The Aesthetics of Unscenic Nature

1. Advocates for the Scenically Challenged Parts of Nature

Revolution in the aesthetics of nature often takes place when people start appreciating the parts of nature formerly regarded as aesthetically negative. One such example is the change in the aesthetics of mountains which occurred during the early eighteenth century. We are witnessing another revolution in this country which started a century ago. Its primary purpose is to overcome the pictorial appreciation of the natural environment, a legacy left by the picturesque aesthetics established during the latter half of the eighteenth century. The picturesque emphasis on vision as the vehicle for appreciating the natural environment has led us to regard nature as a series of scenes consisting of two-dimensional designs. This approach to nature has also encouraged us to look for and appreciate primarily the scenically interesting and beautiful parts of our natural environment. As a result, those environments devoid of effective pictorial composition, excitement, or amusement (that is, those not worthy of being represented in a picture) are considered lacking in aesthetic values.¹

Consider, for example, John Muir's experience of encountering two artists on Mt. Ritter in the High Sierras. Muir complains that they were satisfied only with a few scenic spots affording spectacular, startling views. However, other parts that attracted Muir, such as the autumn colors of the surrounding meadows and bogs, were "sadly disappointing" to the artists because they did not make "effective pictures."²

Half a century later, Aldo Leopold echoes Muir's complaint. "Concerned for the most part with show pieces," Leopold claims, we are "willing to be herded through 'scenic' places" and "find mountains grand if they be proper mountains with waterfalls, cliffs, and lakes." Because we expect to be entertained by the grand, amusing, and spectacular parts of nature (such as in national parks), we find the Kansas plains "tedious" and the prairies of Iowa and southern Wisconsin boring. Against such a common tendency, Leopold reminds us that "in country, as in people, a plain exterior often conceals hidden riches," and urges us to develop the aesthetic sensitivity to penetrate the "plain" exterior to reach the hidden riches.³

The same sentiment is expressed by a contemporary painter, Alan Gussow. While not objecting to the popular appreciation of the "crown jewels" in the National Park system, he calls for "the cultivation of an ability to see beauty in more modest, less aggressive settings," such as tidal wetlands and wildlife habitats. According to Gussow, their beauty is primarily based upon health and sustainability and is more subtle, less visible, than the grandiose splendor of the Grand Canyon, Yellowstone, or Mt. Rainier.⁴

Holmes Rolston III, a contemporary writer on environmental ethics, reiterates this concern for the common inclination to depreciate the scenically challenged parts of nature. In defending the positive aesthetic value of a rotten carcass of an elk full of maggots (not our typical example of scenic beauty), he advises against our tendency to look for pretty objects and picturesque scenes fit for a postcard. At the beginning, Rolston claims, "we search for something pretty or colorful, for scenic beauty, for the picturesque. Landscapes regularly provide that, but when they do not, we must not think that they have no aesthetic properties."⁵

In his recent writing on nature aesthetics, Allan Carlson also challenges the pictorial approach to nature. According to Carlson, considering nature as a series of landscape paintings is inappropriate, simply because that is not what...
nature is. This landscape model for appreciating nature "requires us to view the environment as if it were a static representation, which is essentially two-dimensional. It requires the reduction of the environment to a scene or view." Experiencing nature as a static, representational, two-dimensional scene, however, "unduly limits our appreciation...it also misleads it." Carlson claims that with a proper approach (to be specified later), even pictorially challenged natural objects would appear aesthetically positive, confirmed by the change of people's attitudes regarding mountains, jungles, insects, and reptiles.

II. WHY ADVOCATE POSITIVE AESTHETIC VALUE FOR THE SCENICALLY CHALLENGED?

The writers cited above are in agreement in criticizing the pictorial appreciation of nature and share a general concern over the scenically challenged aspects of nature. But why is it important to overcome our tendency toward scenic appreciation? Because such a mode of appreciation neglects the scenically challenged, and our experience of those pictorially enjoyable objects may be limited or misguided? But that is begging the question. Why can we not just enjoy what realists to us and forget about the boring landscapes and the dead animals with a putrid smell and maggots crawling all over them? As Carlson himself points out (though he does not accept), "we can, of course, approach nature as we sometimes approach art, that is, we can simply enjoy its forms and colors or enjoy perceiving it however we may happen to. Why not then relax and just enjoy similar things in nature?"

