1

Civic Pragmatism and American Environmental Reform

Environmentalism's Lost "Third Way"

The American environmental tradition is often depicted as torn between two diametrically opposed moral visions. On one side lies anthropocentrism, with its penchant for viewing the environment through the lens of human interests (usually cast in the language of economic good). On the other lies ecocentrism, with its unbending defense of the intrinsic value or inherent worth of nature—especially wild species and ecosystems. This moral schism is most obvious in the well-worn distinction between shallow or reform environmentalism and the radical environmental worldview of deep ecology. According to deep ecologists, shallow environmentalism is a piecemeal approach to environmental problems, hamstrung by its policy incrementalism and a superficial focus on the promotion of human health and environmental amenities. Deep ecology, on the other hand, offers a bold egalitarianism of species, a sweeping critique of modern techno-industrialism, and a far-reaching environmental policy agenda based on biocentric and ecocentric principles.[1]

The stories that have been told about the historical development of American environmental thought have certainly tended to reinforce a dualistic understanding. For example, historians and philosophers often trace the alleged rupture in the moral foundation of American environmentalism to the showdown between John Muir and Gifford Pinchot over the damming of the Hetch Hetchy Valley in Yosemite National Park in the early part of the twentieth century. In the traditional version of this debate, Muir—founder of the Sierra Club and one of history's great wilderness advocates—is embraced as a hero by later environmentalists

for his rhapsodizing about the spiritual and aesthetic qualities of wild nature and his take-no-prisoners defense of the Hetch Hetchy Valley from the dam builders. The more utilitarian-minded Pinchot—first head of the U.S. Forest Service and a staunch defender of the efficient and equitable development of natural resources—is tarred as the anti-wilderness, pro-development villain of this morality play, defending the dam and a "highest use" conservation philosophy that appeared to have little regard for the nonmaterial values of the landscape.[2] The Muir–Pinchot row over the damming of Hetch Hetchy, and its subsequent interpretation by scholars, has done much to solidify the most infamous incarnation of the environmentalist dualism: the divide between "conservation," referring to the "wise" or sustainable use of natural resources, and "preservation" (or in some cases, simply "environmentalism"), denoting the protection of environmental systems from the insults of human use.

While the dualistic narrative captures a real conflict running though the history of environmental thought and policy reform, I think that the anthropocentrism versus ecocentrism framework, especially in its more dogmatic varieties, has tended to oversimplify what is in fact a complex and rich moral tradition, one that is not nearly as bifurcated as the received account would have us believe. In particular, the black-and-white nature of this narrative has had the effect of foreclosing the possibility of a more tempered and philosophically pluralistic approach to environmental ethics and politics; that is, the option of a pragmatic alternative running between the zealous "humans first!" and "nature first!" camps.

In this book I seek to restore this lost pragmatic, or third way tradition to the intellectual landscape of American environmentalism, a philosophical path that has been almost completely obscured by the overgrowth of the anthropocentric–ecocentric legend. I believe that this alternative tradition was most powerfully advanced by a small group of conservationists and planners in the first half of the twentieth century. They are Liberty Hyde Bailey, a horticultural scientist and rural reformer who was a leading figure in the agrarian wing of Theodore Roosevelt's conservation movement; Lewis Mumford, an urban theorist, cultural critic, and regional planning thinker active in the Regional Planning Association of America (RPAA) during the interwar period; Benton MacKaye, a forester and conservationist (and Mumford's RPAA col-

league) who proposed the Appalachian Trail in the 1920s; and finally Aldo Leopold, the forester-philosopher and author of the environmentalist classic *A Sand County Almanac*.[3]

Of this group, only Leopold is regularly acknowledged in contemporary environmentalist discussions. In the standard reading, Leopold is lionized for giving us a new land ethic, an orientation toward the natural world that is often presented as a kind of fusion of Muir's older ecocentric (or, more accurately, biocentric) environmentalism with the more mature scientific insights of mid-twentieth-century community ecology (along with a dash of Pinchot's managerial practicality). Leopold's land ethic, speaking as it does to the "rights" of and "love" for nonhuman nature, became for many a moral manifesto when it was rediscovered by environmental advocates, professionals, and academics in the 1960s and 1970s. Today the land ethic (and the book in which it appears, *A Sand County Almanac*) is widely held to be the secular equivalent of holy writ within environmentalist circles.

