

Encouraging Environmental Care

A Code of Ethics for Short Hills Park

In 1991, following a lengthy process of broad public consultation, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR) published a Management Plan for Short Hills Provincial Park, a 688-hectare park located on the southwest edge of St. Catharines in the Regional Municipality of Niagara. The Ministry recognized on the one hand, that there was clear public support for preserving this park as a “wild, natural area, with only very basic facilities to support trail use.”¹ On the other hand, it was equally clear that a wide variety of recreational uses of the park—ranging from hiking, horseback riding, sport fishing, cross-country skiing, mountain biking, nature and heritage appreciation, as well as outdoor education—were to continue.²

The common ethical dilemma of how to reconcile ecocentric and anthropocentric needs surfaced in the Ministry’s recommendations. The Plan concluded that there was a need to explore ways of satisfying both environmental and human needs. On the one hand, the park’s significant natural features unique to the Niagara escarpment deserved to be protected. On the other hand, a variety of “high quality, day-use recreational and interpretive experiences” were also to be accommodated.³ Due to the variety of uses of the park and because some conflict over trails had already been evident, the Ministry’s goal was to seek ways to “minimize conflict between trail users” themselves.⁴

Traditional ways of minimizing social conflict and environmental disruption often amount to policing procedures, and to use of essentially

negative reinforcement techniques and punishment of behavior. So, for example, fines may be administered for littering, or for overnight camping within Short Hills; or, as with the new Management Plan, specific user groups (snowmobilers and motorcyclists in this case) may now be excluded from the park by law.

Planner Oscar Newman reminds us, however, that the root of the word “policing” is “polis,” meaning community.⁵ Certainly, assigning a Park Warden to control behavior within Short Hills Provincial Park may be necessary, but it is not in itself a sufficient condition of ensuring acceptable behavior within the park. Studies have shown that for many (perhaps the majority) of park users, prompts, cues, information dissemination, and better education about behavior expectations, naturally regulated by

members of the community, also encourage constructive activities and help to restrict potential friction between park visitors.⁶

It is in this spirit of pursuing such methods of *positive reinforcement* of responsible behavior, that a Code of Ethics was drafted for visitors to Short Hills Provincial Park.⁷ It has evolved in consultation with hikers, equestrians, bikers, and lovers of the park. At one of the workshops convened during the course of the study, a Friends of Short Hills group has been struck; they are currently investigating means of implementation and communication and dissemination of the code to park visitors.

To our knowledge, such park-centered codes of ethics are rare to the point of being nonexistent in Ontario, and even in Canada. (Some moral imperatives may find their way into general introductory visitor brochures, but not in a self-contained, unified format.) It is true, as David Johnson notes, that "unlike most other aspects of human existence, [enjoyment of outdoor activities] does not have a long-established, tight code of laws regulating it. Rules are still few and loose."⁸ It is precisely on account of this degree of freedom, however, that there may be a need for a level of ethics "considerably higher" than in more naturally restrictive settings, and with more heavily socially or politically monitored activities. Perhaps the time is right to seek to encourage responsible behavior and environmental care in our parks, with the guidance of codes of ethics. In-

deed, this is the argument of the present paper.

What is a Code of Ethics —And Why Do We Need One?

In very general terms, a code of ethics is a written articulation of moral guidelines, designed to lead to minimally acceptable standards of human conduct. A survey of the current literature on ethical codes suggests that, as an expression of general agreement on shared beliefs, a code should:

- Serve to provide a *common vocabulary* about what is right and what is wrong;
- Offer a thoughtful *framework for conflict resolution* and policy development;
- *Clarify ethical issues* and help to resolve disagreement about moral dilemmas, thereby seeking to decrease, if not eliminate, unethical practices;
- *Impose some constraints* on individual behavior;
- *Reduce uncertainty* as to ethical and unethical courses of action;
- *Suggest some course of action* to follow up on charges of unethical conduct;
- *Facilitate improved cooperation* among interested parties, by enhancing mutual ethical understanding of norms of action; and
- *Promote environmental awareness*, by sensitizing the public to shared social and environmental values.⁹

There is some disagreement among academics, policy makers and practitioners, about the usefulness of codes of ethics. Some of the common complaints made about ethical codes include the following:

- They are little more than “*window-dressing*” and “*public relations gimmicks*” which are designed to impress outsiders but are not taken seriously by practitioners.
- They are *too abstract*—too broad, and difficult to apply in specific situations.
- If they manage to express consensus, then they end up being *too vague* and too weak in their provisions; as a result, they provide little practical guidance.
- They may be *counterproductive*, if they formalize the very status quo which they are only apparently attempting to change.
- They are *difficult to enforce*, because they are often not covered by law.
- They are *unnecessarily restrictive* on individual rights and freedom of choice.
- They *unnecessarily complicate matters of management*, by introducing new rules and standards to be enforced.
- They are *ineffective* in handling systematic corruption.¹⁰

It is important to acknowledge that any code of ethics may be potentially subject to the above criticisms. Indeed, in this vein, even the most energetic defenders of codes of ethics rec-

ognize that codes are not a cure-all for every sort of unethical behavior. Nevertheless, particularly in conjunction with other forms of environmental education, written standards can and do help to clarify and resolve ethical dilemmas. Many of the above dangers and complaints directed towards codes of ethics can be avoided through careful formulation and competent administration of codes. In this respect, the goal must not be to avoid formulating ethical codes, but on the contrary, to do so conscientiously, prudently, while remaining mindful of the potential pitfalls.

