. a wombat, may very well be capable of being placed in a dispreferred state, its wellbeing or interests jeopardized, or devalued at one and the same time. On the other hand, another object of moral concern, e.g. Ayers Rock, may, perhaps, only be disvalued.

Further the respect position not only gives generalized principles of obligation, but it also reverses the common notion of when these principles are applied:

On the alternative thoroughgoing respect view, which is illustrated by various nonexploitive non-Western ethics, one starts from a restricted position, a position of no interference and no exploitation, a position at peace with the natural world so to say, and allows interference -- not as on Western thinking, restricts interference -- for good reasons. The onus of proof is thus entirely inverted: good reasons are required for interference, not to stop interference. 42

42 Routley and Routley. Human Chauvinism and Environmental Ethics: 174.

Inverting the onus of proof leads to shifts and inversions in other areas as well. Requiring good reasons for interfering brings about a shift in the notion of property ownership. Operating under a respect position, it can no longer be assumed that the environment or pieces of it can be private property to be done with or disposed of at will. Before a swamp can be drained, or a forest cut, or a stream polluted some good reason must be given. Human convenience and economic gain would not count as good reasons:

Respect does not preclude use, but it does preclude certain sorts of use. It is incompatible above all with property view and with regarding something as no more than a means to the user's ends. 43

43 Routley and Routley. Social theories, Self Management, and Environmental Problems: 322.

The respect position is not only incompatible with the property view, it is also incompatible with the strong dichotomy between use and nonuse:

The conventional wisdom of Western Society tends to offer a false dichotomy of use versus respectful nonuse - a false choice which comes out especially clearly again in the treatment of animals. Here the choice presented in Western thought is typically one of either use without respect or serious constraint, of using animals for example in the ways characteristic of large-scale mass-production farming and a market economic system which are incompatible with respect, or on the other hand of not making any use of animals at all, for example, never making use

of animals for food or for farming purposes. What is left out in this choice is the alternative the Indians and other non-Western people have recognized, the alternative of limited and respectful use, which enables use to be made of animals, but does not allow animals to be used in an unconstrained way or merely as means to human ends. 44

44 Routley and Routley. Human Chauvinism and Environmental Ethics: 179.
Alternative views of non-Western people, several groups of Australian Aborigines, will be taken up in a later chapter.

Neither, then, is the respect position a reverence position that also arises from the use/nonuse dichotomy. The lives, preferences, choices, and considerations of other species or objects of moral concern are not to be taken as sacred and inviolable. But as has been pointed out before a good reason must be given before interference can be brooked. Interference is acceptable, as in the case of "essential predation...which is essential to the normal livelihood of the predator, and where the predator takes for itself no more than it requires for its livelihood." 45

45 Routley, Richard. In Defense of Cannibalism: 32.

Thus an alternative to the Western dichotomy of use versus nonuse is to mitigate, if possible, the user's considerations with the considerations of the item:

To so use something without treating it as available for unlimited or unconstrained use for human ends is characteristic of respectful use. In contrast non-respectful use treats the use of the item as constrained by no considerations arising from the item itself and the user's relationship to it, but as constrained only in a derivative way, by considerations of the convenience, welfare and so forth of other humans. 46

46 Routley and Routley. Human Chauvinism and Environmental Ethics: 179.

For there to be a respectful position that denies the dichotomy of unconstrained use versus respectful nonuse and that allows for the relationship between the user and the item and the considerations of the item to be taken into account, one fundamental change in the present relationship between humans and the environment that must eventuate is for individual users to take direct responsibility for their impact:

Respect positions can only be generally

realized in a society in which the basic social structure and economy enables people to take direct responsibility for the impact on the natural world their needs and their satisfaction create, such as in the economy of cooperative, involvement. 47

47 Routley and Routley. Social Theories, Self Management, and Environmental Problems: 323.

Human users taking direct responsibility for their impact should lower their impact. If users bear the responsibility for producing and managing what they need, then they should produce, in a manner like unto the 'taking' of essential predation only what they need and should 'go lighter' on the world:

...self-management can offer the alternative of a ~~no-waste~~ society in which nothing is produced which does not correspond to genuine needs and in which production is designed to satisfy those needs with a minimum of waste. The possibility of production of material which does not correspond to genuine needs is eliminated by two factors in the economy of cooperative exchange and involvement; first, a direct relationship between the possibility of use of an item and direct expenditure of labour on the part of the user, and second, direct cooperative involvement between producers and users. 48

48 Routley and Routley. Social Theories, Self Management, and Environmental Problems: 313.

The respect position, therefore, is intended to lower the impact of human users on the entire environment, while extending the position's own impact goes far beyond the interrelations of human and other species. It is intended, when applied to western cultures, to face among other issues the economic/ethical conflicts that have been at the core of many of the practical ethical problems concerning humans and nonhumans and that have given rise to much of the current debate over inter-specific ethics. The respect position is a strong repalcement to the Dominion Thesis that has been the ruling and guiding principle of Western thought on ethical relationships between humans and nonhumans. Like the Dominion Thesis, the respect position is a basic set of principles from which a whole range of problems, situations, and questions can be approached. The alterations to the cut of western societies that would result from its adoption as the pattern of ethical progress would be more drastic than that of either a Stewardship Principle (or some other weakened form of the Dominion Thesis) or an extension principle, such as the Utilitarian extension proposed by Singer. Yet these seemingly drastic alterations, or some

other equally drastic set, may be no more than what is
needed to restyle current practices as a more just and less
arbitrary.