In this volume I hope to challenge this understanding of the tradition by offering a different take on Leopold's significance, but also by showing Bailey, Mumford, and MacKaye to be important and unduly neglected environmental thinkers that deserve much more attention than they have received. One of the benefits of a focus on these lesser-known figures in the narrative is that it introduces other landscapes, ideals, and models of the human–nature relationship into the intellectual history of environmentalism. Historical and philosophical studies of the roots of American environmentalism have traditionally been consumed by the ideas of natural resource conservationists like Pinchot and iconic wilderness advocates like Muir and Leopold. As a result, and with very few exceptions, we have not heard voices such as Bailey's speaking to rural and agrarian conservation issues. Nor has the tradition of regional planning of Mumford and MacKaye often been incorporated into the histories and philosophical studies of conservation and environmentalism.[4] I think this is unfortunate, especially given the significance of these threads in the larger story of the development of American environmental reform in the first decades of the twentieth century.

Although I describe it more fully in the individual chapters, one of the noteworthy features of the third way tradition in environmental thought

is its embrace of a pluralistic model of environmental value and action that accommodates both the prudent use *and* the preservation of nature, rather than demanding that we must always choose between these commitments.[5] It is a way of thinking, in other words, that accepts the interpenetrating character of intrinsic and instrumental values in experience, the basic continuity of means and ends in environmental thought and practice. As such, the third way tradition is a strand within environmentalism that cannot be accurately characterized as either narrowly anthropocentric or ecocentric. Rather, it incorporates critical elements of both sensibilities in a more holistic, balanced, and practical vision of human environmental experience.

Furthermore, this pragmatic strain in environmental thought views humans as thoroughly embedded in natural systems. Yet this recognition does not lead to the conclusion that humans have carte blanche with respect to the natural world, or that there is no moral limit to the dominion of human will over the landscape. Instead, the third way view supports a wider and more integrative perspective in which human ideals and interests (including economic interests, but also other nonmaterial social, cultural, and political values) are understood to be wrapped up in the natural and the built environment, and are secured and promoted through deliberate and broad-based planning and conservation efforts. While respectful of wilderness geographies and values, this tradition nevertheless represents a retreat from pure preservationist forms of environmentalism to views that accommodate ecologically benign and adaptive forms of technological enterprise and sustainable community development on the landscape.

Most significantly, the philosophies of Bailey, Mumford, MacKaye, and Leopold form a politically grounded and civic-spirited tradition in environmental thought. I argue that these thinkers were deeply concerned about the health of American political culture and the civic capacity of the community in the face of industrial and urbanizing forces in the first half of the twentieth century. Even though they were often occupied—especially Bailey and Leopold—with the moral character of our relations with the natural world (in some cases going so far as to express a commitment to the intrinsic value of the environment), they also viewed citizens' attitudes toward nature as playing a pragmatic or

instrumental role in the criticism and transformation of American social and political experience. Their land conservation and regional and wilderness planning efforts were at the same time attempts to assert environmental values, especially the ideal of a "balanced" or "healthy" landscape, and to advance vital public commitments as essential parts of the good life within a modern democratic community. Instead of focusing narrowly on the transformation of individuals' environmental consciousness (which seems to be the goal of many ecocentrists today), environmental reform in the hands of Bailey, Mumford, MacKaye, and Leopold therefore took on the shape of a more ambitious moral and political enterprise. It was seen as a powerful tool that could help advance the ends of civic regeneration and social improvement.