In the case of Short Hills Provincial Park, we recognized that one way of avoiding the risk of constructing an abstract and ultimately irrelevant code was to maintain open lines of communication with the community. The initial stages of the study consisted of a dialogue with community members regarding the very issue of the feasibility of a moral code for encouraging ethical social and environmental interactions. A mail-out questionnaire to approximately 90 individuals collected information on whether organized groups already relied upon their own code of ethics, and whether they could identify sources of conflict in the park. In-depth, one- to two-hour interviews were scheduled with a select group of individuals, representing a cross-section of organized visitor groups identified in the park. A workshop was held in June 1993 at Brock University to bring these groups together

to discuss the potential of a common code of ethics to help resolve issues relating to social and environmental conflicts within the park.

Individual codes of ethics were obtained from hiking, equestrian, cyclist, motorcyclist, ski-doo, and naturalist associations. At the same time, there was overwhelming consensus in support of the need of a *common* code of ethics, directed specifically to integrating diverse activities, and regulating overall conduct within the park. Respondents agreed that such a common code would be helpful in addressing the *relations between* individual visitor groups, as well as special environmental considerations *of the park itself*.

While there was clear support for such a code, all groups did recognize the need of other means of regulating members' conduct, in addition to a code of ethics. Such means ranged from self-enforcement, to group monitoring, to pledges, education sessions, meetings, and information manuals. This indicated to us that, according to those surveyed, a code of ethics should not be expected to operate in isolation from other means of regulating behavior.

One question asked in our survey was whether there were "any identifiable groups with whom your own group might be expected to come into conflict within Short Hills Provincial Park." Hikers and naturalists did suggest that mountain bikers, motorized vehicles, and equestrians could present potential sources of

conflict with respect to their own objectives within the park. Representatives of a nature club suggested that they have found "trails crowded and eroded by passing horses, such that one member suffered significant leg injury after a fall."

Altogether, there was acknowledgment of the need to address the issue of *how best* to resolve actual and potential conflicts in the park. Dramatic headlines in a local newspaper at this time, read "Equestrians vs. Pedestrians," and "Short Hills battle a sign to planners of disaster ahead."¹¹ On the other hand, contrary to such headlines, emerging from our research was a clear overall indication of goodwill by respondents towards one another, and a genuinely conciliatory spirit towards resolving potential social conflicts.

On the issue of environmental preservation, there was some disagreement regarding the degree to which the park should be developed to support recreational and educational activities. One respondent wrote that the "Board of Education is most anxious to add Short Hills to their list of resources. However, in order to facilitate *school use*, we need access to the park, parking for a bus, and washrooms." While the Board representative was appreciative of the need to preserve the natural environment of the park, he was equally concerned that pupils from elementary grades would be unable to access educational trails, because of large distances required for walking from parking lots, and because public fa-

cilities were insufficiently available.

Others (like the Niagara Falls Nature Club) appeared to welcome the wildness of the park. They wrote: "The people of the Niagara Falls Nature Club value and appreciate the opportunities in Short Hills Park to observe and study the birds, trees and wildflowers in a significantly sized natural habitat." What emerged from such comments was a lack of consensus among various sectors of the public as to what extent Short Hills—originally deemed to be a natural-environment-class park—could nevertheless be developed to accommodate human (e.g., including children's) use. In short, it was unresolved as to how to balance anthropocentric (human-centered) and ecocentric (wilderness-centered) visions of what the park should be.

The problem of how to reconcile these conflicting anthropocentric and ecocentric demands has riddled environmental ethics. On the one hand, philosophers such as Tom Regan have suggested that "the development of what can properly be called an environmental ethic requires that we postulate inherent value in nature."¹² Otherwise, he argues, we must resort to a "management ethic" for the "use of the environment," instead of a proper ethic of the environment itself.¹³ Critics of the anthropocentric world-view contend that when we value humans above all else, inevitably, the natural environment is seen to be less important and, consequently, we feel justified in degrading nature if it is to society's advantage.

These critics maintain that it is such a human-centered world-view that is to blame for the environmental crisis in the first place. Instead of an anthropocentric ethic, what we need instead, they argue, is an ecocentric ethic to protect the earth as valuable in and of itself.¹⁴

On the other hand, critics of the opposite extreme—of ecocentric morality—have pointed out that to assume that the environment possesses value in and of itself is still to justify such value *on human grounds*.¹⁵ To be sure, reconciling anthropocentric and ecocentric demands presents ongoing ethical challenges which continue to be addressed in the philosophical literature to this day.¹⁶ Not surprisingly, although these general issues of how best to balance human and environmental needs were considered within the extensive public consultation process prior to development of the management plan, our study showed that the concerns had been incompletely resolved. That a code of ethics would need to address some of the difficulties in balancing these anthropocentric and ecocentric interests was clear from the initial stages of our study.

