

POWERFUL IDEAS,
PRACTICAL ACTIONS

yes!

SPRING 2011

Joel Salatin: Why Sustainable
Food Means Meat, Too

+

How the Free-Range Folks
Got It Wrong

Can Animals Save Us?

What They Teach Us About
Being Human

Jane Goodall: 10 Best Things
We Can Do For Animals

+

No Impact Man:
My Life as an Accidental Activist





Animals Among Us

At a small beach park last summer, I watched an enormous shaggy black dog sit anxiously on the beach. A young girl had waded out deep into the cold salt water, and she seemed to be in trouble. At a signal from a nearby adult, the dog leaped in and paddled straight for the child. The girl grabbed the dog's long fur, and it turned and swam for shore, towing the child to safety. Soon, the youngster was back in the water, helping out with what turned out to be a water-rescue training exercise.

We love our animals, and we rely on them, sometimes in unexpected ways. We lavish them with attention; we view endless videos of cute cats or clever birds, and visit wild places hoping to get a glimpse of an elk or an orca. And we eat them.

Our relationship with animals is filled with contradictions. While we treasure wildlife, we are causing a massive wave of extinctions. We are outraged by abuses of dogs and cats, yet we eat food that comes from an industry that keeps animals crowded in sickening confinement and, in the United States, slaughters 104.8 million pigs, 35.3 million cows, and 8.8 billion chickens each year.

Out of these contradictions, a relationship with animals that is both new, and very old, is emerging. We are questioning practices that treat animals as commodities, and instead, looking for respectful ways to coexist. We are moving toward relationships with animals that are more like those of indigenous peoples—seeing animals as fellow creatures living alongside us in complex, interdependent ecosystems.

Does that mean we should never eat animals? Joel Salatin, one of the country's best-known sustainable farmers, says animals are integral to responsible farming and that animals on his farm live good lives (until their abrupt ends). But Sunaura Taylor—drawing on the vulnerabilities she feels as a

person living with a disability—believes eating meat is neither natural nor defensible.

What about wild animals: Can they be saved? Some animal lovers are recreating wild landscapes in our midst to connect habitats. Others are working to establish that nature, animals, and Mother Earth have rights. And many more are making their own backyards and neighborhoods more hospitable to wildlife, as Jane Goodall recommends.

As we grow spiritually, our circle of compassion expands from self to family to community and, sometimes, to all life. A deeper understanding of animals helps us extend that circle to include not only the charismatic animals, but the ugly, slow, and microscopic ones. And with that compassion comes a commitment to save them.

We, too, are animals after all, and the bright lines we draw to separate ourselves from the animal kingdom don't hold up to scrutiny. Stories in this issue tell of magpies that grieve their dead, chimps that dance at the base of a waterfall, crows that train their young to make tools, and dogs that can diagnose early stages of lung cancer.

As I write, my cat lies curled in front of the wood stove, adding warmth and comfort to my home. A short distance away, otters are teaching their young to dive for fish. A great blue heron leaps off a tall cedar, crying out as it soars toward the water's edge. Life without animals is unimaginable.

Are we capable of making the changes necessary to protect our wild cousins and to restore the natural systems that sustain life? It might be too much to ask, except that is what it will take to save us, too.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Sarah van Gelder".

Sarah van Gelder
Executive Editor



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Can Animals Save Us?

THE MISSION OF YES!

is to support you in building a just and sustainable world. In each issue we focus on a different theme through these lenses:

NEW VISIONS

Solving today's big problems will take more than a quick fix. These authors offer clarity about the roots of our problems and visions of a better way.

WORLD & COMMUNITY

New models that foster justice and real prosperity, and sustain the Earth's living systems. How can we bring these models to life and put them to work?

THE POWER OF ONE

Stories of people who find their courage, open their hearts, and discover what it means to be human in today's world.

BREAKING OPEN

Humor, storytelling, and the arts—taking you into unexpected spaces where business-as-usual breaks open into new possibilities



PHOTO BY MELISSA BALDWIN



I8

Our Animal Selves

Western culture draws a sharp line between humans and animals. An indigenous writer reflects on what happens when we accept animals as our relatives and offer compassion to the entire living world. *By Linda Hogan*

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How Happy Was Your Meal?

Temple Grandin thinks like an animal—and makes sure cattle get respect. *By Madeline Ostrander*

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Wildlife Right of Way

Big mammals shouldn't be a casualty of modern society. They could make a comeback—if we give them what they need most: space. *By Sarah Kuck*

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YES. Farmer Joel Salatin says he respects his animals—and eats them, too. *Interview by Madeline Ostrander*

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How you can sustainably have a cheeseburger—or three.

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By Joy Harjo



PHOTO BY MIKE MCGREGOR

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How Warring Baboons Found Peace

Scientists have long said humans are naturally violent and, like other primates, can't change. Then a trick of fate turned a troop of baboons into peacemakers.

By Robert Sapolsky

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What's So Special About Humans?

Do dolphins have rights to the ocean? Does a river have a right to exist? Small-town America, Spain, Ecuador, Bolivia fight for the rights of Mother Nature. By James Trimarco



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Emotional Lives of Animals

Magpies grieve. Elephants empathize. Just like us.

