

In other environmental issues where business and government leaders argue "it's either jobs or the environment, folks," close examination of the situation reveals the fallacy of these simplistic arguments.

But if we use economic arguments to counter those of, say, the timber industry, aren't we still valuing the natural world solely because of its benefit to humans? To a degree, the projection of values onto the natural world is inevitable. We protect coastal fisheries from overfishing and toxic contamination because humans depend upon their extractive value, not necessarily because we recognize the inherent right of fish to flourish in their environment.

Using the natural world for human benefit is to a large extent inevitable. But if untempered by an appreciation of the intrinsic value of all beings, this kind of attitude will lead us into a rather grim future. For if the value of the natural world is contingent solely upon our uses of it, we will protect it only as long as it provides valuable resources. If in the future we learn how to manufacture plastic trees which meet our needs more economically than real trees, our utilitarian view of the natural world will encourage the replacement of living forests with plastic ones.

In coming to perceive the human community as part of a planetary community, we assume an obligation to link human interests with the interests of all sentient beings. If our nuclear family can expand to our planetary family, we can acknowledge the importance of strictly harboring and equitably dis-

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POETRY

thanksgiving '89

*we reached bear mountain summit
midday on a cloudy thanksgiving.
early snow made the ascent a trial,
the highest point in connecticut
barely two thousand feet.*

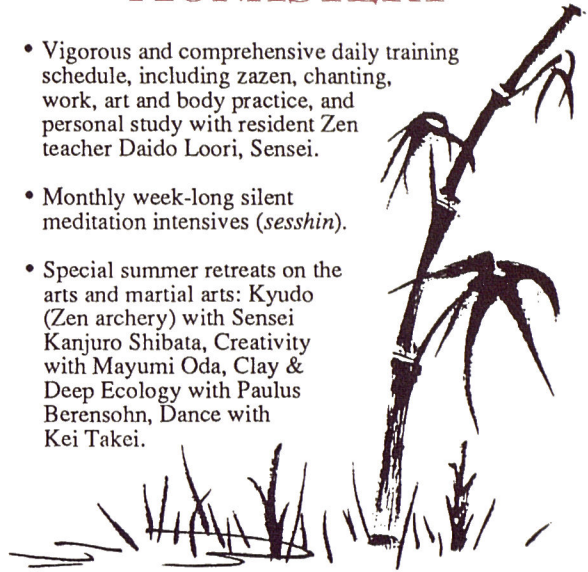
*hills rolled out in all directions,
north and west to new york and massachusetts,
east to connecticut's naugatuck valley.
we rested briefly,
the wind sharp against wet wool shirts.*

*a final sweep of the horizon
confirmed a circle of ragged orange,
the illuminated pollution of working cities
captured and pressing each hill.*

*Paul Bloom
November 26/27, 1989*

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