A Return to Pragmatism

In my attempt to illuminate this overlooked tradition in environmental thought, I will employ some of the resources of classic American philosophy, especially the work of John Dewey (and to a lesser extent, Josiah Royce). As mentioned earlier, and as I discuss in more detail in the chapters that follow, I believe this third way in environmental thought displays many of the marks of philosophical pragmatism. In some cases I think this intellectual influence is fairly direct and overt; in others it is more implicit, yet still palpable and always intriguing. Since pragmatism plays such a key part in my reading of this alternative strain of environmentalism, I should say a few words about it before we go any further.

While its influence in American philosophical circles waned considerably by the 1940s (when it was partly eclipsed by logical positivism), pragmatism has experienced something of a scholarly resurgence in recent decades, thanks to the work of a diverse group of high-profile "neopragmatist" philosophers, such as Richard Rorty, Richard Bernstein, Hilary Putnam, and Jurgen Habermas. It has also made inroads into several other academic fields, including literary, film, and cultural criticism;[6] law,[7] and political theory.[8] Pragmatism has even enjoyed a return to the public eye (Dewey was, after all, the quintessential public philosopher of his time), at least if we can take the enthusiastic

reception of Louis Menand's Pulitzer Prize-winning historical biography of the pragmatists, *The Metaphysical Club*, as any indication.[9]

A philosophical school that can count thinkers as diverse as Charles Sanders Peirce, WVO Quine, Richard Rorty, and Cornel West among its ranks probably resists any simple and concise definition. Still, we can think of pragmatism as being marked by a set of core methodological and normative commitments.[10]

Perhaps the most salient feature of pragmatism is its instrumentalist character and the emphasis it places on the realm of practice (as opposed to the sphere of the ideal). Pragmatism is not a mirroring philosophy that seeks to reflect ideas said to exist outside of human culture, nor does it claim to register an objective, preexperiential understanding of nature. It is rather an active, constructive (or reconstructive) philosophy, one that arises from practical experience and takes shape as individuals—and communities—confront problems, learn about their (and others') values and beliefs, and adjust and progressively improve their natural and built environments. To paraphrase Ian Hacking, pragmatism suggests less the image of the philosopher's armchair than it does the craftsman's workbench. Ideas, as well as values and moral principles, are not abstractions; they are tools for social experimentation with the goal of bettering the human condition and enhancing our cultural adaptation to the environment. Among other things, this emphasis on instrumental action and social practice suggests that new knowledge and novel values can emerge from reflective and well-planned human activity on the landscape. Indeed, such activities have the potential to expand human experience and generate cultural wisdom in a manner that can improve our ability to achieve valued social goals, as well as deepen our appreciation of our natural and built environments.

Pragmatism is also known for its acceptance, if not hearty embrace, of the condition of pluralism; i.e., that individuals are differently situated and are shaped to a significant degree by dissimilar traditions and experiences. Any claim to a universal or singular "good" is thus illusory to most pragmatists. This commitment to pluralism (including both its metaphysical and ethical varieties) prompts in turn the acknowledgment of the fallibility of our beliefs and moral commitments. It requires an openness to revision and change as we come into contact with the views

of others and accept that new evidence and further discussion may show our beliefs to be mistaken and our values to be ill-considered or to have unacceptable implications.[11] In the environmental case, a growing body of social scientific research on public opinion has shown that citizens embrace a range of moral stances toward the environment, including both anthropocentric and ecocentric positions.[12] In light of this evidence, the notion that we should be searching for a final and universal ethical principle (or even a small set of ultimate principles) to govern all of our problematic environmental situations seems misguided to pragmatists. Such a view not only sweeps aside real moral diversity, it also fails to acknowledge that values can and do change in the context of public debate and deliberation over environmental problems and policies.[13]

Another core element of the pragmatist approach is the centrality of experience in all types of knowing and valuing. Human transactions with the social and physical environment are for pragmatists the ultimate generator of knowledge and value, and the ongoing process of direct experience is the only authoritative source of moral and political guidance. Experience, in other words, is uniquely regulative. Furthermore, since all value and knowledge arise through this transactional process, pragmatists believe that it is pointless to make rigid distinctions between means and ends, instrumental and intrinsic values. The basic continuity of experience also leads pragmatists to reject the dichotomy between fact and value, yet this is done without simply collapsing value expressions into factual statements. Instead, pragmatists view facts about human experience as offering empirical support or evidence for moral claims about what is, in fact, good or right (or bad or wrong), evidence that is always capable of being overturned in light of additional experience.[14] Once more, it follows from this way of thinking that culture is fundamentally entwined with the surrounding environment. Environmental values are experienced as human values; they are the products of the transactions between humans and nature in particular social situations and ecophysical contexts.[15] I believe this pragmatic conception of experience runs through the third way tradition in environmental thought discussed in this book.