By Marc Bekoff



Female beluga, Yulka, at the aquarium in Valencia, Spain. Belugas communicate by emitting as many as 32 different sounds. Photo by Jose Escobedo Fernández

OTHER FEATURES

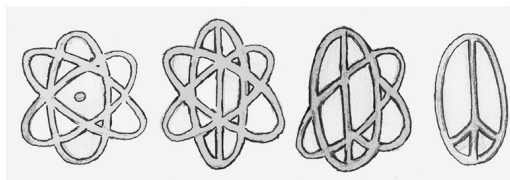


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No Impact Man: My Life As An Accidental Activist

Take the first step, even if you don't know where it leads: What happened when a regular guy tried changing the world. By Colin Beavan



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Nuclear Disarmament Is People's Work

Remember the nuclear scare? It hasn't gone away. How to end nuclear weapons by fighting complacency. By Joe Copeland

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Happy families

I have enjoyed reading YES! for several years. I was happy to see an issue about families, but missed the commitment, support, self-giving, and compassion inherent to healthy families in Jen Angel's description of her open relationships.

History gives no successful precedent for the extreme individualism expressed in this article. All traditions rely on continuity in committed families to provide safe, nurturing environments to learn trust and trustworthiness. A just and sustainable earth depends on understanding our place in communities, part of the web of life.

DANILE MARTENS
Mishawaka, Ind.

Love without possession

How cool to come across an article like this! I have two husbands—committed relationships—open, but not promiscuous. We don't sleep around, but if one of us falls in love, she/he doesn't fall out of love with us. Is it possible to love more than one person? What about loving more than one child?

We raise a beautiful daughter—she's just always had two fathers, more love and more connection. She knows she's different re: her family status, but we are all four of us happy. Things work out. Negotiation is important—always trying to create a win/win, and dealing with issues in a sensible, mature way.

POSTED BY NATALIE

MCP and health

I'm interested in John and Julie Gottman's guidelines juxtaposed in a YES! issue with Jen Angel's article on multiple concurrent partners (MCP). I've observed intense efforts in the developing world to change MCP behavior—a chief driver of HIV infection rates. Whenever multiple partnering is mentioned in responsible publications, I hope to see an emphasis on health protection.

MCP takes a lot of focus if it is to be meaningful to all involved—a nearly fulltime occupation. I wonder if the world needs potentially energetic folks concentrating mostly on complex relationships.

ANONYMOUS

Mothers in prison

Thank you for your article "Raising Babies in Prison." As our national incarceration rate continues to rise, as a country we are still far from seeing people in prison as members of families. I am grateful to read an article that illuminates the struggles mothers face in prison and a model of how to keep mothers connected to their young children. We must continue to share these stories in order to reconstruct

a national narrative about our U.S. prison system.

JULIA TAYLOR
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Freer, messier, happier

When my friends and landlords became parents at age 45, we ventured into a blended living arrangement. We share a household, worries and childcare. We are two families who know we can't make it without the other—without this arrangement, life as we know it would cease. I'd like to see other parents who live in large McMansions open their home to the possibility of unrelated families living under one roof. As my grandmother used to say, "there is always room at the table."

POSTED BY AMY

Family mealtime

This reminds me of the time we took a family trip to Florida to visit the grandparents over spring break. After a week of beach, pool, Disney World, Kennedy Space Center, and the like, I asked my daughter what her favorite part of the trip was. Her response was: Eating dinner that her grandmother had prepared every night, together



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with her family—something she was unaccustomed to at home. Family meals even beat out Disney World!

POSTED BY CHRIS GLECK

GNH and refugees

I was shocked and dismayed to see the interview with the Prime Minister of Bhutan, Jigmi Y. Thinley, once again touting Bhutan's Gross National Happiness. Bhutan is responsible for creating one of the world's highest numbers of refugees (in proportion to population number), who have been forced to flee their birthplace and homes due to ethnicity.

I am quite certain that the

ethnic Nepalese who have left Bhutan and are now living in refugee relocation camps throughout the world do not share this Hollywood-hyped (and now, YES!) viewpoint of Bhutan as meriting kudos for good works toward creating a happy society.

MACKENZIE RIVERS
Langley, Wash.

Editor's Note: The images that YES! published with the essay "Love Without Jealousy, Sex Without Ownership" pictured the author, Jen Angel, with several individuals who are not members of communities described in the essay. We apologize for any confusion.

YES! THIS WEEK

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"I just got home from the long commute home, listening to if not bad, certainly irritating, news on NPR and Maine Public Radio. I felt very much like a lone voice crying in the wilderness, wondering who I should write or call or if indeed there was anything I could do to make myself heard. And here is the weekly email letter from you, and hope returns. Thank you so much for writing about the Really Important Things."

—SARA HUBNER, *South Berwick, Maine*

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LABOR JUSTICE

Domestic Workers Win Bill of Rights

👍 The first law in the United States establishing rights for domestic workers—privately employed nannies, housekeepers, and elder-care providers—went into effect in New York state in November.

“This is a workforce that has been excluded from the labor laws of this country, whose work has never been seen as real work ... who work long hours—sometimes 50 and 70 hours per week for less than minimum wage,” says Joycelyn Gill-Campbell, organizing coordinator of Domestic Workers United (DWU).

A study by DWU found that of more than 200,000 domestic workers in New York state, 26 percent made wages below the poverty line or below minimum wage, 43 percent worked 50 hours a week or more, and 67 percent didn’t receive pay for overtime.

The new law, the Domestic Workers Bill of Rights, requires a minimum of one day off a week, three days paid vacation a year, overtime pay, and protection against discrimination and harassment.