Toward a Code of Ethics for Short Hills Provincial Park

Before we discuss the code itself, a number of key philosophical assumptions which grounded our approach may warrant some discussion here. Presumably, a variety of methods might be employed to evolve a code of ethics, building on either an-

thropocentric or ecocentric theoretical foundations. We chose to rely, however, on the phenomenological method, inasmuch as phenomenology seeks to ally itself with neither a subjectivistic nor objectivist extreme but, instead, aims to uncover the essential belonging and interplay of the two. For the phenomenologist, neither nature in and of itself, nor humans, are central.¹⁷ Rather, firmly grounded in a description of human being-in-the-world, phenomenology will maintain that "the relation is more fundamental than what is related."¹⁸

Originally defined as the study of "phenomena," or of "that which appears" to human understanding, phenomenologists aim to describe things, events and processes as they show themselves, in and of themselves, rather than in terms of any preconceived theoretical filters.¹⁹ Instead of imposing generalized, abstract hypotheses upon the lived world, the intention is to "lay bare" essential patterns of meaning through a careful seeing and listening. The synergism and complexity of phenomena is thereby to be preserved, rather than manipulated into neat, static categories, ultimately disengaged from the phenomenon under study.²⁰

Translating this approach to our research meant that instead of imposing a top-down, preconceived system of theoretical principles to instruct a code of ethics, we proceeded to evolve the code bottom-up, so to speak, through a careful listening to

what community members had to tell us about their needs and perceptions. Questionnaires were designed, not in order to facilitate a quick quantitative compilation and survey of views; on the contrary, leading questions encouraged respondents to share their stories in a narrative format. (This meant, in some cases, that some participants went to their computers, reprinted the questions, and literally went on for pages, sharing their ideas.) Interviews were structured in such a way as to encourage community members to share their thoughts with minimal interruption by the interviewers, allowing for a stream of dialogue to emerge as spontaneously as possible.²¹

Our aim in all cases was to be attentive to essential messages which emerged throughout the course of our data-gathering stages. Even the final questionnaire which elicited views on the contents of a code of ethics, initially gathered information from respondents not on what "ought" and "ought not" to happen in the park, but rather, on what aspects of the park they found to be valuable in and of themselves, inasmuch as they provided for a genuine *sense of place* in Short Hills.²²

Edward Casey reminds us of the fundamental significance of place, as the condition of meaningful description of our way of being in the world. He writes that "to be is to be in place.... [P]lace, by virtue of its unencompassability by anything other than itself, is at once the limit and the condition of all that exists."²³ A

holistic sense of place provides the context for that which is meaningful within a specific locale. What I find to be valuable about an environment is colored by the interest which I take in it, which itself is elicited by a holistic perception of the environment's sense of place.

Such an understanding of the foundations of human values as grounded in a sense of place guided our research project in Short Hills Park. The research method aimed to elicit essential community values about the sense of place of the park as a whole, and to reflect those values in the code, rather than to impose any preconceived, abstract theoretical model of ethical rules of conduct upon park visitors. Such a phenomenological approach, it seemed to us, was warranted if the code was indeed to bring to light ethical precepts which could be seen as ultimately relevant by the very members of the community who cared for Short Hills Park.

To enlarge further upon these views, some words might be helpful about a second set of related philosophical assumptions about the need for an *ontological* grounding of an ethical code.²⁴ We should emphasize two points in this regard. First, phenomenological ontologists argue that a distinction has arisen between abstract value systems and concrete facts. This has resulted in ethical theories of free-floating ideals that seem to be detached from and irrelevant to the lived world of decision-making. Such a separation between facts and

values, moreover, is seen to be possible only on the basis of a more primordial ontological rift that has developed between subject and object. Let us spend a moment to examine these two propositions and how they affected the development of a code of ethics for Short Hills Park.

In the modern epoch, we may be inclined to describe values as subjective, and facts as objective.²⁵ Values are apparently fuzzy opinions; facts reflect reality. Philosophy supposedly describes subjective value systems; science studies objective facts. Yet, as Don Marietta observes, gradually we have come to understand that the "notion of brute, theory-free facts is an obsolete concept, no longer useful in science or the philosophy of science."²⁶ Conrad Brunk and his colleagues provide a fascinating illustration in their book entitled *Value Assumptions in Risk Assessment*, of how the same set of scientific facts are differently interpreted by distinct individuals, because of hidden value systems affecting the interpretation of those facts.²⁷ In other words, facts are rarely if ever value-free, because they are interpreted always within the context of taken-for-granted assumptions and beliefs. At the same time, values cannot afford to be divorced from facts; otherwise, they become irrelevant and lack a proper "fit" with the lived world of our everyday existence.²⁸