Carlson's own response is, for the most part, based upon the aesthetic defense. He claims that "if we are to make aesthetic judgments which are likely to be true, that is, judgments which avoid both "esthetic omissions and aesthetic deception," we must interpret and appreciate the natural object in its correct scientific category, rather than as pictorial design. Rolston at times also invokes this type of cognitive reasoning. To try to understand the beauty of wildness with a representational or with pictorial criteria is inevitably to misunderstand it." making these experiences examples of "deadfall category mistakes."

However, this argument alone will not show how and why this cognitive consideration should outweigh other considerations, such as maxim enjoyment, amusement, and entertainment accompanying the (inappropriate) aesthetic appreciation. Carlson's position, that the most enjoyable experience may not always correspond to the most correct appreciation rooted in the appropriate art-historical knowledge. Appreciating a representational painting as a nonrepresentational design may make the experience more pleasant by simply avoiding the sometimes long, arduous task of determining its symbolic content and allusions. Furthermore, an incorrect interpretation may render the otherwise "grating, cliché-ridden, pedestrian" object "exciting, ingenious," hence a "masterpiece." Or, reading a literary work with "deliberate anachronism and the erroneous attribution" may "fill the most placid works with adventure." Similarly, one could argue that an incorrect interpretation may render our aesthetic experience of the natural object more enjoyable. The longevity and popularity of the pictorial appreciation may indicate the attractiveness of its (presumably improper) approach, most likely because very little work is demanded of us. Furthermore, an ordinary oak tree in front of my house may look much more exciting, amusing, and interesting when viewed as a maple tree. It is true that the quality of novelty and uniqueness, when applied to my oak tree at a maple tree, are "mistaken" and "incorrect." However, in the absence of other constraints, these cognitive concerns by themselves do not overcome the challenge of entertainment seekers who pursue any way (no matter how misguided or incorrect) of getting their aesthetic kicks, so to speak.

I think that what is needed for advocating the appropriate appreciation is some consideration. Let us first examine the reason why it is inappropriate to experience a work of art incorrectly, even when doing so would provide the utmost enjoyment and entertainment. Our refusal to experience an art object on its own terms, that is, within its own historical and cultural context as well as by reference to the artist's intention, indicates our unwillingness to put aside (at least to a certain extent) our own agenda, whether it be an ethnocentric or a present-minded perspective or the pursuit for easy pleasure and entertainment. As John Dewey reminds us, the moral function of art is "to remove prejudice, do away with the scales that keep the eye from seeing, tear away the veils due to Wort and custom, [and] perfect the power to perceive." Art, invites us to visit an often unfamiliar and somnolent parts created by the artist, encouraging us to "enter...into other forms of relationship and participation than our own." Granted, our journey may prove to be disappointing and our willingness not adequately rewarded because of the poor quality of the artwork. However, such a possibility should not discourage us from approaching each art object with due respect, to give it a chance. Similarly, in the case of nature, our effort at understanding its origin, structure, and function correctly indicates our willingness to recognize its own reality quite apart from us and to suspend our exclusive pursuit for entertainment in nature. Instead of imposing our own standard of aesthetic value (such as pictorial coherence), we are willing to acknowledge and appreciate the diverse ways in which nature speaks, though some may not be clearly comprehensible at first.

While Rolston, like Carlson, does invoke the cognitive argument, he also argues for the moral importance of the pictorial appreciation of nature. To demand that nature please us pictorially is to treat it "as though it were material to be harvested for a picture postcard." But "environmental ethics stretches out from our individualistic, self-centered perspectives into a consideration of systemic beauty." As a result, "we ought not to tour Glacier National Park interested only in a view," thinking "as though the parts of nature that cannot serve us ought at least to please us." The ultimate reason for aesthetically appreciating the scenically challenged is the moral importance of overcoming our perception of nature as (visual) resources to be used for our enjoyment. "Leopold has given us a more specific and explicit about the moral reason for advocating the aesthetic appreciation of the underappreciated parts of nature. He worries that "American conservation is...still concerned for the most part with show piee" and that "we have yet learned to think in terms of small cogs and wheels. These parts are often unseam, like the flora and fauna of a pasture, but necessary for sustaining the working of the natural environment. But the knowing concerning these cogs and wheels must be supplemented by a refined taste in natural objects." Such a refined taste presupposes perception informed by relevant scientific facts, not merely what meets the untutored eye. Because "much of the damage inflicted on land is quite invisible to laymen." With such a perception, Leopold hopes that we will come to have an aesthetic appreciation of these scenic parts, providing a step toward developing an ecologically responsible attitude toward nature. I do not think we should give an overly moralistic account of appropriately appreciating nature by inductively condemning the pictorial appreciation of it. Nature appreciation, just like art appreciation, must begin somewhere, as acknowledged by Leopold himself: "our ability to perceive quality in nature begins, as in art, with the pretty." I take the moral dimension of nature appreciation described in this section to indicate the direction for guiding our education in nature aesthetics.