DWU, a New York-based

organization that informs workers of their rights at the neighborhood level, campaigned for six years for the new law. It is now advocating for inclusion of domestic workers in the New York State Labor Relations Act, which would provide them the right of collective bargaining.

In California, a domestic

workers rights bill passed by the state assembly in 2006 was vetoed by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. Organizations working to pass another law in the state are encouraged by the success in New York, while domestic workers in Massachusetts and Colorado are campaigning for domestic workers’

rights laws in their states.

The National Domestic Workers Alliance, an association of 33 member organizations, is aiming for reform of regulations at the federal level that will allow the Department of Labor to improve enforcement of laws protecting domestic workers.

—Caitlin Battersby



ALTA GRACIA

Alta Gracia Apparel’s website allows you to check whether your college bookstore carries the company’s fair-labor products.

Fair-Labor Logos Find Factory Home

👍 For more than a decade, activists urged college-logo clothing manufacturers to end poverty wages and labor rights violations in their factories. Campus-based organizations like United Students Against Sweatshops pressured companies to allow monitoring by the labor rights watchdog Worker Rights Consortium (WRC).

These campaigns won a major breakthrough when Alta Gracia Apparel adopted a new business model designed to provide high standards for fair-labor conditions. The Alta Gracia factory, owned by American company Knights Apparel, opened in the Dominican Republic in August 2010 to produce college-logo clothing in cooperation with the local garment workers’ union.

Alta Gracia exceeds industry norms by paying a living wage—more than three and a half times

“WE SHOULD HOPE FOR ANOTHER AMERICAN SOCIAL MOVEMENT FROM THE BOTTOM—AND THEN JOIN IT.”

Frances Fox Piven, longtime scholar of social movements, suggesting that the unemployed mobilize for government investment in public-service programs, infrastructure, and green energy.



EDUCATION

Dealing With U.S. Deficit: Outdoor Playtime For Kids

the Dominican minimum. Based on a WRC cost-of-living study, this *salario digno*, or “dignified wage,” enables Alta Gracia workers to support their families, covering the costs of food, housing, health care, transportation, and education for their children.

Higher wages from the factory have had a ripple effect in the surrounding community. Food stands have opened to greet the lunch rush, shiny new motorcycle taxis scoot workers to and from the factory, and construction companies are building more secure and livable homes.

The Alta Gracia model also extends the notion of “school pride” beyond the American college campuses where the company sells its products. Workers’ children have access to early education, and workers themselves can now afford to attend weekend continuing-education classes.

“Alta Gracia has given my family the chance for a better education,” says union leader Yenny Perez. “The factory even has a free daycare where my 4-year-old can play while I’m working.”

Alta Gracia products are stocked in 350 college bookstores in the United States. They retail at the same price as comparable college-logo apparel, but are the first brand to carry a tag from the WRC confirming that Alta Gracia pays a living wage, respects workers’ rights, and allows unrestricted, frequent labor-condition monitoring.

Rachel Taber is Alta Gracia National Organizer and a University of Washington and United Students Against Sweatshops alumna.

Interested? altagraciaapparel.com

On a crisp, clear day last October, 50,000 parents and children gathered in New York’s Central Park to play. There was a drum circle and dancing, a giant game of “Simon Says,” and an adventure playground built by kids out of wood, cardboard, and fabric.

The Ultimate Block Party, organized to demonstrate the importance of play, drew five times as many participants as the organizers had expected.

With overbooked family schedules and restrictions on physical freedom, experts in child development worry that many American children are missing out on playtime. According to a study by the Kaiser Family Foundation, American children spend an average of 7.5 hours per day in front of a TV or computer screen.

“For a child to reach their full potential, unstructured outdoor play is essential,” says Fran Mainella, co-chair of the US Play Coalition at Clemson University. “Without the opportunity for play, decision-making, creativity, and imagination are restricted.”

The US Play Coalition, an organization of educators, is just one of many groups around the country who are working to correct America’s play deficit. Another is KaBOOM!, a nonprofit that helps parents set up neighborhood playgrounds. Their play campaign has established 1,900 playgrounds so far, often

>>



PHOTO BY KUM KIT TAN

Nearly 50,000 parents and children gathered in New York’s Central Park for “The Ultimate Block Party,” organized to demonstrate the importance of play. Experts in child development worry that many American children don’t play enough.



OSMANLI TRAVELLER

Osmanli Naksibendi Hakkani Dergahi is a Sufi Muslim center in Sidney, N.Y.

» starting with community-building play day events.

Play for Tomorrow, a new coalition of educators, researchers, and businesses, organized The Ultimate Block Party in New York, and is working with other cities to host similar giant play day events throughout North America. —Alyssa B. Johnson

HUMAN RIGHTS

Tolerance in a Small Town

Last summer, during the “Ground Zero Mosque” controversy, the battle for tolerance spread to upstate New York, where the sleepy town of Sidney, population 5,993, suddenly found itself in the media spotlight.

A Sufi Islamic center and farm in the town contains a small cemetery on its grounds. When a member of the Sufi community was killed in a car accident and buried there, Sidney’s town supervisor Robert McCarthy called the cemetery illegal and said its two graves might have to be moved. In August 2010 the town’s board of supervisors tasked its attorney with researching how to close down

the cemetery.

