# Contents

**Acknowledgments**  
page vii

Introduction: Modern Environmentalism’s Identity Politics 1  
Ecological Authenticity and the Wilderness Narrative 4  
The Uses of Dissolution 13  
A Literary History of Environmentalist Identity Politics 21

1  
The Ecological Alternative: Civilization, Selfhood, and Environment in the 1960s 27  
Selfhood and Civilization: The New Left and Beyond 31  
The (In)Authentic Anarchist: The Self in Postwar Environmental Writing 40  
The Spontaneous Society: Ecology and the Politics of Self-Liberation 43  
"Feeling Like a River": Edward Abbey’s Subjective Uncertainty 48  
Social Ecology and Psychoanalytic Vocabulary 53  
The Superficial Self 55

2  
The Entheogenic Landscape: Psychedelic Primitives, Ecological Indians, and the American Counterculture 59  
The Countercultural Psyche 63  
Peter Matthiessen’s Psychedelics of Water, Wind, and Stone 67  
“The Hallucinogenic Oceans of the Mind” from East to West 74  
Psychedelic Primitivism’s Presymbolic Myth 81  
Simon Ortiz, Oral Tradition, and Environmental Justice 85  
Narrative, Self, and Environment 92

3  
The Universal Wilderness: Race, Cultural Nationalism, and an Identity Politics for the State of Nature 95  
The New Universalism: Environmentalism Beyond Natural Rights 99  
Cultural Nationalism and Racial Authenticity 105  
Racial Particularity and Ecological Authenticity: A Reflective Stalemate 112  
Toni Morrison’s Skeptical State of Nature: Race, Gender, and Wilderness 118  
An Admission of Fabrication 124  
A Brief Comment on Community and Environment 128
# Contents

4 The Essential Ecosystem: Reproduction, Network, and Biological Reduction 133  
*Surfacing’s Identity Crises: Gender and Nature in the 1970s* 137  
Depth and Nature Feminism 143  
“The First True Human”: Narcissistic Fantasy and Material Complexity 148  
Depth and Network 152  
New Materialisms, Old Narratives 157  
An Appeal to Obliteration 164

5 The Death of the Supertramp: Psychoanalytic Narratives and American Wilderness 170  
Characterizing Chris McCandless 174  
Depth and Deep Ecology 177  
The Ascetic Superhero’s Boast 181  
*Into the Wild’s* Freudian Narrative 185  
Fatal Dissolutions 190  
The Neoliberal Wilderness 195  
Conclusion: Ecological Consistency 199

*Notes* 210  
*Bibliography* 228  
*Index* 243