III. HOW TO APPRECIATE THE SCENICALLY CHALLENGED

The previous discussion addresses the "why" of the aesthetics of the scenically challenged. I would now like to indicate how we can account for the positive aesthetic value of the pictorially unsatisfactory parts of nature.

Let us first consider the remedy offered by Rolston to cure our pictorial appreciation of nature. According to him, the presumed negative aesthetic value of the dead elk with maggots stems from isolating these objects from a larger context.

Every item must be seen not in framed isolation but framed by its environment, and this frame in turn becomes part of the bigger picture we have to appreciate—not a "frame" but a dramatic play.

We should view a natural object or phenomenon in its own larger context, whether spatial or temporal, so that we understand the role it plays in the drama of the life cycle or in the sustenance of an ecosystem. In short, "one should thrill over ecosystems, at the production of which Nature seldom fails." One consequence of this view is that "nature's landscapes almost without fail have an essential beauty."
the aesthetic object is. It is the entire ecosystem or an individual object (like the carcass)? If this seemingly ugly still shot in an ongoing motion picture, a piece of a jigsaw puzzle, or a player in the drama of a "dynamic evolutionary ecosystem." 19 It is not the aesthetic object the entire motion picture, the jigsaw puzzle, or the ecosystem, but not the carcass and maggots. If so, even if we agree that the whole is aesthetically positive, it does not follow that the beauty of the whole implies the beauty of its parts. 18

One could respond that, indeed, the aesthetic object in nature is not individual pieces but always the whole ecosystem constituted by individual pieces. However, this response creates further problems. First, if, as Rolston claims (and other scientists seem to agree), the particular ecosystem that contains the elk carcass and maggots "turns becomes part of the bigger picture we have to appreciate," then the ultimate object of appreciation is not even a local environment surrounding these objects but rather a global environment. 20 Then, if we ought to appreciate nature as a large frame, this position leads to a counterintuitive consequence that the only legitimate object for our aesthetic experience of nature is the global ecosystem. Second, if the beauty in an ecosystem (due to its harmony, unity, and interdependence of parts) is a highly conceptual one, experienced by us through verbal descriptions or a diagram. Unless we are field ecologists and its many members and their behavior for a long period of time, such beauty is beyond our ordinary perceptual experience. On the other hand, a rotten carcass and maggots are easily accessible to our perception. By stressing the aesthetic value of the whole ecosystem, the actual perceptual experience of the individual object seems to become unimportant. In fact, if the beauty of an ecosystem determines the beauty of each of its members, the positive aesthetic value of each of its members is predetermined, rendering our actual experience of their colors, shapes, smells, textures, and movements irrelevant.

But I must stress that the aesthetic value of the elk with maggots is not simply our conceptual understanding of its role in the ecosystem, but the way in which its various sensory qualities illustrate or express its important role. The drama of life, struggle, and the transience of existence must be presented in the visual composition, as well as in the smell and texture of the decaying animal carcass and the movements of the maggot, which work the whole ecosystem triggered by the odor of the carcass and maggots has to be brought back to these individual objects at hand.

