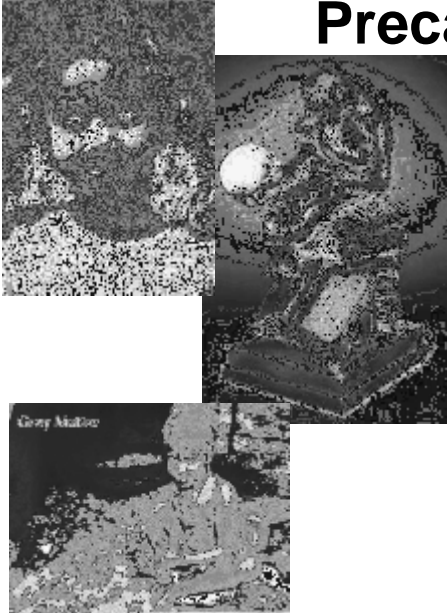


The Ethics & Values of Precaution



June 24, 2006
Seattle
Precaution Academy

Ethics & Precaution 6/24/06

Program

**Facilitators:
Ted Schettler &
Steven Gilbert**

Open Discussion

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Grand Vision

Environmental & Human Health

“Conditions that ensure that all living things have the best opportunity to reach and maintain their full genetic potential.”



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The Precautionary Principle

Uniquely addresses knowledge and ethics in the same decision rule

What do we know (not know)?
What do we do?

(Douglas Weed—NCI)

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The First Bioethicist



Aldo Leopold

"A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise." - Aldo Leopold, 1949, A Sand County Almanac

----- 1887 - 1948 -----

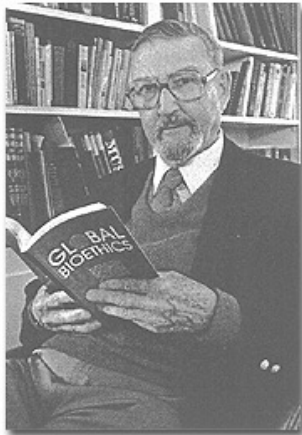
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Limits on Freedom

**“An ethic, ecologically, is a limitation on freedom of action in the struggle for existence”
Aldo Leopold**

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Bioethics



Van Rensselaer Potter

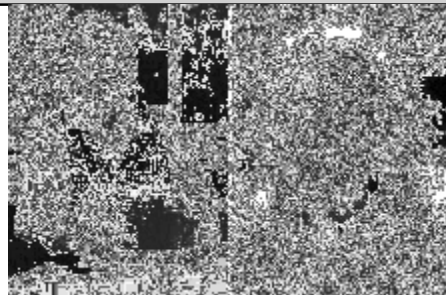
"Biology combined with diverse humanistic knowledge forging a science that sets a system of medical and environmental priorities for acceptable survival."

Global Bioethics (1988)

----- 1911 - 2001 -----

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"The Commons"



The Tragedy of the Commons
By Garrett Hardin, *Science*, 1968



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Technical Solutions

“It is our considered professional judgment that this dilemma has no technical solution.”

**The Tragedy of the Commons
By Garrett Hardin, Science, 1968**

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Socially responsible white guys?



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Hans Jonas

Responsibility to future generations as a guide
for decision-making in today's world

Different from rights or utilitarian cost-benefit
analyses

**“Modern technology has introduced actions of
such novel scale, objects, and consequences that
the framework of former ethics can no longer
contain them”**

-Hans Jonas; *The Imperative of
Responsibility: In Search of An Ethics for the
Technological Age* (1978)

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Resources

Blue Mountain Statement on Essential Values. www.sehn.org/blue.html
and Appendix B in Myers and Raffensperger, *Precautionary Tools for
Reshaping Environmental Policy*.

Ethics of the Environment: Precautionary Principle, UNESCO,
[http://portal.unesco.org/shs/en/ev.php-
URL_ID=6252&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/shs/en/ev.php-URL_ID=6252&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

Ethical, legal, and social issues: our children's future. S.G. Gilbert
Neurotoxicology, Vol 26/4 pp 521-530, 2005. (doi
10.1016/j.neuro.2004.12.006).

Ethics for Our Time. Schettler, T., Myers, N. SEHN Networker, vol 10 #1
March 2005. www.sehn.org/the.net.html.

Ethical Economics. Myers, N. SEHN Networker, vol 9 #6, Dec. 2004.
www.sehn.org/the.net.html.

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