


## The Lecture Contains:

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## What Is the Spirit of Ethics?

Since the time of community living human beings have developed a mechanism to live together. 'Living together' is naturally based on certain social conditions that allow every member of the community to participate and share responsibility on the basis of cooperative attitude. The spirit of ethics is evolved out of the social norms and practices. The co-operative attitude among the fellow members ensures fair competition and allows each member of the society to participate freely. The spirit of ethics in society does not always follow written laws it has conventions and practices that has been followed for centuries.

Ethics, which is widely used by human society to govern various rules and regulation, is fundamentally created for human beings. In societal environment human beings have cultivated a rational philosophy and agreement to unify its members together based on their cultural and traditional ethos. It is accepted in all human societies, the inner spirit of any ethics is co-operative attitude towards the fellow members. Instead, if the society makes it a 'free for all' competition the foundation of cooperation and understanding will be totally destroyed. On the other hand the dictatorial governance curbs the freedom of man to excel and express.

The Design Ethics is outcome of such ethical practices to safeguard the health and the interests of the majority members of the community. Usage of non-biodegradable material in design is not acceptable to the society and globally. Therefore, saving the biotic environmental conditions is obligatory to all members of the community. The ethical issues related to Industrial Design products have come under the scanner of communities. The use of extraordinary electronic components in computers is raising serious questions. The obsolete electronic components require systematic disposal because of various metals that may cause serious health and environmental hazard. Applications of inexpensive toxic colors in children's toys are raising serious issues. Therefore, new technology and their applications in modern design are closely related have enormous responsibility towards the society and environment. The cost in manufacturing all of those plastic shells (computer) and some toxic elements in computer hardware that make recycling a must for unused workstations.

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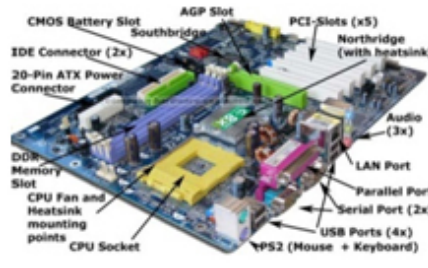
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Plate 1A Monitor



1B Typical Hardware Components



1C CPU Hardware Components

(Source: <http://www.brighthub.com/environment/green-computing/articles/11508.aspx> ; April 3, 2013)

Used computer hardware or monitors (plate 1A-1C) are a source of some useful elements like copper and lead: but other harmful substances reside in your old hardware that, improperly discarded, poses serious problems for environmental and human health. Some of the worst parts of discarded computer hardware include:

- Mercury in fluorescent tubes
- Cadmium and other potential toxins in laptop batteries and energy sources
- Lead in circuitry

Therefore, we need to have a strong environmental protection laws to protect the ecology and mankind from the effect of the hazards that may destroy the harmony of our healthy living condition. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has increased their activities to regulate the dumping of such old computer parts. It is up to the buyers to regulate and be vigilant on the dumping of the obsolete computer monitors and other hardware which is bad for the global and local human communities, and safe, effective recycling is the responsible thing to do. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that only about 18% of computer products including CPUs, monitors, notebooks, keyboards, mice, and other peripherals are recycled. The remaining 82% are disposed using various methods including dumping into landfills.

(Read more: [http://www.brighthub.com/computing/hardware/articles/49698.aspx?cid=parsely\\_rec](http://www.brighthub.com/computing/hardware/articles/49698.aspx?cid=parsely_rec) ; April 3, 2013)

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#### Environmental Ethics

Aldo Leopold renowned environmental scientist and forester in the US had raised a few basic issues to highlight man and nature relationship. Leopold tried to show the ethical responsibility of man toward nature. (Read more: Aldo Leopold, 'A Sand County Almanac' Pub: Dover Publications, N.Y)