The Sufis, who had in fact obtained the necessary burial permits, expressed outrage at a heated town meeting in October. “Nobody called me. Nobody sent us a letter. You made assumptions about us that were not true,” said Meryem Brawley, one of the center’s owners.

Amid an overflow crowd of 150 people, one community member after another spoke out in support of the town’s Sufi neighbors. In reference to the media’s coverage of the controversy, town resident Patrick McElligott said, “For a while, Sidney was put in the hot seat and started to look like the butt of a national joke, but we’ve overcome that because everybody came together.”

The repercussions of the controversy have gone far beyond the town meeting. Two groups—Impeach Bob McCarthy and Sidney First—formed to change the town’s leadership.

According to McElligott, more Sidney residents are reaching out to their Muslim neighbors and visiting the center.

Tom Schimmerling, the Sufis’ lawyer and the son of Holocaust survivors, was so inspired by the events that he plans to travel across the country in his new

turban (a gift from the Sufis) this spring to see for himself what it’s like to be Muslim in America.

—Sven Eberlein

ECONOMY

Benefit Corps, a New Kind of Company

For-profit corporations have become known over the past two decades for layoffs, outsourcing, and determination to maximize profits for investors—no matter the cost to employees, consumers, or the economy. But such practices may be waning: States across the U.S. are considering laws to enable entrepreneurs to create corporations that do as much for society as they do for their shareholders.

Maryland was the first state to pass Benefit Corporations (“B-Corps”) legislation. Co-sponsored by State Senators Jamie Raskin and Brian Frosh and Delegate Brian Feldman, the law, which went into effect in October 2010, creates a new class of corporation committed to having a positive impact on the environment and society.

Vermont and New York passed similar legislation in June. Legislators in other states, including California, Colorado, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and Washington, are considering the issue.

Businesses incorporated under B-Corps laws have social goals and commitments written into company bylaws. This ensures that companies will no longer face the hard choice of sacrificing their socially beneficial goals in order to fulfill their responsibility to investors when, for example, an acquisition offer is on the table. Under traditional corporate law, company heads can’t refuse such an offer for fear of a lawsuit from shareholders.

“There have been a number of socially conscious companies that have been forced to sell out to large corporations and end up sacrificing the public side of the equation,” explains Raskin. “Ben & Jerry’s is an excellent example. The directors of the corporation were required to accept a handsome buyout offer even though they knew the business would lose its soul.”

B-Corps may choose any goals that will have a measurable “general public benefit.” They can go totally “green,” offer worker training or literacy programs, or host activities that promote the arts and sciences. Companies incorporated under the law will have to submit an annual report detailing not only their finances but also their good works.

**“HOPE KNOWS THAT UNLESS WE PHYSICALLY DEFY
GOVERNMENT CONTROL WE ARE COMPLICIT IN THE VIOLENCE
OF THE STATE. ALL WHO RESIST KEEP HOPE ALIVE.”**

Chris Hedges, Pulitzer Prize winner and former war correspondent, explaining why he joined a civil disobedience protest against the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, outside the White House on December 16, 2010.



According to Sean Smeeton, president of Taharka Brothers, the law is just the right match for his Baltimore-based ice cream company. The company works to dispel misperceptions about young men from Baltimore's underserved communities, while helping them gain work experience, leadership skills, and the opportunity to become stockholders in Taharka Brothers.

“The Benefit Corp movement should bring a change in mindset to the business world and entrepreneurs,” says Smeeton. “The two will be able to acknowledge the vital role business can play in making the world a better place.” —*Walaika Haskins*

ALSO...

According to a poll by 60 Minutes and Vanity Fair, most Americans want to protect Social Security.

To balance the U.S. budget, 61 percent favored taxing the rich, 20 percent chose cutting military spending, and only three percent were for cutting Social Security.

RootsAction (rootsaction.org), is a new organization for “economic fairness, equal rights, civil liberties, environmental protections—and defunding endless wars.” Supporters include Naomi Klein, Cornel West, Daniel Ellsberg, Barbara Ehrenreich, and Bill Fletcher Jr.



APPALACHIAN VOICES

“The science is overwhelming in showing the detrimental impacts on the water and the community health impacts,” says Sandra Diaz of Appalachian Voices.

ENVIRONMENT

Public Pressure Saves 2,200 Mountain Acres

👍 One of the most environmentally damaging mining practices may be on the way out.

In January 2010, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency blocked a proposed West Virginia mining project that would have been among the biggest mountaintop removals in Appalachia. Mountaintop removal is a method of mining that involves blasting the tops off mountains to excavate coal.

The EPA used its authority under the Clean Water Act to veto

a permit for Arch Coal's Spruce No. 1 Mine to dispose of coal-mine waste in nearby streams.

Had it been allowed to move forward, the project would have destroyed more than 2,200 mountain acres, dumping more than 110 million cubic yards of coal-mine waste into more than six miles of adjacent streams. The pollution would have been carried downstream.

“The science is overwhelming in showing the detrimental impacts on the water and the community health impacts,” says Sandra Diaz of Appalachian Voices, an activist group working to end mountaintop removal. While this decision represents a victory in the fight to protect Appalachia's communities, wildlife, and forestland, mountaintop removal persists.

Already 500 mountains have been blasted, and more than 2,000 miles of stream buried.

Activist organizations have cultivated a nationwide movement against mountaintop removal by pushing legislation and raising awareness of the method's harmful effects. The EPA received over 50,000 public comments about Spruce Mine. —*Rebecca Leisher*

Interested? Visit ilovemountains.org

ALSO...