In assigning significance to a specific environment like Short Hills Park, I think that it is fair to say that, normally, we would not seek to as-

seem a cumulative list of discrete, objective "facts" about it—that it provides specific natural science features or a particular terrain of trees and trails—and only then proceed to "value" the park. On the contrary, the process of moral awareness is more complex, and fundamentally other than one of linear, technical process.²⁹

Joseph Kockelmans explains that "it is of the greatest importance to realize that a human being is not born a moral agent, but that he grows up and is educated to become a moral agent. The importance of this remark becomes clear when one realizes that the experiences in which ethical discourse must take its point of departure, have already occurred in the life of an individual long before they received an explicit ethical meaning in the limited sense of this term.... Thus it seems to me that reflections on the foundations of morality should begin at a level where the distinction between ontology, anthropology and ethics is not yet relevant."³⁰

The point here is that ethical beliefs are not just arbitrary, subjective opinions, nor are they abstract, technical constructions. To be meaningful, they arise within the existential concreteness of lived experience. In this respect, the phenomenological task of evolving a code of ethics becomes more than a philosophical construction of abstract moral rules for the community to follow. Once again, the task becomes one of illuminating taken-for-granted community values that sustain that community in

their everyday experiences of the park prior to the evolution of the code.

To turn to our second, related point, we have suggested that the tendency to separate human values from the world of "facts" rests on a more fundamental dualism that has developed in modern metaphysics between subjects and objects themselves. The rift, briefly described above, between anthropocentric and ecocentric foundations—one that has played a prominent role in environmental ethics—is merely a reflection of a more fundamental ontological dualism that has evolved between subjectivity and objectivity.³¹

To bridge this chasm, phenomenologists describe the ontological belonging of humans to their lived worlds, and they emphasize this belonging in the hyphenated description of human being-in-the-world.³² Rather than grounding their thought either within a subjective idealism, or the alternative of an objective realism, phenomenologists seek to describe the ontological *relation between* humans and the environments within which they find themselves.³³

How did such an ontological presupposition affect our work at Short Hills? First of all, it made us wary of subjectivistic, human-centered assumptions which would immediately assign ontological priority to humans over the natural environment. There has been much criticism in the field of environmental ethics of this sort of anthropocentrism. From Deep Ecology to Leopold's Land Ethic, the arguments against assuming that hu-

mans come first—and that the environment is nothing more than a resource for the use of human beings—have been presented in many different forms.³⁴

More specifically, consider, by way of example, the definitions coming out of the United States of “outdoor ethics”—a term signifying precisely the domain of our Short Hills project. At a conference in 1987, the director of National Park Service in Washington stated that “outdoor ethics are a code of man’s creation which governs his conduct in the use of the outdoors.”³⁵ Similarly, the Assistant Deputy Minister for Parks and Wildlife in Manitoba defines outdoor ethics again as a “system of code morals which applies to man’s use of the out-of-doors.”³⁶

Putting aside the gender critique of sexist language here (women use outdoors too!), both these definitions clearly stipulate *the use of* the outdoors. Indeed, a commonly accepted term in the Short Hills Management Plan which we found somewhat problematic was that of *user groups*. In all of these cases, the claim that the environment is there *for human use* may lead one to the conclusion that the world is there exclusively for human purposes. It is precisely such a view of nature in terms of its purely instrumental value to humans which, according to many theorists, has provided the justification for the domination, manipulation, and exploitation of the environment and the current unsustainable state of society.

Paul Eagles reminds us that even

such a phrase as “natural resource management is value laden”—as is indeed the very concept of management.³⁷ “To manage is to guide or control,” he explains. “Typically, management involves setting goals, marshaling resources and taking action to fulfill those goals. It is inherently manipulative. Some managers feel that they must interfere, must change the environment, or they are not properly fulfilling their management role.”³⁸ Yet, as we all know, sometimes the best environmental policy may turn out to be non-interference with natural cycles.³⁹

As much as phenomenologists avoid committing themselves to a subjectivistic ontological foundation, they similarly avoid an objectivist, ecocentric perspective which itself becomes ultimately naive. Douglas Torgerson explains that the paradox of the ecocentric move is that

it de-centers the human and, at the same time, places humanity at the center of things. As soon as humanity is expelled from its privileged position, it is readmitted, so to speak, by the back door. Human reason is divested of its pretensions, but placed in judgment of all being. It could not be otherwise, for environmental ethics depends, after all, on ethical discourse. Discourse presupposes rational participants, and the only natural beings we know to be potentially qualified participants happen to be human beings.⁴⁰

Arguments for the "intrinsic value" of nature in and of itself, existing independently from human consciousness, assume the human understanding of that very statement of value—and to this extent, it becomes impossible to completely abandon the human standpoint.⁴¹ Those who see the dangers of an *ego-centric* perspective may wish to opt instead for an *eco-centric* view, but Torgerson reminds us that in such a move, we cannot, in fact, avoid employing human parameters for the very purpose of assigning value to the environment itself. We cannot escape *being* human in the projection of value onto non-human entities.