In this sense, I agree with Carlson's account of how scientific reference illuminates nature in terms of the story it tells about it. The importance of scientific knowledge in the appropriate aesthetic appreciation of nature has been repeatedly stressed in Carlson's writings. According to him, just as proper appreciation of art must begin with the correct art-historical understanding of the object, the appropriate appreciation of nature must also be based upon correct information regarding it. This information must be supplied by nature itself, irrespective of our own associations, because "nature is natural—not our creation," implying that "we can discover things about them which are independent of any involvement by us in their creation." 21 Scientific knowledge about a natural object's own structure, history, and function will facilitate the most correct and rewarding appreciation by suggesting the best approach to each of the diverse environments. Furthermore, each scientific knowledge illuminates nature rather by making its order visible and intelligible or by imposing an order on it. 22

Specifically, we see and feel the drama of the life cycle in the motionless elk carcass (in contrast to its dignified movement described) and its smell of decay, along with the incessant movements of the maggots as if to symbolize the unglamorous, yet crucial work crew behind the scene. With Muir, we admire the way in which "nature's poems are carved on tables of stone" of Mt. Ritter, and we enjoy "reciting the records she has carved on the rocks." 23 And, as Leopold describes, the aesthetic value of cranes is embodied in their call, capturing only "the slow unrelenting of earthy history," symbolizing "a paleontological pattem of nobility." 24

Training in "nature study," in particular evolution and ecology, will "promote perception," not simply of the sensual, but the way in which it organizes, functions, and mechanisms are disclosed and manifested externally. Though "invisile and comprehensible" in itself, the appropriate scientific knowledge brings a "change in the mental eye," enabling us to decipher and appreciate the "marsh-land chorus. Our appreciation of the speech of hills," which is "a pulsing harmony—its score inscribed upon a thousand hills, it rotes the lives and deaths of plants and animals, its rhythms spanning the seconds and the centuries," and "the incredible intricacies of the plant and animal community—the intrinsic beauty of the organism called America." 25

What is important in all these descriptions of nature appreciation is that (1) these appreciations are anchored in a scientific understanding of the objects' origin, history, and function; but (2) such scientific understanding is incorporated into as it illuminates the sensuous surface of the immediate object. I believe that the aesthetic appreciation has to begin and end with the sensuous, though the sensual can be, and is often, modified or adjusted by the conceptual.

Leopold reflects upon the primacy of the sensuous in his nature appreciation thus: "my earliest impressions of wildlife and its pursuit retain a vivid sharpness of form, color, and atmosphere that half a century of professional wildlife experience has failed to obliterate or to improve upon." 26

If we consider the aesthetic appreciation of nature as appreciating the way in which nature tells its own story through its sensuous qualities, we can account for the asymmetry between art and nature in terms of their aesthetic values. Why we experience a work of art, even if we heed Donald's advice to "never" to meet the object on its own terms, the object may not reward us for our effort and willingness in the following two ways. First, if for the moment we continue as a story-teller, it may disappoint us because the story it tells, no matter how brilliantly narrated, may simply be too repulsive and abhorrent. For example, it would be difficult to have a true aesthetic appreciation of a work of art which concentrates the Third Reich of which griffites rape and child abuse. 27

Conversely, even if we do not have any objection to the story told by an art object, it may be related to us so ineffectively that we may not find anything interesting in the object. We criticize those objects as poor, or failed, works of art. Thus, with respect to art, there are ways in which aesthetic values are considered lacking, even with our utmost effort to supply the necessary framework and context.

However, the above considerations do not apply to our aesthetic appreciation of nature, making it plausible that every part of nature is aesthetically positive. Because nature is amoral, it would not make sense to consider some of its stories (about its origin, structure, and ecological function) to be morally objectionable or unacceptable. 28 Moreover, I cannot think of any stories of nature which are uninteresting or trivial. As Leopold rhetorically states, "the weeds in a city lot convey the same lesson as the redwoods. 29 The account of how maggots are constructed to break down animal meat for food and how their role is vital to the functioning of the entire ecosystem is as fascinating as how the Grand-Canyon has been formed over the millennia. No matter how seemingly insignificant, uninteresting, or reproductive at first sight, natural history and ecological sciences reveal marvellous works of every part of nature.

Furthermore, while there may be different degrees of nature's skill in storytelling, none of its parts are mute. Simply by virtue of exhibiting various perceptual features, all bear witness to their own origin, structure, and function, which we articulate verbally in our scientific accounts. Indeed, scientific discourse exists because of nature's observable characteristics. In this sense, I agree with Carlson's observation:

All of nature necessarily reveals the natural order. Although it may be easier to perceive and understand in some cases for others, it is yet present in every case and can be appreciated through awareness and understanding of the forces which produce it and the story which illuminates it adequately developed. In this sense all nature is equally appreciable. 30

