

# The International Journal of Ecopsychology (IJE)

---

Volume 3  
Issue 1 *Anthropocentric Signification*

Article 2

---

11-15-2021

## Editorial Introduction (IJE 3.1)

Editorial Board  
intljournalcopysychology@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.humboldt.edu/ije>



Part of the [Alternative and Complementary Medicine Commons](#), [Cognitive Psychology Commons](#), [Community Psychology Commons](#), [Counseling Psychology Commons](#), [Environmental Public Health Commons](#), [Environmental Studies Commons](#), [Health Psychology Commons](#), [Human Ecology Commons](#), [Medical Humanities Commons](#), [Other Philosophy Commons](#), [Outdoor Education Commons](#), and the [Place and Environment Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Board, Editorial (2021) "Editorial Introduction (IJE 3.1)," *The International Journal of Ecopsychology (IJE)*: Vol. 3 : Iss. 1 , Article 2.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.humboldt.edu/ije/vol3/iss1/2>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at Digital Commons @ Humboldt State University. It has been accepted for inclusion in The International Journal of Ecopsychology (IJE) by an authorized editor of Digital Commons @ Humboldt State University. For more information, please contact [kyle.morgan@humboldt.edu](mailto:kyle.morgan@humboldt.edu).

## Editorial Introduction

Questions about what makes any one person, groups of people, or even millions of individuals seem mostly blind and powerless to the reality of collapsing ecosystems are often presented in contrapuntal fashion while making references to ideological thinking—in politics, economics, or religion. Equally, and also in contrapuntal fashion, references are made to attributional states rooted in some definition of “personality” (*dispositional* or *situational* factors) with some suggesting that a failure to evolve a sort of idealized “self” has much to do with our ignorance, or febrile and misguided agency. And yet, something foundational seems missing. The Chinese poet *Bai Juyi* astutely put it in these words:

Two monks sit facing, playing chess on the mountain,  
The bamboo shadow on the board is dark and clear.  
Not a person sees the bamboo's shadow,  
One sometimes hears the pieces being moved.

Neither monk is paying attention to the totality of their surroundings, each self-absorbed in playing an inconsequential game -- mountain, bamboo and shadows far from *their* awareness. And if monks are so unenlightened, what are the rest of us to do?

In this vein, this and subsequent issues of IJE address and readdress what author Robert M. Pirsig correctly identified as a limited capacity inherent in human cognition when he wrote, “We take a handful of sand from the endless landscape of awareness around us and call that handful of sand the world” (*Zen and The Art of Motorcycle Maintenance: An Inquiry into Values*). In our daily lives, and for some determined and allotted time of serialized *couchant* and *levant*, *levant* and *couchant*--lie down and rise again--we are evolutionarily circumscribed to exist and behave as if we were “selves,” actors in the world. One problem is that the words “self” or “world” are rarely or clearly defined, and when they are, their definitions betray various senses of anthropocentrism. Thus, in actuality, the convenient fictions “self,” “world,” “nature,” and other empty signifiers, result in half-hearted and contradictory existential paths, ontogenetically and phylogenetically speaking. The existential circumscription is tautological--inescapable.

Even when one arrives at the realization that the constructs “self,” “nature,” or “consciousness” are empty signifiers, much work lays ahead and all of it is incredibly daunting. Nevertheless, *clearer formulations about what/how any subset of mental processes engage with other natural processes and give rise to a fictional synthesis, “self-in-nature,”* are more honest beginnings. Given all the crises we face, in all these formidable efforts, the only temporal windows that seem to matter are NOW and TOMORROW. Nostalgia is of no use; time itself a *profugum*.

The opening article (Kopnina *et al*) invites an exploration of how one might navigate through the construct “anthropocentrism” and, in particular, how to recognize when authors sell us anthropocentric ideas in sheeps’ clothing: “Nature” in the sky with diamonds. Wernitznig’s original article continues the ideas about the misappropriation of notions of *natureness* employed in discriminatory political practices: the baseless and the ‘barbaric’ becoming racist purism.

Jorge Conesa-Sevilla, *Editor-in-Chief*, November 7, 2021