How do the above considerations impact upon Short Hills Park? They serve to remind us of the recurring dialogue among those who wished to preserve the park's natural, wild features for their own sake, and those who sought to accommodate human needs and wants which inevitably impact upon the wildlife of the park. Inasmuch as phenomenology will opt for neither a pure subjectivism nor a pristine objectivism to ground an ethic, we sought ways to avoid grounding the ethical discussion on either a purely anthropocentric, or, on the other hand, a purely ecocentric foundation. What then, was the alternative?

Recall our discussion above that, from the phenomenological perspective, one seeks to shed light on the *human-environment relation*. In this light, the challenge was not to evolve a code to exclusively support the hu-

man "use" of the environment, but neither was it to argue for the intrinsic value of the environment *separate from* human concerns. Instead, the aim was to remain sensitive to the reciprocal relation between humans and the environments within which they find their place. The phenomenological task was to see that Short Hills Park is not there merely for human utilization, yet that it may also benefit from human stewardship and care.⁴² Such care, though, if it is to be genuine, should be park-directed, for the good of the environment as a whole.⁴³

In addition to these phenomenological assumptions of our study, there were some practical guidelines to which we adhered in the formulation of a code of ethics for Short Hills Park. Having contacted superintendents from every major national park in the United States, we were particularly moved by a code of ethics which is provided to visitors of Grand Canyon National Park as a bookmark. (See Appendix A).⁴⁴ This code begins with some fundamental "understandings," on the basis of which an environmental "pledge" is then articulated. The code is concise, and powerful in its simplicity. It captures the essence of a caring attitude towards the park, as the foundation of responsible conduct. We decided to follow the example of including a general understanding of commonly accepted precepts, as the context for a pledge of a personal, moral commitment to protect the environment.

Indeed, in our overview of other

ethical codes in general, we saw the practical advantages of including both global guidelines as well as more specific codes of conduct in the park.⁴⁵ One of these advantages was the maximum flexibility in levels of communication of a code which could be conveyed either in a brief, immediate fashion, or in other arenas, with a more detailed explanation. For instance, a short, to-the-point review of basic moral tenets could be posted in such strategic meeting points as feed stores for horses, or in sports stores for hikers and bikers. Another suggestion was that one-line prompts and cues, based on some of the more general precepts of the code of ethics, could be posted on wooden signs, carefully placed in appropriate areas of the park. A more detailed code of conduct could be useful to Boards of Education, who might seek some more specific and pragmatic direction of a code, to be communicated within a program of environmental education. The same could be said for organized visitor groups, keen on encouraging environmental awareness among their own group members.⁴⁶

In the end, a draft Short Hills Park Code of Ethics (including a code of conduct) was presented to community members at a workshop at Brock University in September 1994. Small working groups deliberated over details of the draft proposal, and their valuable suggestions were incorporated into some modifications of a final code, found in Appendix B to this paper. The Friends of Short Hills

Group, who held their first organizational meeting shortly after this workshop, began the process of investigating appropriate ways and means of communicating the code to park visitors.⁴⁷ Board of Education members will be similarly considering ways in which the code might be integrated into current environmental education programs for children in Niagara.⁴⁸

Some Policy Recommendations

On the basis of this two-year study, we propose the following policy recommendations:

1. That the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, together with other Ministries and Departments with responsibility for human-environment relations, recognize the potential for *positive reinforcement* of responsible human behavior within their programs. Concurrently, we encourage government support of community-centered initiatives, such as is found in the recently formed Friends of Short Hills Park.
2. That these same Ministries recognize the positive role that can be played by a carefully formulated code of ethics, within the broader framework of a program of enhancing environmental awareness among the public. Such "recognition" could range from explicit encouragement of the formulation of codes of ethics within management plans, to education of public service employees of the impact of philosophical and

ethical assumptions upon behavior.

Clearly, formulating a code of ethics is not the sole route to encouraging environmental care, nor do we advocate blind obedience to any rigid set of codified rules. (Chandler reminds us of Aristotle's warning that it is quite possible to obey laws and regulations, while remaining unethical.)⁴⁹ It may be true that ultimately, it is one's own conscience which is the genuine source of environmentally responsible behavior.⁵⁰

At the same time, however, it is in the sharing of common paradigms that communities are formed.⁵¹ If shared paradigms, reflected in a code of ethics, may help to increase environmental awareness and resolve

some conflicts among community members, if a code may broaden one's environmental vision so that one's conscience is better informed, then perhaps such a philosophical articulation of ethical guidelines does indeed have some significant role to play in guiding the future of our parks.

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Endnotes

¹ Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, *Short Hills Provincial Park Management Plan* (Fonthill, Ontario: OMNR, 1991), p. 2.

² *Ibid.*, p. 7.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 21. Examples of conflicts between trail users included complaints by hikers of damage to trails by equestrians, mountain bikers startling horses and similar instances relating to the sharing of multi-use trails in particular.

⁵ Oscar Newman, *Defensible Space: Crime Prevention through Urban Design* (New York: Macmillan, 1972), p. 3.