Perhaps I can restore this passage as follows: every part of nature is aesthetically positive for its storytelling power. In our aesthetic appreciation, we are backtracking the scientific story to the sensuous, as it were, because the reason why it suggests the scientific account in the first place.
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he argues, because "much, perhaps most, of our appreciative experience of nature exceeds the limits of a contemplative object and refuses to be constrained within discrete boundaries." Specifically, the feeling of awe in the face of our own powerlessness and fragility cannot be captured by our attempt to objectify, contain, and control nature. But, being a direct effect of our encounter and engagement with the object, such a feeling should be integral to our appreciation of a dangerous natural object. In short, distancing presents a dilemma: some distancing is necessary for making our aesthetic appreciation of dangerous objects in nature possible, but too much distancing will deprive us of the opportunity to have a fully engaging aesthetic appreciation of them.

This paradox becomes even more acute with respect to so-called natural disasters of massive scale and power, such as hurricane, earthquake, volcanic eruption, flood, and the like. Though I cannot judge a pine, the instrument and dramatic manner in which these phenomena encompass and threaten our existence makes it extremely difficult and challenging to aesthetically appreciate their beauty. Indeed, how can we possibly appreciate an aesthetic ideal if we are actually in the midst of a tornado or facing the flow of lava approaching us?

Several suggestions can be made to enable the aesthetic appreciation even of these natural calamities, but I remain doubtful as to whether success and desirability. The first strategy is to induce psychological distancing by viewing a natural disaster from afar (such as through binoculars or on a movie screen). We can experience the thrill and awesome sublimity of this nature's drama by watching it on television or on a movie screen.

However, the aesthetic price we pay by such distancing is even more clear here than in the case of dangerous animals. Appreciating the view of a tornado or volcanic eruption is different from appreciating these phenomena from within. As Berleant reminds us, "perceiving environments from within, as it were, looking not at it but being in it, nature...is transformed into a realm in which we live as participants, not observers." The view of a mountain, as a part of a landscape, is experienced primarily visually, while its appreciation from inside would envelop and affect our entire body. Similarly, the vicarious experience of a natural disaster through distant viewing will leave us relatively untouched; we remain spectators of this natural drama. The actual experience of natural calamities, however, affords us being through this unvarnished staging of the second, the power of volcanic rocks and ashes raining cave-dwelling and the roar and vibration of the wall of moving snow. Furthermore, the painful awareness of our vulnerability and fragility, experienced immediately by our being situated in the midst of these natural events, is essential in our aesthetic experience of them (if we can manage to have such an aesthetic experience, that is).

At this point, one may propose another way in which these natural disasters are to be appreciated aesthetically. It has to do with a conceptual maneuver on our part to recognize and transcend the anthropocentrism implied in the fear we experience with these phenomena. Consider, for example, the following point made by Jean-Paul Sartre (although he is not making an aesthetic claim here):

Man is the only being by whom a destruction can be accomplished. A geological plication, a storm do not destroy least they do not destroy directly: they merely modify the distribution of masses of being. There is no less after the storm than before.

That is, the effects of these natural disasters are in themselves neutral. The negative effect they hold toward them is wholly dependent upon our all-too-human perspective. Nature itself works in a way that is totally indifferent to human requirements.

This trans-human perspective is also shared by Satish Kumar, who explains the Indian-world view:

If something is natural, then it is beautiful. In India, even a storm...even an earthquake is sacred, because something is happening, where the earth is maintaining itself, countering itself, balancing itself.

An earthquake is simply the earth's way of indicating the collision, tear, or push and shove of its plates. A volcanic eruption illustrates the way in which hot magma squeezes upward through a fissure in the earth's crust. Other me-
teological phenomena also have explainable causes, making them comprehensible. In the large global scheme of things, they become the necessary parts of the earth’s functioning. Just as a seemingly ugly object such as an animal carcass gets aesthetically justified by reference to the concept of the natural devolution of life, the natural disasters become justified because they have their own place in the larger frame.

