

# Attitude for the respect for nature

Environment



There are many different aspects to Taylors Bio-Centric Outlook. Past environmental issues as well as present day issues affect them all. They all derive from Taylor's book, " Respect for Nature". All of the aspects of the Bio-Centric Outlook all interconnect and are dependent on each-other to reach the final conclusion of the Outlook itself. Taylor starts with the definition of Environmental Ethics.

Then that definition moves into the principals and rules that people must follow in order to treat nature, This then is connected to Priority Principles and the aspects of that itself and how that is effected by having the attitude towards the respect for nature. Moving along the attitude for respect for nature is a direct correlation to the Bio-centric Outlook and its own aspects and then in environmental issues past and present the Bio-Centric Outlook sways a person one way or another according to the attitude towards the respect for nature.

According to Taylor there is a set of facts that are generally accepted by a person who follows the basic guidelines of environmental ethics. Environmental Ethics is an explanation of how we, as humans, treat natural ecosystems. This then moves and directly connects to the set of facts that a person who follows the guidelines of Environmental Ethics accepts about nature. The first fact is that Taylor says that all living things are in the same boat together. This means that we are all in the same world together and thus we must treat it as so.

The second fact is that all living things are interdependent, meaning that all living things are dependent upon each other. For example plants and trees provide oxygen, which humans breath, and humans produce carbon dioxide,

which trees and plants take in. The third fact is that all living organisms are their own individuals and they all seek their own life. The fourth fact, and most controversial, is that humans are not inherently superior to any other living things. Taylor, for this fact, sets up an argument against human superiority.

He says that there are three examples in support of human superiority, the Ancient Greek era, Great Chain of Being, and Descartes. But he says that these are all from a human perspective only and thus are not valid for human superiority. The attitude for the respect of nature is derived from the previous facts stated in Taylor's Bio-Centric Outlook. He states that if a person accepts the four facts previously stated then it makes a person intelligible and strongly supports the rules of environmental ethics in which is part of the attitude for the respect for nature.

Taylor explains a set of four rules that a person must accept about environmental ethics. The first of these is Non-Maleficence; this rule is that no person should harm any living thing. The second is Non-Interference; this says that a person should try to refrain from interfering with nature. For example, we should not interfere with a naturally caused forest fire because it will burn out the dead brush and thus help the forest. Another part of this rule is the aspect of Impartiality, which says that if you truly respect nature then you will not favor a certain species over another.

The third rule is Fidelity; this says that a person should be faithful to nature and not try to trick anything in nature. The fourth and final rule is the idea of Restorative Justice; this is a reestablishment of a balance if it has been upset. This rule is put into place in the case that if you were to violate any of the first three rules, then you should make that up by using this rule to

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reestablish a balance that has been upset by the violation. Taylor sets up an order of importance of these rules that go as follows; Non-Maleficence, Resistive Justice, Fidelity, and finally Non-Interference.

One aspect to these rules that is quite controversial, in my opinion, is that Taylor says that we, as humans, are the only living things that are subject to these rules. According to the attitude for the respect for nature, you must be fully committed to these rules of environmental ethics as well as the facts stated previously. Naturally for the survival of humans as a whole and for the protection of certain virtues for us as humans, it is impossible for us to follow the rules of environmental ethics to their full extent.

In a case that we “ must” violate the rules of environmental ethics in order to survive, Taylor puts forward a set of Priority Principles that must be followed in such a case. The first of these principles is Self Defense; there are different conditions are set into place for self defense. One condition is that the motive of the harm to another living thing must be in self-defense alone. It also must only be at the time of an attack in such a situation. It also must be the last resort and the amount of force should only be as much needed to stop such an attack.

The second of the principles is that of Proportionality; this is where basic interest and non-basic interests are introduced into this theory. A basic interest is something that is absolutely necessary for the survival of humans. A non-basic interest is something that we do not absolutely need but want. It is inevitable that a conflict will arise between the non-basic interest of a human and a basic interest of other living things. Taylor states that if we look

at these other living things as instrumental goods only then we should not do any harm them.

