**Anthropocentrism VS. Nonanthropocentrism:**

**Why Should We Care?**

An argument by Katie McShane

**Important Definitions:**

1. **Anthropocentrism**: the view that the nonhuman world has value only because it directly or indirectly serves human interests
2. **Nonanthropocentrism**: denial of anthropocentrism; the view that it isn’t the case that the nonhuman world has value only because it directly or indirectly serves human interests.
3. **Norton’s ‘convergence hypothesis’**: the claim that both anthropocentric and nonanthropocentric ethics will recommend the same environmentally responsible behaviors and policies.

**Argument:**

Even if we grant the truth of Norton’s convergence hypothesis, there are good reasons to worry about anthropocentric ethics.

* This assumed under the condition that both anthropocentric and nonanthropocentric ethics converge when it comes to the policies and behaviors they recommend.

**Premises:**

1. Ethics are concerned about not only actions but also how one feels when performing the action
2. Anthropocentrism and nonanthropocentrism have differences in how we feel
3. With anthropocentrism, we are wrong in seeing the value of the natural world with attitudes of love, respect, and awe.

**Conclusion**:

Therefore, there are practical differences between anthropocentricism and nonanthropocentrism that we must take into account when dealing with ethics in nature.

**Concepts**:

*Nonanthropocentrism;*

* One can deny Anthropocentrism and claim:
  + That the value of every organism depends on the contribution it makes to the health of its ecosystem
  + That the value of every nonconscious being depends on whether conscious beings happen to care about it
  + That is no such thing as intrinsic value at all
* Not committed to intrinsic value of nonhuman or human entities

*Anthropocentrism and action/feeling;*

* Nature valuable in how it serves human interests
* Those human interests lead us to care about nature
* This leads to our actions of protecting nature in order to protect our own human interests

*Feelings*

3 considerations

1. Our feelings affect the way we act (if ethics cares how we act, it ought to care how we feel
2. Matters of feeling are an important part of what we care about in our social relationships
3. Questions of how to feel are also central in thinking about how to direct our own lives

*Ethical Norms*

* 1. Norms of Action (what we ought to do)
  2. Norms for feeling (how we ought to feel)
     1. Could be limited by actions allowed in anthropocentrism

*Anthropocentrism incompatibility with Love, respect, awe in nature*

* These feelings towards things are not compatible with our the thinking that its value depends on its service to human interest
* These attitudes are feelings that are not compatible with seeing things as solely valuable in serving our interests

**Objections/Questions**:

1. McShane says that she accepts the convergence thesis for sake of argument, but can this really be accepted? Does the convergence thesis have weight?
2. She argues on the condition that anthropocentric and nonanthropocentric actions would create the same outcomes when anthropocentric principles were on par with nonanthropocentric ones. Is that realistic?
3. McShane nonanthropocentrism question: If the center is not on humans, then is there a center of something else? Should there be?
4. Are the aforementioned attitudes not compatible with anthropocentrism as McShane suggests? Or is she wrong?