However, I find problems in locating natural disasters within this trans-human perspective. On the one hand, adopting the trans-human perspective and justifying the aesthetic value of natural disasters from such a viewpoint is vested with an all-too-human interest. This claim may sound paradoxical because the conceptual maneuver under consideration denies our own well-being to be the primary concern. However, it can be argued that in this strategy reflects an underlying assumption that every aspect of nature, even those threatening and overwhelming parts, is within our conceptual capture and grasp. Berleant’s critique of the Kantian sublime helps illuminate the present issue. The source of pleasure in our experience of the sublime, both the overwhelming and endangering parts, is in our recognition of the ultimate supremacy of our conceptual capacities. Here, Berleant proposes, “the Cartesian Cartesianism of the Western tradition comes to the rescue, saving us from the terror of overwhelming natural phenomena and outright disaster from nature by the purposive order of thought.” But, he continues, “this play is... no longer available,” because “nature will not stay within its prescribed limits, but breaks out to engulf us;” that is, “we can no longer... contain the natural world within the constructions of the mind.”

Though initially appearing to be a total abandonment of the human-oriented perspective, the Indias that are framed and embraced by Kumar can thus be interpreted as an effort to contain and grasp these natural events within a human conceptual scheme.

On the other hand, there is a sense in which this conceptual maneuver is too alienated from human sensibilities. Recall our discussion in section II. In it we emphasized the primacy of the perceptual qualities of a detailed, vivid, aesthetic experience while recognizing the relative neglect and necessity of referring these qualities to a larger frame (ecosystem). The possibility of this integration of the conceptual and the perceptual provides the necessary context in which an individual’s conception of the world is tied to a manner in which individuals sufficiently conceptualize their part of the world to be able to listen to it.

In the case of natural disasters which overwhelm us, however, through the concept of the sublime, the understanding is around the world, and, as a result, the natural phenomena transcend our worldliness, worrying about their effects on us. But I am not sure whether it is psychologically possible to adopt such an overall, nonanthropocentric standpoint which articulates the sublime in the midst of actual experience. After all, we are dealing with our aesthetic experience, which is supported by our own unique set of sensory apparatus, perceptions, imagination, and concepts. We are not conceptual and without a possible aesthetic experience of a super-human being who can have a global and extremely long-range overview in which to place various natural disasters and whose attitude toward its own existence differs from our own.

Furthermore, this aesthetic appreciation of a natural disaster without regard to its impact on humans, even if possible, conflicts with moral concerns, if my claim in section II is correct (that the two cannot be separated). The claim that natural phenomena are ultimately based upon moral considerations. That is, if I sought to find a possible aesthetic value in these natural phenomena that were harmful to my existence by adopting the anthropocentric standpoint, I believe this implies that我国’s proposal, --- the natural phenomena that they are not created by a moral agent, unlike the mushroom cloud over Hiroshima. However, the same moral considerations that question the appropriateness of our aesthetic appreciation of the mushroom cloud, I believe, also apply to the possible aesthetic experience of natural disasters which cause people to suffer.

One could question whether there is any difference between the suffering and death of an animal and the suffering and death of people who are victims of some natural disaster. If the former calls for the use of aesthetic appreciation when referred to a larger context, why not the latter? Are we saying that Peter Singer would call "speciation" by treating human suffering different from animal suffering simply because of the reason to be specific? Whether desirable or undesirable, wise or unwise, our human-oriented moral sentiments do dictate that we derive pleasure (including aesthetic pleasure) from "animalism's" misery, even if it is caused by nature taking its course. Satish Kumar claims, regarding an earthquake, that "there might be some point; some suffering, some difficulties for human beings, but if you look at the earth as a whole, all natural phenomena have their place." I would have to claim the contrary; although all natural phenomena have their place, their potential aesthetic value is held in check or is overruled by our moral concern for the pain, suffering, and difficulties that these phenomena cause for human beings.

In conclusion, then, I take exception to the claim that everything in nature is aesthetically appreciable. Some phenomena in nature others with their endangering aspects, which are not possible for us to have enough distance, physical and/or conceptual, to listen to and aesthetically appreciate their story. Furthermore, even if we are able to do so, I caution the moral appropriateness of doing so. As long as we are talking about our aesthetic experience based upon our all-too-human, sensual, capacities, limitations, and concerns (moral concerns in particular), not every singling out of nature cannot be considered aesthetically appreciated.

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1. The typical picturesque remedy for these pictorially inferior landscapes is to "improve" them through design, either in the imaged sketch and drawings.
9. Rolston, ibid., p. 25, emphasis added, and p. 23, Carlson hints at, but does not develop, the moral importance for appreciating nature on its own terms ("our appreciation is to be a deeper level," by noting that doing so "is important not only for aesthetic but also for moral and ecological reasons.
11. Rolston, p. 243, emphasis added.
16. Rolston, ibid., p. 239, emphasis added.
17. Rolston, ibid., p. 243-244, emphasis added. The reason Rolston qualifies "improving" as a virtue is that the aesthetic value of massive natural disasters with destructive power. I will examine this issue in the last section, see note 42.