A Dutch parliamentary committee heard complaints that Shell ignored human rights abuses and understated its responsibility for oil spills in Nigeria. The hearing also considered what authority Dutch courts should have over multinationals.

People We Love



BRADLEY MANNING
Challenging secrecy

"I was actively involved in something that I was completely against," wrote "bradass87," describing why he gave classified information to WikiLeaks. He said that "without information, you cannot make informed decisions as a public."

Bradley Manning, accused of being "bradass87," was a 22-year-old army intelligence analyst when he was charged in June 2010 with downloading 150,000 diplomatic cables and other classified information. This included the "Collateral Murder" video released by WikiLeaks that shows the shooting from a U.S. army helicopter of Iraqi civilians—including two Reuters news agency staff and men who attempted to help the wounded.

Manning has been held in solitary confinement since his arrest and faces up to 52 years in prison if he is convicted.



INEZ KILLINGSWORTH
Saving homes and neighborhoods

In her testimony to a Congressional committee, Inez Killingsworth described taking busloads of "ripped-off homeowners" to throw plastic sharks at the homes of executives of predatory lenders.

"Some tell us that doing this isn't nice," she said. "I suppose they are correct, but we don't think what these lenders have done to our neighborhood is very nice either."

Foreclosed homes were left abandoned and empty on Cleveland's east side, attracting drug dealers and vandalism. After her retirement, Killingsworth launched herself into finding solutions for her community by starting Empowering and Strengthening Ohio's People (ESOP).

ESOP has pressured big lenders like CitiFinancial and Bank of America into negotiating formal agreements on affordable loan modifications, saving over 16,000 homeowners from foreclosure.



YesMagazine.org/killingsworth
Killingsworth helps Clevelanders fight for their homes



SHANNON MCNAMARA
Sharing education

Fifteen-year-old Shannon McNamara was preparing for a family trip to Tanzania when she learned about the obstacles there to girls' education: time (girls traditionally do more household labor than boys) and poverty (a shortage of funding for schools and supplies).

McNamara, an avid reader, created a project specifically for African schoolgirls, organizing friends to collect 500 pounds of donated books and education materials. Three years later, SHARE (shareinafrica.org) serves more than 3,500 students and 65 teachers, and has helped many students progress to secondary schools.

McNamara, who recently received the United Nations Youth Achievement Award, has developed a girls' scholarship program and will be entering Rice University in the fall.



MARI ROSE TARUC
Environmental justice for all

When Mari Rose Taruc's parents immigrated to the United States, they went to work in grape fields doused with pesticides. These days, climate change brings stronger typhoons to their relatives back in the Philippines. "When they talk about environmental justice, they are talking about me," Taruc says.

Taruc works on behalf of low-income communities of color—the ones often affected "first and worst" by environmental injustice—as director of Asian Pacific Environmental Network (APEN) in California.

Since 2003, APEN has helped halt the expansion of a Chevron oil facility, defended the state's greenhouse gas reduction law, established multilingual emergency warnings, and pushed for public transit and walkability in neighborhood development.

Taruc took APEN's message to an international audience when she protested inside the Cancún climate talks in December.

COMMENTARY :: Rob “Biko” Baker

YOUNG VOTERS: DON'T WRITE THEM OFF

Don't believe everything you see on TV. Last fall, pundits and mainline Democrats and Republicans turned up their noses at the Millennial Generation. Pointing to our entirely average 2010 midterm election turnout, news outlets nationwide returned to the well-worn narrative that “young voters are experiencing an enthusiasm gap.” It's true that President Obama's absence from the ticket and a serious shortage of cultural icons and celebrities promoting participation had an impact on our ability to raise the noise level in our target communities.

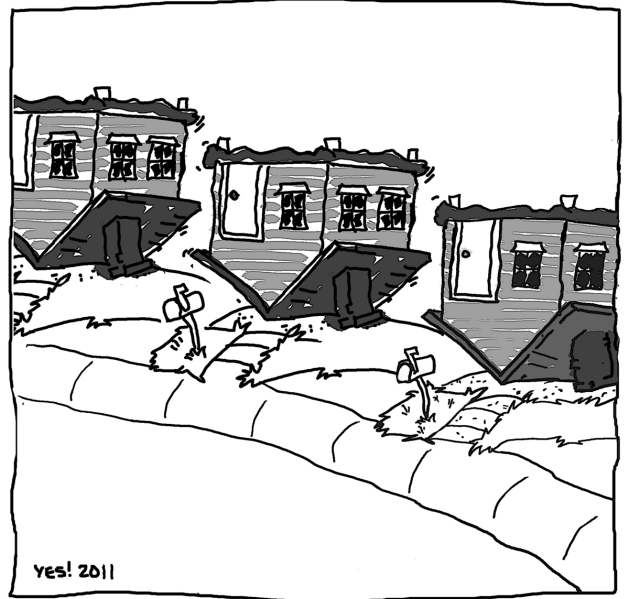
But as the leader of a national team of extremely talented and passionate young activists, I have to tell you, anyone who believes that under-30 Americans aren't tuned in to the future is fooling themselves.

Across the country, leaders of youth engagement organizations like ours, the League of Young Voters, are plotting field plans with one date in mind: November 6, 2012—the next presidential election. At the League, we are seriously worried that our country is becoming less tolerant of those of us who represent the future, as it seems that elected officials are looking to cut programs that empower young people or people of color to become the future leaders of their communities.