Finally, within pragmatism there is a high regard for the epistemic, moral, and political worth of the community.[16] On logical grounds, prag-

matists like Charles Sanders Peirce and John Dewey embraced the notion of community because of their belief in its ability to provide an institution capable of solving complex scientific and social problems. They believed that, working in concert, a diverse association of "inquirers" (which could include experts, citizens, or both) was better positioned to identify facts, construct solutions to problems, and root out crippling errors than were individuals operating by themselves and saddled with their idiosyncratic perspectives and biases. In Dewey's understanding, this idealized view of cooperative inquiry was manifest in what he called the method of "social intelligence."[17] This process, patterned after the method of inquiry successful in the sciences and technical professions, in Dewey's writing was linked to the political culture of democracy. A democratic social order, characterized by openness, toleration, freedom of expression, and so on, would permit social intelligence to function most effectively; i.e., it would facilitate free and cooperative inquiry and the collective resolution of social problems.[18]

Community held more than purely cognitive value for the pragmatists, however (especially for more socially and politically oriented thinkers in the tradition, like Dewey). It was also a core moral concept, embodying a communicative and social ideal in which individuals participated in collective experience, contributing to the development of shared values and the direction of group affairs toward a locally defined notion of the common good. The community in turn provided the critical social and educational environment in which individuals could fully mature and flourish, both as individuals and as democratic citizens. For pragmatists of Dewey's persuasion, democracy rested upon this intertwined social and moral vision. It was a vision, moreover, that he believed required a vigorous defense in an age of rampant market individualism.

In the *Public and Its Problems*, for example, Dewey argued for the retrieval of a participatory, face-to-face politics and a renewed understanding of the common good. These values, he lamented, were being eroded by the corrosive culture of an unplanned industrialism and overly materialistic individualism. As we will see in the chapters that follow, the third way environmentalist thinkers shared Dewey's concerns about the growing threats to community life and the corrosion of a sense of the public interest in modern America. Although their ideas differed in

a number of ways, I believe that Bailey, Mumford, MacKaye, and Leopold were of one mind in the hope that ambitious environmental reform would reinvigorate communities and strengthen citizens' sense of their collective stake in a healthy landscape and a vibrant social life.

As it has in other academic circles, pragmatism has recently surfaced in a number of fields within environmental studies, including environmental philosophy,[19] environmental law,[20] environmental economics,[21] and environmental policy and management.[22] Even though I will touch on several themes and questions in this book that have consumed the attention of environmental philosophers, my discussion here is pitched more generally than this. I want to show that a strong current of what might be called civic pragmatism (marked by an emphasis on instrumental action and experience, a recognition of value pluralism, and a focus on revitalizing community and cultural affairs) runs through the American environmental tradition. I also want to illustrate how this third way tradition resonates in certain efforts at environmental reform being advanced today, movements that speak to a wider cultural view of the impact of pragmatism on American environmental thought.

Finally, I want to suggest a role for this civic pragmatist approach in the construction of a more balanced and better-adapted environmentalist culture. My discussion of pragmatism, in other words, is generally not as concerned with the more technical and specialized questions of knowledge and value that have largely dominated its career within environmental philosophy.[23] Rather, I want to understand how the alternative environmentalism set forth by Bailey, Mumford, MacKaye, and Leopold—a tradition that is in general humanistic (but not narrowly utilitarian), attentive to the beauty and nonmarket value of nature, yet resistant to doctrinaire versions of ecocentrism—can lead to a transformed understanding of the relationship between our environmental values and our other moral and political commitments.