10. Rilems: The references to a possible picture and a jigsaw puzzle come from p. 239, and evolutionary ecosystem, p. 241.

11. For example, David W. Ehrenfeld views the whole earth as a large ecosystem, noting the term “ecosphere.” It is defined as “the largest possible eco-system: namely, the sum total of life on earth, together with the global environment and the earth’s total resources.” *Biological Conservation* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970), p. 205.


15. Leopold: In his reference to nature study and promotion of the importance of nature as a factor in the mental, eyes, p. 291, marsh–larch–chord, p. 171, the song of a river, the speech of hills, and a vast pulsing harmony, p. 128, and America, p. 291. Leopold claims that Daniel Boone, who Leopold gives as an example of someone who lacks the necessary knowledge, “saw only the surface of things” and was unable to fully appreciate the intimate and intrinsic beauty of America (p. 291).

16. Leopold, p. 128.

17. Elements that can be said of natural artifacts and man-made environment. No matter how perfectly designed to fulfill a function, we feel compelled to have an aesthetic appreciation of a conception designed to create human beings, such as described in Kafka’s *In the Penal Colony*. Similarly, what better expression of his conception of deep despair and despair contentment than a ghost with a barrel of dead bodies, with a ghostly riddle on the wall that reads: "He is the only one who can see the world."

18. Realization that it is highly controversial whether nature is a moral, but for the purpose of the present discussion I am glossing over this issue. However, in this regard, I find John Stuart Mill’s *Nature* (originally published in 1873) to be interesting. In this essay Mill argues against the homologous use of the notion of nature by pointing out, among other things, how nature must be considered a mass murderer by causing all kinds of destructive phenomena.


21. The green, velvety, smooth, and "weed-free" lawn, a quintessential American symbol of domesticity and affluence, has come under criticism lately because of its reliance on environmentally harmful herbicides and pesticides, as well as its inappropriateness to indigenous plants and local biomes. See, for example, *Redesigning the American Lawn: A Search for Environmental Harmony*, by F. Herbert Borman, Diana Bartoli, and Gordon T. Gehrke (Yale University Press, 1993).


23. In addition, gaining knowledge about these creatures definitively helps us develop a more positive attitude toward them. For example, I gained a lot from reading *Nature’s Outcasts: A New Look at Loving Things We Have to Hate* by Des Kennedy (Pomona, Vermont: Storror Communications, 1993).

24. Carlton, "Appreciation," p. 269. For these reasons and the reasons for animal welfare, more recent zones are made with an explicit barrier (such as metal bars) that tends to make us spectacles and animals spectacles, or cages and confined spaces, reflecting them with more open space designed to closely resemble the animals’ original habitat.

25. Writing in the late eighteenth century, Archibald Alison illustrates the relationship between the natural object’s aesthetic quality and its environment of display: “The scene of the Eagle is simply disgraceable, when the bird is either tame or confined: it is Sublime only, when it is heard amid Rocks and Deserts, and when it is expressive to us of Liberty, and Independence, and savage Majesty. ... The call of a Goat... among rocks, is strikingly beautiful, as expressing wildness and independence. In a farm-yard, or in a common enclosure, it is very far from being so.” Essays on the *Nature and Principles of Taste* (Dublin, 1790), pp. 147–148.


27. I am emphasizing here the problem of too much distancing in our aesthetic appreciation of the sublime. But the traditional accounts of the sublime in general seem to emphasize the importance of the sublime. For example, while Edmund Burke regards fear of danger as the first cause of the sublime, he notes that "when danger or pain pass too nearly, they are incapable of giving any delight, and are simply terrible" or "they are simply painful when their causes immediately affect us." But only "at certain distances ... they are delightful"; that is, "they are delightful when we have an idea of pain and danger, without being actually in such circumstances." Similarly, Immanuel Kant claims that the sublime is "the more attractive, the more fearful it is provided that we are in security"; that is, in our appreciation of the sublime, "we must regard ourselves as safe." Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990, pp. 36–37; and 47). Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, trans. J. H. Bernard