For years, my peers in the youth engagement world and I have argued that our generation will embrace politics if we are talked to on our level—not down, not up. The straight scoop from our peers is the backbone of social networking, the online “Like/thumbs-up” endorsement system that filters out truth from talking points. In short, one cannot fake the credibility that comes from an organization having thousands of Facebook fans and retweets on Twitter. And because online and offline organizing is the bread and butter of our work, the League was brash enough to believe that our State of the Union watch party and online discussion (which we lovingly called #BarackTalk) could be a first step in starting a national discussion among the youth political sector's strongest leaders and the music world's most influential critics.

So, as a first step in a new partnership with AllHipHop.com, the League set up cameras and broadcast live from the D.C. offices of the New Organizing Institute immediately after the State of the Union address. We were blown away by the impact our event had on the web. We received over 8,000 live views, putting us on the front page of Ustream, and 1,800 people joined the conversation on Twitter.

That doesn't mean Millennials are going to be able to retweet their way to change. We face a tremendous set of social problems, many of them—like immigration reform,



Another neighborhood of upside-down mortgages.

ARTHUR E. FACHT

The Great Turning

LIZ FULLER



YesMagazine.org/cartoon for more reader captions

healthcare reform, and reproductive justice—stretching back through decades of violent social upheaval. Youth unemployment is at record highs, and the federal government is proposing sweeping cuts to the arts and education programs that would fill out the resumes of young professionals. Then there is the plan to eliminate the health care reform package that is one of the greatest accomplishments since the New Deal.

Now is the time for us to start getting loud. Our generation has to use our growing numbers to influence the conversation. We can't let decision makers ignore us, otherwise the momentum that we've built over these last several years will stagnate. We cannot allow those who are stuck on 20th century paradigms to control our futures.

Instead we need to step up and build the strong local economies that give young people a chance to compete. The very same technology that is bringing us together on the Internet, can be used to transform our communities into self-sustained economic powerhouses. We just need the opportunity to bring our ideas to scale. **Y**



Rob “Biko” Baker is executive director of the League of Young Voters, a national civic engagement organization that works to empower noncollege youth to become winners and players in the political game.

NO IMPACT MAN

COLIN BEAVAN didn't set out to lead a movement. But that's where he ended up. Here's how a regular guy found he had the power to change the world.

Advice FROM AN Accidental Activist



Colin Beavan

So many of us have good ideas for helping the world. But we tuck our ideas away. I did. I'd tell myself that if the idea were any good someone else would have already done it. That I'm not capable of making a difference. I'd sit on my ideas, get on with my "life," and then feel angry at the world because the problems I cared about didn't get solved.

I had that fear of going first.

Then I took my first hapless step into what I call accidental activism. In 2006, I started a project where I lived as environmentally as possible for a year—with my little family, on the

ninth floor of an apartment building in the middle of New York City—to attract attention to the world's environmental, economic, and quality of life crises.

I had no experience as an activist. Yet suddenly my project caught fire.

My book and film, both titled *No Impact Man*, ended up being translated into 20-plus languages. Some philanthropists appeared and offered me funding to hire consultants to get NoImpactProject.org off the ground. About 20,000 people have now participated in our educational immersion program, No Impact Week.

And how have I felt through all this?

Like a deer in the headlights.

How am I supposed to stand up to all this? Surely people can see how selfish and shortsighted I am? That I'm sometimes mean to my family? People like me aren't supposed to do things like this. We're supposed to wait for people who have their acts together, and follow them.

But if we wait for those people, we're done for.

There are a lot of people who know way more about activism and citizen engagement than me. I'm pretty ordinary. Frankly, I don't even always *want* to be of service. But I've now learned a



"I've now learned a lot about how to be an ordinary person, filled with self-doubt, who still takes the risk of trying to do something about the world," says Beavan.

PAUL DUNN FOR YES! MAGAZINE

lot about how to be an ordinary person, filled with self-doubt, who still takes the risk of trying to do something about the world. Maybe you're like me. And maybe the things that have helped me will help you, too.

BE STUPID ENOUGH TO TAKE THE FIRST STEP

My first step was just to begin living with the lowest possible environmental impact. A few people said I was "too

stupid to know that one person can't make a difference." Think on this story (with apologies for high schmaltz quotient):

Two frogs—one very smart and one very stupid—are caught in a bowl of cream. The sides are too steep to climb and they have no foothold to jump. The stupid one begins to swim as hard and fast as he can. The smart one looks over and says to himself, "He's too stupid to know that all that effort will make no difference."

Having weighed the hopelessness of the situation, the smart one decides >>



no impact project

YesMagazine.org/no-impact-week

When Colin Beavan partnered with YES! for No Impact Week in January, more than 3,000 people joined him. Read their stories.

» that the most intelligent thing is to give up. So—Blub!—he drowns. The stupid one keeps trying. Just when his legs are about to give out the cream starts to get thicker. His struggling has churned the cream to butter. He's surprised to find himself on solid ground. He jumps out. By stupidly pursuing the first step (swimming), the second step (jumping out) appeared, as if by magic.

The question is not whether you can make a difference. The question is, do you want to be the person who tries? Do you want to be like the smart frog, who relies on the brain that tells him there is no solution, or the stupid frog, whose heart tells him to try anyway?