Plan of the Book

My approach is to uncover the tradition of civic pragmatism in environmental thought and practice by exploring the work of the four environmental reformers already introduced: Liberty Hyde Bailey, Lewis

Mumford, Benton MacKaye, and Aldo Leopold. I then consider how this third way in environmental thought is manifest on the landscape today by examining in detail two important and ongoing reform movements in land conservation and planning that I see as reflecting and extending this tradition of pragmatic environmentalism. I close the book with a few brief reflections on how this third way environmentalism challenges some of the current assumptions and preoccupations of the academic field that has spoken the most loudly about the moral character of human–environment relations: environmental ethics.

In chapter 2 I consider the work of Liberty Hyde Bailey, a horticultural scientist, agricultural administrator, and rural reformer who played a pivotal role in the Progressive Era Country Life Commission, the brainchild of Teddy Roosevelt and an attempt to bring a version of the conservation spirit to agriculture and the countryside. Bailey's emphasis on nature study in childhood and the transformative effects of immersive environmental educational activities such as planting and tending school gardens fed into efforts to reform American country life, an agenda that hinged in no small part on making rural environment and culture an attractive and valued realm in a rapidly industrializing and urbanizing nation. I argue that Bailey's educational goal is completely in step with that of pragmatist philosopher and educational reformer John Dewey, whose well-known advocacy of active, child-centered learning and the role of education in cultivating a democratic citizenry reverberates in Bailey's work. Like Dewey, Bailey viewed education (in this case, nature study) as the means for creating more public-spirited and civic-minded individuals. Bailey also hoped that such experiences would instill a love of nature and the farm landscape within a new generation of rural residents, a regard that would anchor them to the countryside and stem the flow of population into the early twentieth-century metropolis.

In a series of books with environmental themes written in the period beginning at the turn of the twentieth century to the onset of World War I, Bailey developed an environmental ethic that captured both a sense of the land's intrinsic value (the "holy earth") and a more traditional conservationist concern for resource sustainability and the well-being of future generations. Bailey's environmentalism was therefore both morally pluralistic—i.e., encapsulating both instrumental and intrinsic values of

nature—and grounded in a broader pragmatist-inspired educational philosophy and a political goal of rural reform and civic revitalization. While his contribution to environmental thought and the historical development of conservation and environmentalism is therefore quite significant, Bailey is largely unknown within the contemporary environmental studies and environmental practitioner communities. Yet his influence may be felt today in several quarters of environmental reform, including movements for a sustainable agriculture and those promoting an overarching ethic of stewardship within public and private land conservation programs.

I continue to develop this third way environmental tradition in chapter 3 with an exploration of the work of Lewis Mumford in the period between the two world wars. Like Bailey, Mumford is fairly uncommon in environmentalist discussions; he is certainly much better known among urbanists and historians of technology. For the present discussion, my interest in Mumford is in his regional planning theory and his involvement in the Regional Planning Association of America in the 1920s and early 1930s. I attempt to show that an important part of Mumford's planning program was his effort to widen the American conservation vision to include a regional rather than a single-resource focus, and to diversify and strengthen its philosophical foundations beyond a narrow utilitarianism by appealing to deeper cultural and political values.

Although Mumford had some unflattering things to say about pragmatism in his classic work of cultural criticism, *The Golden Day*,[24] and squared off with John Dewey in the pages of the *New Republic* in the late 1920s, I argue that Mumford's approach to regional planning was thoroughly pragmatic; indeed, I suggest that he articulated what was in fact a Deweyan understanding of social intelligence in his discussion of the staging of the regional planning process. Furthermore, as with Bailey's nature-study efforts, Mumford also linked his environmental program (regional planning) to a larger civic agenda. The participation of citizens in Mumford's regional survey process would, he believed, teach them about the biophysical and cultural resources of their community and surrounding landscape, while at the same time building a common political identity and nurturing a wider civic pride. Mumford's

participatory and democratic vision for the regional survey is thus another point of intellectual contact with Dewey's pragmatism, especially the political ideas Dewey advanced in works like the *The Public and Its Problems*.