Leopold is critical about man's attitude toward nature. Man has evolved various ethical and rational norms for their society whereas never proposed anything to save the ecology. Until man is in danger man has never cared for their neighbour. The question arises, if man could evolve such rationality towards its society members, why doesn't it extend to the other members of the biotic society? Man as a member of the vast biotic community needs to understand the importance of such attitude to be extended to the other members as well. Ethics for human society if extended to other members it would certainly create a greater harmony and respect towards the other fellow members. In order to do so, a 'limitation on freedom of action' (discipline) is a necessary component. The disciplined citizen with 'freedom of mind' would create the ideal societal environment for the democratic governance. The limitation (discipline) would create a better understanding and respectful attitude toward other members (in wider sense). By exercising such limitation, the present role of human being would 'change from conqueror of the land community to plain member and citizen of it'. Aldo Leopold writes in his book entitled *A Sand County Almanac*, "... a land ethic changes the role of Homo-Sapiens from conqueror of the land community to plain member and citizen of it. It implies respect for his fellow members, and also respect for the community as such."

#### Methods and tools

- Each person is rooted to their cultural heritage. Therefore, every design process has to adopt methods and tools that are associated with the local, national and other cultural ethos.
- Traditionally every design revolves around sound ethical reasoning. Therefore each design has to consider ethically appropriate mechanism that would harmonize with the design process and ethics.
- Each project has to be developed based on group-based methods involving larger groups for the acceptance in the society.



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Ethics (philosophically): 'a differentiation of social from anti-social'.

Ethics (ecologically): 'a limitation on freedom of action in the struggle for existence'.

'Ecology: the pattern of relationship between organisms and their environment' (Webster)

In order to keep the balance of the eco-system we need to preserve - **integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community.**

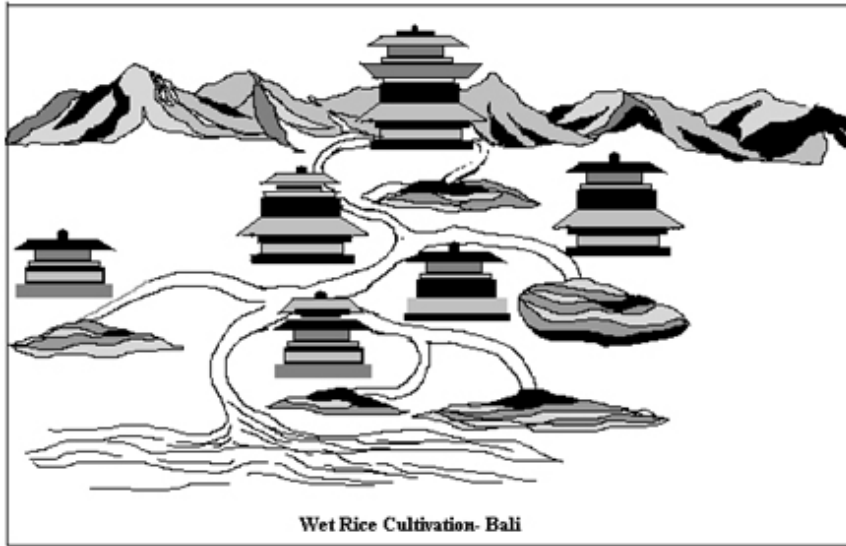


Plate 2 Wet-rice Cultivation, Bali

The case study of the Bali Wet-rice Cultivation is a unique example of such ecology where man has maintained the beauty of the land along with its purposeful activities. The success of the Balinese rice-cultivation depends upon precise control of water. Cultivation begins with the flooding of the fields, which remains under water for most of the 105 days growing cycle. There are 20 thousands temples existing in small islands of Bali.

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Bali's wet-rice cultivation gives a fine example of man's wise participation in natural environment, an environment where man has harmoniously incorporated his activities with nature and successfully established a life sustaining relationship with natural environment. Nature was allowed to remain in its own characteristic state with a few modifications. The balance of water, minerals, nutrients, and sunlight are utilized to its fullest.

Hence, an ethics may be regarded as, a mode of guidance for meeting ecological situations.

**Animal Instinct**- built in every individual in meeting instant situation.

Whereas, **Community Instinct** - builds instinct toward 'cooperation'

"Land Ethics based on cooperation enlarges the boundaries of community to include soils, waters, plants, and animals." Land ethics cannot prevent the alteration, management and use of these 'resources', but it does affirm their right to continued existence, and at least in spots their continued existence in a natural state.

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