



Chinnagounder's Challenge: The Question of Ecological Citizenship

Deane W. Curtin

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When Indian centenarian Chinnagounder asked Deane Curtin about his interest in traditional medicine, especially since he wasn't working for a drug company looking to patent a new discovery, Curtin wondered whether it was possible for the industrialized world to interact with native cultures for reasons other than to exploit them, develop them, and eradicate their traditional practices. The answer, according to Curtin, defines the ethical character of what we typically call 'progress.' Despite the familiar assertion that we live in a global village, cross-cultural environmental and social conflicts are often marked by failures of communication due to deeply divergent assumptions. Curtin articulates a response to Chinnagounder's challenge in terms of a new, distinctly postcolonial, environmental ethic.

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