

## **Literature Review: Contemporary Environmental Philosophy and Its Challenge to Planning Theory from Harvey M. Jacobs**

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### **A. Introduction**

The topic of the environment appears almost everywhere these days, more and more people concern for their environment. In fact, it is not easy to elaborate environment issue in practices, people tend to neglect their environment, except they know the benefit from the environmental. The concern on environmental can be traced back from the first Earth Day in 1970, and the publication of Silent Spring in 1962, and also from popular and legislative events of that period. The environmental movement grows because of the growth of the environmentalism, accompanied by the development of environmental philosophy and ethics.

Environmental ethics or philosophy is a branch of philosophy intended to raise a set of fundamental questions about the relationships among people and the natural world. One categorization of literature of environmental ethics for planners is long-standing debate over the so-called "conservation versus preservation". The development of environmental ethics is in the same period with virtual revolution in social and political theory. Critical reexaminations of old ideas and the articulation of the new frameworks have fed into the development of contemporary environmental ethics. The invention and refinement of feminist theory, the recasting of Marxist theory and the critical reexamination of concepts such as dualism, modern scientific thought, and contemporary Western religion are all intellectual movements that have contributed to a new environmental ethics.

There are three of the more provocative strains within contemporary environmental ethics, those being deep ecology, ecofeminist, and bioregionalism. Like planning theory, contemporary philosophy originates in concerns about action. As philosophy, it argues that root questions must be posed if an action is going to be effective, equitable, and sustainable. This is its principal challenge.

### **B. Objectives**

1. to outline, discuss and explore three of the more provocative strains within contemporary environmental ethics, those being deep ecology, ecological feminism, and bioregionalism.
2. the exploration of these streams is undertaken so as to speculate on their relationship to that body of literature known as planning theory and to determine how a serious engagement of these aspects of environmental ethics might reflect, reshape, and inform the development of such theory.

### **C. Environmental Philosophy**

What is the meaning of environment philosophy? Ted Beckman (2000) discussed about what this mean. It seems commonplace for some people to use the terms 'nature' and 'environment' interchangeably. In fact, many environmental activists, today, assume that not only is our environment the same as nature but that nature should be understood in the further limited sense of "wild nature" or "wilderness." According to him, environmental philosophy requires a broader definition.

If we begin with the roots of the word, 'environment' means "that which environs us." Being "environed" is being encircled or surrounded. Broadly speaking, the environment should be understood as the overall physical and emotional context in which we are located. It is very important, therefore, to recognize that environments are different from place-to-place and from time-to-time, depending upon who we are and where we are. As human beings, the relevant physical context that environs us can also be quite different depending upon who we are and what culture we come from, especially, what kind of technology we express.

Philosophy come from Greek Word means the literally love of wisdom, but 'wisdom' is not a commonly used word in our society so we need to make some effort to locate its meaning. Tad Beckman (2000) concluded environmental philosophy is a young field that brings together this traditional nurturing of wisdom with a specific interest in the environment.

#### **1. Deep Ecology**

Deep ecology is a phrase coined by Arne Naess (1973), his used this phrase to contrast which shallow ecology. The later term used is legislative-management orientation of the mainstream environmental movement. Naess argued that this orientation was fundamentally flawed =in concept and asserted that as long as environmentalism and the environmental movement focused upon reforms and at the margin tinkering with an industrial-technology society in which people related to nature in utilitarian and anthropocentric fashion, society could never truly fashion a sustainable way of living with the earth. The problem in not one of particular law or management approach but rather the attitude people bring to their relationship with the natural world.

The deep ecology of Naess not only talks of a personal identification with nature, but also of self-realization being dependent upon it.

#### **2. Ecological feminism**

H. M. Jacobs described ecological feminism or ecofeminism evolves out of the feminist movement of the 1970s, which itself spawned a tremendous growth in feminist theory and philosophy. The roots of liberation of women and the roots liberation of nature are likewise linked by a need to reform how we understand, think about, and conceptualize the world around us.

From the bookrags.com about *Ecofeminist Analysis* that ecofeminism or ecological feminism, is a term coined in 1974 by Françoise d'Eaubonne. It is a philosophy and movement

born from the union of feminist and ecological thinking, and the belief that the social mentality that leads to the domination and oppression of women is directly connected to the social mentality that leads to the abuse of the environment.

Similarly, according to Carolyn Merchant (2001) women and nature have an age-old association – an affiliation that has persisted throughout the culture, language and history. Their ancient inter connections have been dramatized by simultaneity of two recent social movements – women liberation and the ecology movement.

Karen J. Warren (1987) ecological feminism is the name given to a variety of positions that have roots in different feminist practices and philosophies. These different perspectives reflect not only different feminist perspectives (e.g., liberal, traditional Marxist, radical, socialist, black and Third World), they also reflect different understandings of the nature of and solution to pressing environmental problems.

### **3. BiOregionalism**

H. M. Jacobs stated if bioregionalism is distinguished from deep ecology and ecofeminism in several ways. Bioregionalism originates through observation of the earth, its patterns, and the ways people accommodate and become part of these patterns. Bioregionalism is concerned with people live in place and learns from living in that place (Andruss et al. 1990). It is from this practical basis that it develops a set of philosophical positions about human-earth relationships.