Finally, while Mumford's writing during this period conveys what we might think of as a broadly humanistic environmental ethic (albeit one that included discernable organicist, i.e., nonanthropocentric elements), the intellectual significance of Mumford's regionalism, I believe, is best understood as a more expansive cultural form of environmentalism, one that speaks to a range of political and aesthetic concerns as well as to ethical questions surrounding the value of nature and the human community.

Mumford's friend and regionalist ally Benton MacKaye is the subject of chapter 4. MacKaye, a Harvard-trained forester who straddled the conservation and planning camps in the interwar period, was both a fascinating practical philosopher of the wilderness and a thoughtful and effective advocate of the regional planning agenda. These passions would converge in his most significant environmental legacy: the Appalachian Trail, a 2,100-mile-long recreational footpath running along the mountains from Maine to Georgia. In this chapter I argue that MacKaye's original justification for the Trail—it was to be an instrument for the social and political reform of the Appalachian region by building up the provincial forces of "indigenous" America to repel the physical and cultural advance of metropolitanism—reflects the influence of the social philosophy of Josiah Royce, an American philosopher who was one of MacKaye's teachers at Harvard. MacKaye's reformist hopes for the Trail also appealed to several older ideas in the American intellectual tradition, including a Thoreau-style turn to nature for a clearer view of social and economic questions, as well as the notion of an alternative provincial political founding that harkened back to the generation of the American Revolution.

Like Mumford, MacKaye's ethical orientation toward nature was generally humanistic. In his mind, environmental values were bound up with the intrinsic values of authentic (i.e., "indigenous") local communities living a balanced and human-scaled communal life in nature. This orientation, and MacKaye's focus on the cultural dimensions of wilderness

conservation and the maintenance of vital communal and folk traditions in the hinterlands, makes him a thinker of great originality and contemporary relevance, especially in light of the recent wilderness debate that has cropped up among scholars and environmental advocates over the past decade or so.[25] MacKaye's attempt to unite issues that we would today describe as community planning or rural development with the protection of the American wilderness remains a unique contribution in the annals of conservation and environmental thought. His effort stands as a lesson—perhaps one forgotten by some ecocentric environmentalists—that a serious regard for the civic health of human communities does not preclude a concern for the integrity of wild places (and vice versa).

In chapter 5 I consider the work and thought of Aldo Leopold, MacKaye's fellow wilderness advocate and widely considered to be the father of environmental ethics. Leopold's reputation in environmental studies is, to put it mildly, secure. Generations of readers have been inspired by *A Sand County Almanac*, his towering contribution to the environmentalist canon. The challenge for anyone who takes on Leopold's legacy for contemporary environmentalism, unlike that for Bailey, Mumford, and MacKaye, is certainly not one of establishing relevance. It is the opposite: What could there possibly be left to say? Leopold has spawned a virtual cottage industry within environmental ethics and environmental history; *Sand County* and its philosophical crown jewel, "The Land Ethic," have figured prominently in environmental ethics discussions and debates since the early 1970s. Indeed, efforts to claim Leopold as either a nonanthropocentrist or an environmental humanist have become in many respects a struggle over the very soul of environmental ethics and the moral underpinnings of environmental policy, planning, and management.

Here I approach Leopold somewhat differently than he has been in the past. Instead of focusing solely on the more philosophical anthropocentrist versus ecocentrist debate and the issue of his stance on the "moral considerability" of nature, I treat Leopold as what we might today refer to as a public intellectual and reformer who spoke to the core normative political question of the public interest. I suggest that Leopold's developing notion of land health became for him a

substantive definition of the public interest, and that we can understand his endorsement of the intrinsic value of nature in works like *A Sand County Almanac* as (at least in part) a pragmatic move designed to motivate land owners, and citizens generally, to practice sound conservation and promote a healthy landscape, which would in turn produce a number of valued cultural, aesthetic, and economic goods.

