

CENTER FOR REFLECTION ON THE SECOND LAW
8420 Camellia Drive, Raleigh, North Carolina 27612

Affiliated with
The Riverdale Center for Religious Research
5801 Palisade Avenue, Bronx, New York 10471

James F. Berry
919/847-5819

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Ecology is a term that designates a study of the inter-relatedness of all living and non-living systems of the earth as these exist and flourish under the light and warmth and energy of the sun. In recent times it has come to be a branch of the science of thermodynamics as it measures the inflow of energy and the sequence of its transformations as these take place in the earth community. The nourishment of earth beings which enables them to survive and develop is dependent on these vital energies which flow from one to the other throughout the entire earth system. This flow of life passes through a cycle which has wonderful renewal capacities in its natural state. For the greater part of his existence the human has survived with little interference with or control of this cycle.

A few thousand years ago, however, the human began to bring some aspects of this cycle and some components of the earth community into a special relation with himself. He began his managerial role. This functioned with some success until recent times. Human demands were limited, population was not overwhelming, the ability to interfere with the total range of earth dynamics was not very great. Then came the abrupt transformation: the assault on the earth, its subjugation, and the structuring of a life context based largely on the nonrenewable fuel and ores of the earth and the machines that extract the energy from these substances to make available a mode of existence that has vast powers of consumption but almost no capacity for renewal. Although from the beginning this new mode of existence was based on the burning off of irreplaceable energies, this fact was not fully appreciated or understood. Nor is the poisonous effect of this energy consumption on the air, land, and waters of the earth understood; or its effect on the life cycle. In addition, there has been a more direct interference with the life cycle by the use of chemicals and of pesticides in defending one aspect of life against another, in a certain ignorance of the full consequence of such an interference.

To remedy the monumental difficulties emerging from such inept managerial activities, present concern is largely directed toward an understanding of the energy flow through this life cycle and how to avoid the destructive forces that have been loosed on the environment. While this constitutes an activity that needs to be fostered with all possible support there are other aspects of our present situation that need as much or even more attention. I refer here to the need for a deepening of human feeling for the earth and the capacity to accept the delight, the education, the healing, that come to man in and through the earth. I suggest also the need for a new religious context for modern existence and for our task of transforming modern life in such a way that we will be able to experience with mystical exaltation the depths of our being in communion with the earth and with the numinous presence that comes to us in this way. I am not suggesting an arcadian or utopian or purely romantic ideal of life. I am suggesting that a mechanistic world given over to manipulative processes cannot satisfy a need for interior communion and the excitement of living in an emerging universe filled with mystery as well as with the simple satisfactions of daily living. I am suggesting that no recovery of a sustainable way of life is possible unless the human community is activated by such visionary experience. Questions of population limitation, restriction in energy use, greater food production, elimination of environmental poisoning, all of these depend ultimately on a psychic energy and on a will to

live, on what might be called a "taste for life", which appears to be in a diminished condition at present.

Renewal of a "taste for life" in a larger context has begun on a spontaneous basis in a multitude of places. Along with this renewal has come a keen antagonism toward exploitive relations with the natural world and a demand that human institutions establish themselves within a more integral earth-human process. Neither management nor any other functional group in our society can any longer expect to continue an irresponsible course. The "bottom line" of profit in the customary sense is being forced to yield to two bottom lines that are even more basic. The first of these is the bottom line of the human welfare of the society. Since every managerial establishment exists by license from the society and for its benefit, the society to protect itself, must require the managerial establishment to fulfill this purpose of its being. Then below this "bottom line" is the bottom line of the earth community itself. Any corporation that invades the earth in a destructive manner is entering on a conflict that it cannot win. The human in all its activities has emerged out of the earth and as a function of that context. Any dysfunction within that context is certain to be resisted and eventually eliminated. The future of management and of our entire society lies in our ability to bring these three bottom lines into accord.

The above is adapted from The Managerial Ethos and the Future of Planet Earth Teilhard Study #3, Spring 1980, by Thomas Berry. Copies available on request.

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The first meeting of the Second Law Study Group, held on August 7th was attended by sixteen persons. Discussion was very lively and argument centered principally on the pros and cons of Hazel Henderson's severe criticism of economists. The second meeting will be held on Thursday, August 28th and will go toward an examination of what the future may be:

1. Business as usual
2. Disaster. Nuclear War
3. Authoritarian response to chaos
4. Small is beautiful. Steady state economics.