

UNIVERSITY of NORTH TEXAS

Department of Philosophy
and Religion Studies

and

ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

INSTITUTE of APPLIED SCIENCES
Department of Biological Sciences

present



Are Environmentalists Hypocrites?

Ethics, Actions, and the Concept of Hypocrisy

A Lecture by

MICHAEL NELSON

Friday, February 20, 2004 at 3:00 p.m. in EESAT 130

Environmentalists are often saddled, and often saddle one another, with the charge of hypocrisy. But what is hypocrisy exactly and are those who express environmental concern inevitably hypocrites? The charge of hypocrisy is commonly employed as a way to silence or discredit a given ethical position. However, the common use of the charge rests upon an exceedingly naïve and inappropriate (perhaps even dangerous) understanding of the relationship between ethics and actions. A more sophisticated method of reading a person's or a group's ethical commitments is preferred. Such a method would go a long way toward making sense of the charge of hypocrisy, and perhaps other common ethical problems as well.

Nelson is an associate professor of philosophy and of natural resources at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. His research interests include environmental philosophy and ethics, metaethics, and various interdisciplinary dimensions of environmental thought from literature to ecology, religion to archaeology. He is coeditor of **The Great New Wilderness Debate** (University of Georgia Press, 1998) and coauthor of **American Indian Environmental Ethics: An Ojibwa Case Study** (Prentice-Hall, 2004), both with J. Baird Callicott. He is currently working on a second volume of **The Great New Wilderness Debate**, a volume collecting the wilderness writings of Aldo Leopold for Island Press, and a collection of interdisciplinary papers focusing on the thought of Aldo Leopold as applied to aquatic and atmospheric environs to be published by the American Fisheries Society.

The lecture is free and open to the public.

For special accommodation, contact us at 565-2266 or philosophy@unt.edu.