Maybe you care about food deserts and kids not having access to good food, or maybe it's incarceration of local youth, or maybe, like me, you worry about inaction on climate change. Whatever it is, pick up your placard or call your senator or gather your friends. Don't worry about the second step. Just be too stupid to know the first step won't work.

USE YOUR PERSONAL STORY TO INSPIRE A MOVEMENT

Part of the reason one person can make a difference is that one person's efforts soon inspire other people's efforts. So inspire other people to get involved by sharing your personal story. Not just the story, say, of the hungry children in the Global South who you are trying to help, but your own story.

In *No Impact Man*, I share stories of how I tried to keep my food fresh without a refrigerator, how I had to eat mostly cabbage in the winter, and how I washed my laundry by hand. People didn't suddenly realize that they, too, should hand-wash their clothes. Instead, they learned, not that they *should* make a difference—which statistics and figures tell us—but that they *can* make a difference—which personal stories have the power to tell.

It is through the personal that people

connect with the political.

No matter what your cause, look for the powerful, personal story about how you got involved and how being involved has improved your life in some way. I've heard it said we shouldn't have to tell these stories—that people should automatically care. The thing is, once they know, people do care. The problem is that they are often overwhelmed by it. So the job is not to shove information at them that makes them feel guilty for not doing something. The job is to give them a story that shows them how to do something.

GET OFF THE INTERNET AND INTO REAL LIFE

Back in the '60s, a string of civil rights sit-ins began when four students from a black college in North Carolina sat down at a whites-only Woolworth lunch counter. In the end, about 70,000 students participated in sit-ins that spread across the state. As Malcolm Gladwell points out in a recent *New Yorker* article, the action didn't start with lots of Twitter followers. It started with lots of flesh-and-blood (as opposed to Facebook) friends.

The strong social bonds and long-standing mutual trust gave those first four students the bravery to stand up for themselves. Gladwell says that the strong ties of real friendship and community—not the weak ties of the virtual world—are necessary to make us feel supported enough to take meaningful risks for our values.

I ran a blog at NoImpactMan.com and many thousands of people came there to discuss their views on and methods of environmental living. It was a good thing. In the absence of real-life communities of shared environmental values, the blog provided a lot of people with some measure of community support. But the stronger, more action-oriented communities are formed in my work when people come together for our No Impact Weeks.

One of the most accomplished

friendship-based communities I am familiar with, 350.org, the grassroots climate organization, began with a group of students who lived together at college and then in the Bay Area. They have grown their little house party into an international organization of hundreds of thousands of climate activists. They use the Web to aggregate the actions of thousands of friendship-based groups. But the point is the actions taken by small communities of friends or neighbors—not the information sharing.

So use the Internet, of course. But use it to get people to do things in real life. What if the many hours spent leaving angry comments on the Huffington Post were instead spent gathering once a week in a coffee shop. Sooner or later, real action—as opposed to real, um, clicks—might occur. Get people to come together. They need each other.

TRUST YOUR VISION

So you have your idea, you've taken your first step, you've gathered like-minded people, and now you have a little bit of energy and success. Great news! This is when the critics and second-guessers arrive. That's a reason for not getting started in the first place, right? Nobody bothers to second-guess you when you're just fantasizing about your great idea.

I suddenly found myself invited to go on *Good Morning America* with Diane Sawyer. As they say: WTF? I was horrified. I'm sure I had an overinflated sense of my own importance, but I was worried I could send people in the wrong direction.

I had no real endorsement other than—again—my own trust in my intentions. I had to go on national television trusting in myself and my vision.

Absolutely the hardest thing of all was this: I had to accept that I might be wrong and do it anyway.

Sadly, lots of arguments break out in activist communities about best

IT'S TIME FOR EVERY CITIZEN WITH A GOOD IDEA TO GET TO WORK, TO TRUST YOURSELF, TO START.



PHOTO BY JUDY WATSON TRACY

Colin Beavan during a visit with students at Rollins College.

methods. People tear each other apart as though the scenario is either/or when really it's and/also. We need many shoulders against many doors. What I've learned as I've come to meet so many amazing engaged citizens is that it takes many different strategies and many different styles to make the changes we're hoping for.

So trust your vision. You may find that the biggest sacrifice you can make for the world is to face the possibility of being publicly wrong. And to move forward anyway.

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

Once you get involved in this kind of work, the pressures mount—many of them from within rather than without. We need to take care of both the insides and the outsides. I started by saying you just need to take the first step, but this step is just as important. If you can't sustain yourself, you can't sustain your work.

No Impact Man, in many ways, began as an extension of my meditation

practice. A lot of the confidence I needed came from inklings of understanding of the Truth—whatever the hell that is. And of Service. But while I was making time for TV appearances and press interviews and rallies and favors and guest appearances on blogs I lost time for my meditation.

Then anxiety arrived. And depression. I was running on fumes. I was draining the battery without charging it. The good news is that I am back to my regular practice. I feel better. Of course, I'm not saying you should necessarily meditate, just that you need to find what suits you to take care of your insides.

About the outsides: A couple of years ago, after so many TV interviews and radio interviews and international press appearances (and, by the way, repeatedly having to face accusers who said I was trying to get rich from the world's problems), I looked at my bank balance and saw I had about \$200 left—about \$3,000 less than my monthly nut. I'd been working all my waking hours on what I believed in and couldn't take care of myself.