I also argue that the notion of land health serves an additional pragmatic, especially Deweyan purpose in Leopold's work. It offers a means by which a disparate public can recognize its common interest in a fertile and biologically diverse landscape and the civic values it supports, an instrumental precondition for intelligent social action within a recognized political community. This claiming of Leopold as a public thinker, I suggest, is further justified by his rhetorical efforts to reform conventional views of American material progress and technological development. He consistently advocated a view of the public interest that asserted the cultural and aesthetic values of nature over acquisitive individualism, commercial boosterism, and the accumulation of ever more numerous gadgets and technological devices at the expense of the health of the land.

Building from the third way tradition of Bailey, Mumford, MacKaye, and Leopold, I turn in chapter 6 to a discussion of current practice, focusing on two important attempts at land-use reform: Natural Systems Agriculture and New Urbanism. I believe that these practical movements both illustrate and further develop the civic pragmatist environmental tradition constructed in the preceding chapters. For nearly three decades Natural Systems Agriculture (also known as perennial polyculture) has been promoted by Wes Jackson and his collaborators at The Land Institute in Salina, Kansas, as a more sustainable and ecologically benign alternative to chemical- and energy-intensive industrial agriculture. I examine the main features of Jackson's program and his ethical justifications for developing a new agricultural paradigm that seeks to mimic wild ecosystems. These rationales, I argue, turn out to be both anthropocentric and nonanthropocentric in content. Moreover, Jackson's agricultural vision, like that of the four historical figures discussed in the earlier chapters, is tied to a larger social reform agenda devoted to preserving American communal traditions and democratic values from the

moral corruption, social atomism, and ecological destructiveness of the market and the consumer impulse.

In the second half of chapter 6 I provide an analysis of the intertwining environmental and social philosophies of New Urbanism, a movement composed primarily of architects and planners seeking to remedy the negative environmental, physical, social, and civic effects of suburban sprawl. I suggest that the New Urbanist charter and the overall design philosophy advanced by many of its proponents represent an intriguing convergence of environmental and social ends, and that New Urbanism also carries forward the third way tradition of a pragmatist-inspired environmentalism with its value pluralism, its strategic and conceptual inclusiveness, and its emphasis on community building and the restoration of a human-scaled environment conducive to a fuller and more vibrant civic life in an increasingly urban environment.

In the concluding chapter I briefly summarize the main themes of the book and discuss how the third way tradition suggests a different path than that currently being taken by most writers on environmental ethics, the field that has taken responsibility for interpreting and advancing the moral discourse of environmentalism today. I argue for a rethinking of the field's mission and advocate the adoption of a more civic style of environmental ethics that comports both with the third way tradition explored in this book and with the growing number of citizen-led environmental movements on the American scene.

The "landscape" of this book's title is both metaphorical and conventionally literal. It is, on the one hand, the intellectual territory navigated by the third way environmental thinkers whose work and ideas I discuss in the following pages. It is also the physical landscape itself, which, in addition to being an object of moral concern and the locus of past and present conservation and planning efforts, also serves in this alternative tradition as a vehicle for criticizing our social and political practices and a means for proposing alternative visions of the good life in a democratic community.

I have also chosen the term *landscape* (over the more widely used *nature* in environmentalist discourse) deliberately. John Brinckerhoff Jackson has pointed out that it is a semantically rich and resonant word,

one that "underscores not only our identity and presence, but also our history."[26] Indeed, landscape suggests a more cultural understanding of the environment that encapsulates social goods and experiences. It therefore also signifies, I believe, an implicit acceptance of responsible human agency in nature, rather than dismissing human will and activity out of hand, a move that has become commonplace in the more zealous versions of ecocentric environmentalism. Staying with this theme, I close this introduction with the words of Simon Schama (from his spellbinding book, *Landscape and Memory*), which I think also serve as an appropriate preface to the chapters that follow:

> All our landscapes, from the city park to the mountain hike, are imprinted with our tenacious, inescapable obsessions. So that to take the many and several ills of the environment seriously does not, I think, require that we trade in our cultural legacy or its posterity. It asks instead that we simply see it for what it has truly been: not the repudiation, but the veneration, of nature.[27]