⁶ For instance, studies by psychologists have shown that there was a significant reduction in the rate of destructive lawn-walking in areas of a new "mini-park," simply by erecting signs reading "University Mini-Park: Please Don't Trample the Grass." (Cf. S. C. Hayes and J. D. Cone, "Decelerating environmentally destructive lawn-walking behavior," in *Environment and Behavior* 9, 91-101). Certainly, such prompts may not achieve such success under some conditions (for example, when the cost of obeying the cue is too high), but nevertheless, researchers have learned much about the power of positive prompts. Reich and Robertson have shown that the chances of success of written cues are much enhanced when they are positively worded: thus for example, people are less likely to obey an overly forceful sign, such as "You *must* not litter," and may even react in direct opposition to such an order; more effective would be a sign which read "Thank-you for not littering." (Cf. J. W. Reich and J. L. Robertson, "Reactance and normal appeal in antilittering messages," in *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 9, 91-101, 1979). Similarly, a prompt in the form of an acceptable alternative may prevent environmentally unfriendly acts: for instance, psychologists suggest a nearby sidewalk might serve as a prompt not to walk on newly planted grass, or a nearby garbage bin may offer a cue not to litter. (Cf. Paul A. Bell, Andrew Baum, J. D. Fisher, and Thomas E. Greene, *Environmental Psychology* (Fort

Worth: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1990), 480; and A. W. Magill, "Methods to Control Negative Impacts of Recreation Use," *River Recreation Management and Research Symposium*, Jan. 24-27 1977, 402-4.

⁷ Research Assistants on this project were Marie Poirier, Institute of Environmental Policy, Brock University; David Szttybel, Department of Philosophy, University of Toronto; and Lynn Topp, Department of Recreation and Leisure, Brock University. The researchers gratefully acknowledge the financial support for this project, provided through a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) General Research Grant; and a Grant-in-Aid, through the Department of Philosophy, University of Toronto. Thanks are also extended to Brock University's Institute of Environmental Policy, which hosted both workshops on the project.

⁸ David N. Johnson, "Outdoor Ethics and Public Education in Africa," p. 22 in *Proceedings of the International Conference on Outdoor Ethics*, November 8-11, 1987, Lake Ozark, Missouri.

⁹ Cf. for example Kenneth Kernaghan, "Managing Ethics: Complementary approaches," *Canadian Public Administration* 34:1, 132-145; Reg Lang and Susan Hendler, "Ethics and Professional Planners," in D. MacNiven, *Moral Expertise* (London, 1988); J. S. Beazley, "What is this Thing called Ethics and Sometimes, The Code of Ethics?," *Photogrammetric Engineering and Remote Sensing* 57:5 (May 1991), 497-499; James Schaefer, "Toward an ethic for the Great Lakes Basin ecosystem," discussion paper prepared for the Societal Committee of the Great Lakes Science Advisory Board, Windsor, Ontario, November, 1989; and Ralph Clark Chandler, "The Problem of Moral Reasoning in American Public Administration: The Case for a Code of Ethics," in *Public Administration Review* 43 (January-February 1983), 32-39.

¹⁰ Cf. Kernaghan, 135; Lang and Hendler, 61; and Chandler, *Ibid*.

¹¹ Stories by Doug Draper in the St. Catharines [Ontario] *Standard*, June 26, 1993.

¹² Tom Regan, "The Nature and Possibility of an Environmental Ethic," *Environmental Ethics* 3 (1981), p. 34.

¹³ *Ibid*.

¹⁴ See, for example, David Ehrenfeld, *The Arrogance of Humanism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978).

¹⁵ Douglas Torgerson, "The Paradox of Environmental Ethics," in *Alternatives* 12:2 (Winter 1985), 26-36.

¹⁶ See, for example, Leslie Paul Thiele, "Nature and Freedom: A Heideggerian Critique of Biocentric and Sociocentric Environmentalism," *Environmental Ethics* 17:2 (1995), 171-190.

¹⁷ *Ibid*.

¹⁸ Joan Stambaugh, "Introduction," Martin Heidegger, *On Time and Being* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), x.

¹⁹ Cf. Edmund Husserl, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy*, translated by F. Kersten (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1983); and Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, translated by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper and Row, 1962). For a layman's introduction to phenomenology, see I. L. Stefanovic, "What is Phenomenology?," in *Brock Review* 3:1 (1994), 58-77.

²⁰ The term "synergism" builds on the notion that, on the strength of the interaction between discrete entities, the total effect is greater than the sum of the individual effects.

²¹ A paper describing the phenomenological method as it impacts upon the interview process is in preparation. Some preliminary remarks are available in a paper describing a similar process of interviews on another project—the interdisciplinary "Ecowise" research study funded by the Tri-Council program of awards, and investigating the sustainability of the Hamilton Harbour Ecosystem. See Ingrid Leman Stefanovic, "Interdisciplinarity and Wholeness: Lessons from Eco-research," *Environments: A Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies* 23:3, 1996.

²² Some clues for this approach were provided to us by a particularly instructive article by Jim Cheney, "Postmodern Environmental Ethics: Ethics as Bioregional Narrative," in *Environmental Ethics: Convergence and Divergence* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1993).

²³ Edward Casey, *Getting Back into Place: Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1993), 14-15.