But if we have a non-basic interest that absolutely must have as an intrinsic good then we must use Minimum Wrong in fulfilling this need. For example if someone wanted to build a medical center where there currently stands trees then they must do the minimal amount of damage to nature. The forth principal is Distributive Justice; this is when there arises a conflict between a human's basic interest and the basic interest of another living thing. This states that if the conflict arises then, assuming that everything is inherently equal, then we should distribute the resources equally.

Taylor also brings up the point of a vegetarian and their benefits that there is to being a vegetarian. He says that they use far fewer resources to survive as well as the cost being down and the ability to feed more people. The final principal is that of Resistive Justice; this states that if we use these principals to harm nature then it is our duty to replace as much as we can. For example when loggers in the forests of Maine cut forest down for logging purposes then they should re-plant trees according to resistive justice as well as the attitude for the respect for nature.

Issues are risen today in energy production are they very crucial and controversial when it comes to having a respect for nature and can have a great influence on the production on energy. The issues in taking sides raise questions in every ones minds as to what we should do to both produce energy as well as protect the environment. These questions and concerns can be directed back to Taylor and having an attitude for the respect of nature. One of the first issues that come up in Taking Sides is the issue of <https://assignbuster.com/attitude-for-the-repect-for-nature/>

emission of greenhouse gases into the ozone layer and creating global warming.

According to Taylor's philosophy these companies do not have an attitude for the respect of nature. It is very easy to see why; these companies are violating every single one of Taylor's theories, and most crucial of all is they are not using Restorative Justice in order to re-establish a balance of the harm that they create in the environment. The most fearful of this is that these companies actually think that they are doing no harm to the environment and truly think that they are not the cause of the sudden increase of global temperature.

For example Exxon Mobile has been adamant that they are not to cause for global warming, and part of their argument is that global warming may not even exist. Exxon Mobile is even said to have scientists argue for their position. All of these facts lead to a shift in focus to debating about the problem rather than just fixing it and produce less carbon emissions into the ozone. According to Taylor this would also be a violation to all of his facts, rules and principles and thus would not lead to them having an attitude towards the respect for nature.

But if they were to accept this theory by Taylor then they would be helping the environment rather than hurting it. This would be even more crucial for Taylor because in his previous examples there is a conflict between basic interest of plants and other living things and non-basic interest of humans, and in this example it brings up a non-basic interest of a certain group of humans and the basic interest of other living things, humans included. This

then brings up the unique situation about offshore drilling here in the United States and what that would do in Alaska.

This concept brings up many questions as to what we should do about the problem that is being raised because the demand of oil is rising, but subsequently the amount of oil is decreasing. A question is raised as to whether or not we should completely convert to alternative energy, like bio-fuels, wind etc. In this specific case Taylor would decipher what would do the least amount of harm to the environment and do the “ minimum wrong” to a certain area. He would also use his principle of Resistive Justice in order to replenish anything that is being cut down, damaged in the environment.

According to these facts and Taylor’s attitude for the respect for nature, as well as his bio-centric outlook I think that he would not approve of any of these alternative energies in there most basic sense. Although he would understand that heat, electricity are basic goods for us he would say that it would be ok for wind energy to be the cleanest, and most environmentally friendly form of energy. But these would be according to his priority principles, and specifically minimum wrong and resistive justice.

Taylor would say that the wind mill companies must do the absolute minimum wrong when it comes to the destruction of trees etc. , and to also us restive justice to replace as much as possible of what you have damages. Moving from Paul W. Taylor’s attitude for the respect for nature in its entirety, from the facts to his principles and every thing in between, it is very clear what his position would be in environmental issues today according to his environmental philosophy. Taylor is vey clear in his explanation of his

philosophy of what a normal person should do in order to keep a certain respect for nature.

There are some things that can be controversial in his theory as well as some things that are very accurate in the protection of our world. Any normal rational person would accept that our habits in the present day environment are terrible and must be changed in order for us, as a human race, to see the turn of the next century. Paul W. Taylor provides us with a very simple and easy road map of what we need to do to preserve and protect our environment, and if we follow this theory, to a certain extent, it may be very possible to see the turn of the next century and many more to come.