Peter Berg (2002) coined the term "bioregionalism" in the early 70s to define an environmental perspective that emphasizes action over protest, lifestyle over legislation. Here he brings us up to date on the definition as it currently is being acted out on the stage of the ecology crisis we all must confront. According to him, a bioregion is defined in terms of the unique overall pattern of natural characteristics that are found in a specific place. The main features are generally found throughout a continuous geographic terrain and include a particular climate, local aspects of seasons, landforms, watersheds, soils, and native plants and animals. People are also counted as an integral aspect of a place's life, as can be seen in the ecologically adaptive cultures of early inhabitants, and in the activities of present day rein habitants who attempt to harmonize in a sustainable way with the place where they live.

Other definition from Taylor (2000), bioregionalism is to know, to sustain, to defense and to declare that there is strong relationship among the location where we live with land, plants, animals, rivers, lakes, wind, family, friend and neighborhoods, also with production system and trade.

According to H. M. Jacobs, one obvious implication of bioregional perspective is that people should not live the same everywhere. From a bioregional view-point, the fact that urban and regional form is, with minor trappings, largely the same throughout North America is exactly the problem. We are isolated and insulated from the places in which we live. We protect ourselves from the land; we protect it from speaking to us, affecting us, and because we do, the quality of our lives is diminished. As our lives are diminished, the quality of the environment is likewise

diminished. If we want the environment to be rich, diverse, sustainable in fully ecological term, we need to promote and mirror those conditions in human society. One way to do this is to live with land.

#### **4. The challenge to planning Theory**

H. M. Jacob used a conventional and simplistic typology of the field. This typology divided planning theory into three parts: comprehensive-rational, incremental and advocate-progressive. Comprehensive-rational planning is understood to be the foundational paradigm in planning. It is an approach that argues that in order to plan effectively it is necessary to be comprehensive with regard to both the types of functions within a geographic area (planning should cover all functions) and relative to the area itself (one needs to plan for entire the city, county, state, province, and so on).

Incremental planning arose in response to the perceived failure in the practice and theory of comprehensive-rational planning. Incremental planning is an approach that argues that there are major obstacles to the implementation of the ideal of comprehensive planning. Incrementalists argue that planning should be limited in scope and area, specific in its content, and short-range in its time frame.

Advocate-progressive planning is emphasizing the issue of how a planner should function, rather than how a plan should be prepared and what it should consist of. Progressive planning is not just a critical examination of planning practice but also a search for how to promote a more socially equitable planning (Clavel 1985, Krumholz 1982).

#### **5. An Ecoview of Planning Theory**

The environmental philosophy literature presses the invalidity of the incrementalist's claim relative to perspective and process. Incrementalists seek to narrow the scope of planning; a common thrust in the environmental philosophies discussed here is that long term here is that long-term, substantive success will come only from a broadening of the scope of analysis and recommendation. In planners terms, the message of environmental philosophy is that it is not useful to make little plans.

Environmental philosophy can lead validity to the positions of both comprehensive-rational and progressive planning, it suggests the need to pose a set of question that exposes the structural origins of the conditions are understood in their long-term systemic context, and to think about responding to these conditions with a comprehensive. Drawing as it does from ecological science, environmental philosophy has a natural tendency to place issues into a systems context, a context that in planning terms is comprehensive. The implication of all this for planning theory is to suggest that environmental philosophy establishes the basis for a critical comprehensiveness.

The critical comprehensiveness will differ from both comprehensive-rational planning and progressive planning in two ways: first, by drawing upon the critical perspective of progressive planning as the basis for comprehensiveness analysis, and second, by utilizing the

rational mode of analysis that is the explicit foundation of comprehensive-rational planning and the barely disguised basis of progressive planning, as only one of several systems of informing and knowing.

The number of points in planning theory also criticized by environmental philosophy are the legitimacy of an abstract or contextless planning theory, the general anthropocentric orientation of planning theory and practice, the relationship of means (or process) and ends (or outcomes) and the loss of "place" as a specific basis for planning.

#### **D. Conclusion**

- Deep ecology and ecofeminism share a great deal in common, but there are also important differences between them. They both argue, in their own ways, that it is people's attitudes that are the key to the construction of a sustainable world. Together they represent a rejuvenation of discourse about underlying principles of environmental management. Bioregionalism more focuses on the relationship between human and earth.
- According to environmental philosophy, we cannot discuss a specific environment without identifying those who are envired by it; however, in fact that we cannot discuss and understand ourselves until we acknowledge and understand the environment to which we are related. Most of environmental abuse, today, starts within and is caused by the contemporary fact that we are short-sighted and ignorant about the specific environs that nurture us.
- The challenges of the environmental philosophy in planning theories are in the whole body structure of the literatures, where the environmental philosophy may offer a way to recast and reformulate some long-held positions, and with specific issues within planning theory.
- The roots of environmental philosophy and planning theories are the same, both are born from concerns about how to act in the world while the sphere is ostensibly different (natural environment for environmental philosophy and the person-constructed city and its impact on the surrounding region for planning).
- Planning theory is the basis of planning action, then, the challenges offered by environmental philosophy must be engaged because they confront basic notions of effective action.
- The transformation of planning in the twentieth century has been continuing search for relevance and influence in the decision-making process, what has been lost is a connection to the tradition of planning that asked questions and poses issues about the nature of the good life.
- Contemporary environmental philosophy wants us not to be afraid to ask fundamental questions. Because no other if our goal is an effective, long term, sustainable, and equitable planning.

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