²⁴ Ontology is the study of the meaning of Being itself. Instead of focusing merely on essents (things), ontology seeks to illumine the condition of the possibility of the appearance of things in the world. See Heidegger, *Being and Time*.

²⁵ For a fascinating discussion of the belonging and overlapping of facts and values, see Don E. Marietta, Jr., "Knowledge and Obligation in Environmental Ethics: A Phenomenological Analysis" in *Environmental Ethics* 4:2 (1982), 153-162; also J. Baird Callicott, "Hume's Is/Ought Dichotomy and the Relation of Ecology to Leopold's Land Ethic," *Environmental Ethics* 4:2 (1982), 163-174.

²⁶ Cited in Marietta, *Ibid.*, 267-8.

²⁷ Conrad G. Brunk, Lawrence Haworth, and Brenda Lee, *Value Assumptions in Risk Assessment: A Case Study of the Alachlor Controversy* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1991.) For a recent work on similar issues of how hidden value assumptions affect interpretations of risk, see William Leiss and Christina Chociolko, *Risk and Responsibility* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996.)

²⁸ On the notion of sustainable "fittingness," see Maurice Mandelbaum, *The Phenomenology of Moral Experience* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins Press, 1969), especially 61 ff.

²⁹ Cf., in this connection, Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (New York: Seabury Press, 1975), 284. He seeks to distinguish between the *techne* of the craftsman and the *phronesis* (practical knowledge) of the judge who seeks to interpret, in a morally justifiable sense, a specific law.

³⁰ Joseph J. Kockelmans, "The Foundations of Morality and the Human Sciences," in *Foundations of Morality, Human Rights and the Human Sciences*, edited by Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka and Calvin O. Shrag (Dordrecht, Holland: D. Reidel, 1983), 381-382.

³¹ On this point regarding the subjectivism and objectivism of the modern age, see Martin Heidegger, "The Age of the World Picture" in *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, translated with an introduction by William Lovitt (New York: Harper & Row, 1977).

³² Cf. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, *op. cit.*

³³ A paper entitled "The Contribution of Phenomenology to Environmental Ethics" describes more fully the significance of the ontological ground of ethics, and is in preparation by the author.

³⁴ See for example, Walter O'Brian's "Man, Nature and the History of Philosophy," in William T. Blackstone (ed.), *Philosophy and Environmental Crisis* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1974); Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac with Essays on Conservation from Round River* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1949); David Ehrenfeld, *The Arrogance of Humanism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978); and Arne Naess, *Ecology, Community and Lifestyle* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

³⁵ William Penn Mott, Jr., "A National Park Service Perspective on Ethics," p. 39 in *Proceedings of the International Conference on Outdoor Ethics*, November 8-11, 1987, Lake Ozark, Missouri.

³⁶ Richard Goulden, "Meeting the Outdoor Ethics Challenge in Canada," *Ibid.*, 80.

³⁷ "Is the squirrel that lives in the tree a natural resource? Not usually, unless someone wants to hunt it or eat it, or look at it. The concept of a natural resource, then, is inherently anthropocentric." Cf. Paul F. J. Eagles, "Environmental Management in Parks," p. 154 in Philip Dearden and Rick Rollins (eds.), *Parks and Protected Areas in Canada: Planning and Management* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1993).

³⁸ Eagles, *Ibid.*, 155.

³⁹ Planner Michael Hough advocates the design principle of "doing as little as possible." "The greatest diversity and identity in a place, whether a regenerating field or urban wetland, or a cohesive neighbourhood community, often comes with minimum, not maximum, interference." For elaboration on this perspective, see his *Out of Place: Restoring Identity to the Regional Landscape* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990), 190-191.

⁴⁰ Douglas Torgerson, "The Paradox of Environmental Ethics," *op. cit.*, 27.

⁴¹ Cf. J. Baird Callicott, *op. cit.*, who clearly shows the fallacy of seeking philosophical justification for the "intrinsic value" of nature, apart from human understanding.

⁴² Leslie Paul Thiele shows how a Heideggerian phenomenological understanding of nature and freedom provides a significant impetus for fostering a new ethic of ecological stewardship and "care," distinct from both ecocentric identification with nature as well as from egocentric manipulations. See "Nature and

Freedom: A Heideggerian Critique of Biocentric and Sociocentric Environmentalism," *Environmental Ethics* 17:2 (1995), 171-190.

⁴³ Interestingly, in their deliberations on the meaning of crimes against the environment, the Law Reform Commission of Canada has come to a similar conclusion. In reflecting upon "homocentric" and "ecocentric" ethics, they explain that "there remain some serious conceptual and practical obstacles to the provision of legal protection to the natural environment *for its own sake*, apart from considerations of human benefits, wishes, uses and health risks. It would amount to granting rights to nonhuman entities. From a practical standpoint, it is inconceivable that natural resources could ever be totally insulated from economic and political considerations. Nor is it evident that we cannot provide adequate protection for the natural environment itself by continuing to permit a homocentric ethic to underlie our environmental regulations and laws, but one which now gives more scope to the *quality* of human life, and to our responsibility of *stewardship* or trusteeship over the natural environment." (See "Crimes Against the Environment," Law Reform Commission of Canada, pp. 217-218 in Eldon Soifer (ed.), *Ethical Issues: Perspectives for Canadians* (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 1992).

⁴⁴ We acknowledge with gratitude, the detailed and extremely informative responses which we received from virtually every park superintendent contacted in the U.S.A.

⁴⁵ It was useful to compare, for example, the codes presented in *Codes of Ethics: Ethics Codes, Standards and Guidelines for Professionals Working in a Health Care Setting in Canada*, compiled by Françoise Baylis and Jocelyn Downie (Toronto: Department of Bioethics, The Hospital for Sick Children, 1992).

⁴⁶ Sometimes these more detailed codes of conduct could include actual *examples* of ethical dilemmas, and routes for resolving such dilemmas. While we saw the advantages to this, at the same time, we were concerned to keep the code of ethics, in its complete form, to a single typed page. We felt that anything longer might be seen to be vexatious and tedious to some.

⁴⁷ Further information about the Friends of Short Hills Group is available from Marie Poirier, at the Institute of Environmental Policy, Brock University, St. Catharines, Ontario.

⁴⁸ Contact, for example, Bert Murphy, Consultant in Environmental Education for the St. Johns Outdoor Studies Centre, Fonthill, Ontario.

⁴⁹ Chandler, *op. cit.*, 34.

⁵⁰ For a discussion of stages of moral development, see Daniel L. Dustin, "To Feed or Not Feed the Bears: the Moral Choices we Make," *Parks and Recreation*, October 1985, pp. 54-57, 72.

⁵¹ Cf. Chandler, *op. cit.*, for some further discussion of this notion.



APPENDIX A. A model code of ethics from Grand Canyon National Park

CODE OF ETHICS

As a member of the world community, I understand that:

- All life on earth—human, plant and animal—is joined in one world community. This is our natural heritage.
- Every person has a right to a safe and healthy environment in which to live. Plants and animals share that right.
- Our air, water, and atmosphere are replenished and maintained by the diverse natural communities of the world. I share responsibility for protecting these communities.

As a member of the world community, I pledge:

- To show respect for the world's natural heritage by taking care not to harm or degrade it through ignorance, carelessness or misuse.
- To continue to increase my understanding about the diversity of life and to share that knowledge with others.
- To express my opinion on issues of concern that affect our natural heritage, and to actively support its protection.

Enjoy your visit to Grand Canyon National Park.



APPENDIX B. A code of ethics for Short Hills Provincial Park

As a friend of Short Hills Park, I understand that:

- The park is a unique, natural environment to be preserved for its own sake, as well as for future generations.
- My responsibility is that of a care-taker, to actively seek to promote the ecological health and diversity of the park.

I pledge to:

- *Show respect; tread lightly.*
- *Pack out* at least what is packed in.
- *Keep wildlife wild*, by observing from a safe and non-interfering distance.
- *Observe, not disturb* natural features in the park. Memories outlast specimens.
- *Preserve the peace* in the park. Be considerate of others.
- *Protect the park from disruptive activities*, such as fires or vandalism.
- *Become better informed* about the needs of Short Hills Park, and share my knowledge with others.

SOME GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCT

1. Show Respect; Tread Lightly.

- 1.1 *Remain on established trails.*
- 1.2 *Respect the rules of multi-use trails.* Meet and pass with respect. Use caution and speak quietly in approaching, to pacify the horses. Cyclists will remain in single file to the right of trails, announcing themselves in advance of bends, and yielding to others.
- 1.3 *Avoid using trails when wet*, especially when cycling or horseback riding.
- 1.4 *Avoid trespassing* on private property.

2. Pack out at least what is packed in.

- 2.1 *Avoid all littering.*
- 2.2 *If possible, leave the park cleaner than you found it.*

3. Keep wildlife wild, by observing from a safe and non-interfering distance.

- 3.1 *Avoid feeding wildlife*, as it upsets the natural food chain.
- 3.2 *Control all pets* brought into the park.

4. **Observe, but do not disturb natural features in the park.**
 - 4.1 *Preserve plants and flowers.*
 - 4.2 *Natural systems, as well as cultural artifacts, will remain duly undisturbed in the park.*
 - 4.3 *Refrain from polluting the environment in any way.*
5. **Preserve the peace in the park. Be considerate of others.**
 - 5.1 *Be courteous in sharing trails.*
 - 5.2 *Use common sense in announcing yourself, particularly on narrow trails with limited visibility.*
 - 5.3 *Curtail rowdiness.*
6. **Protect the park from disruptive activities.**
 - 6.1 *Fires are prohibited in the park.*
 - 6.2 *Report to the Park Superintendent, at the telephone number below, any vandalism encountered within the park.*
7. **Become better informed and share your knowledge about Short Hills.**
 - 7.1 *Be aware of and sensitive to the needs of the park. Be open to new knowledge about the park.*
 - 7.2 *Support environmental education about Short Hills Park.*



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