Luckily for me, I didn't have to change much (like, I began to ask to get paid when someone asked me to make a speech) but I did have to face my guilt and confront my monkish self-image. There is a meme in our culture: You can be a monk or a merchant. Monks do good and merchants make money. If you make any money—if you find a way to take care of your outsides—you can't be an ascetic monk, and you're not really doing good.

Imagine, though, if we create a new meme. What if we show each other how wonderfully well we're managing as a result of taking our ideas for social change and running with them? What if we bragged about outperforming the bankers every so often?

But even if we don't get the chance to do that, we should at least make good homes out of our lives. Without loving ourselves, the love for others will wither. By taking the burden of the world on our shoulders, we leave no room for the strength of others. In other words, have fun!

After all, the world isn't worth saving if there isn't time for joking around.

Besides, we might as well enjoy ourselves when you realize how much work there is to get done. With two wars in progress, melting ice caps, and an economic system teetering on the brink of collapse, there just isn't time to wait for some guru or leader to give us permission to act on our good ideas.

Who's going to fix things if it isn't us? I can't help thinking that the time has come for us to take back our culture. It's time for every citizen with a good idea to get to work, to trust yourself, to start. Sooner or later you have to accept the fact that you need no other authority than your good intentions and your loving heart. **Y**

Colin Beavan speaks widely to audiences around the country. He is founder of the No Impact Project, noimpactproject.org. The paperback edition of his book *No Impact Man* was published in 2010 by Picador.

Amount of real money Jon Jacobs received in November 2010 for virtual real estate in the online Entropia Universe: **\$635,000**¹

The average price of a home in the United States in November 2010: **\$170,600**²

Distance in inches you must keep an iPhone from your body to ensure the amount of radio frequency energy is below
FCC exposure guidelines: **5/8**³

Percentage increase in the likelihood of brain tumor on the side of the head preferred for cell phone use in people who
have used cell phones for at least 10 years: **200**⁴

Percentage of cell phone owners ages 18 to 29 who have used their phone to look up health or medical information: **29**⁵

Number of beer bottles used to construct the Wat Pa Maha Chedi Kaew Buddhist temple in Thailand: **1,000,000**⁶

Of the eight most highly ranked leadership qualities, number of qualities survey respondents listed as truer of women: **5**

Number of qualities respondents said were truer of men: **1**

Percentage of respondents who said women make better leaders than men: **6**

Percentage of respondents who said men make better leaders than women: **21**⁷

Number of U.S. private military contractors who died in war zones during the first six months of 2010: **250**

Number of U.S. soldiers who died in war zones during the first six months of 2010: **235**⁸

Average weight in grams of a male bee hummingbird (*Mellisuga helenae*), the smallest known bird: **1.95**⁹

Weight in grams of a dime: **2.268**¹⁰

Percentage of voters who think the current regulations controlling the influence of large corporations on legislation are
working well: **5**

Percentage of voters who support the passage of a Constitutional amendment to overturn the Supreme Court's decision in
the Citizens United case: **79**¹¹

Average number of ingredients found in fragrance products that were not listed on the label: **14**

Percentage of those chemicals that have not been tested for safety: **66**¹²

Percentage of all Americans who say they are satisfied with the school system: **45**

Percentage of American parents who grade their own child's school with an "A" or a "B": **76**¹³

Percentage of farmers in the United States who did not collect subsidy payments in 2007: **62**

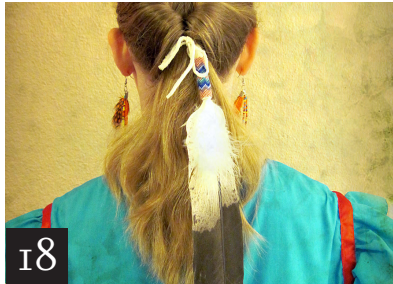
Percentage of subsidies collected by ten percent of farms from 1995-2009: **74**¹⁴

Complete citations at yesmagazine.org/ptc

- 1.** Oliver Chiang, *Forbes.com*, November 13, 2010. **2.** Tom Barkley and Jeff Bater, *Dow Jones Newswires*, December 22, 2010.
- 3.** *Apple.com*, 2010. **4.** *Surgical Neurology*, September 2009. **5.** Pew Internet & American Life Project, October 18, 2010.
- 6.** *Reuters.com*, October 21, 2008. **7.** Pew Research Center, August 25, 2008. **8.** T. Christian Miller, *ProPublica*, September 23, 2010. **9.** Guinness World Records, 2010. **10.** United States Mint. **11.** Hart Research Associates, January 20, 2011.
- 12.** Environmental Working Group, May 2010. **13.** Gallup, August 24, 2009. **14.** Environmental Working Group, 2009.

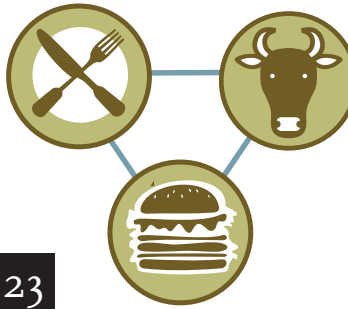
Can Animals Save Us?

Too often, we forget the biological truth that humans are an animal species, too. Our culture treats animals as food, pets, pests, property, and curiosities. We've spoiled their habitats, endangering tens of thousands of species and our own future. If we learn to understand animals, we can protect and restore the planet we all share.



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Animals, Our Selves

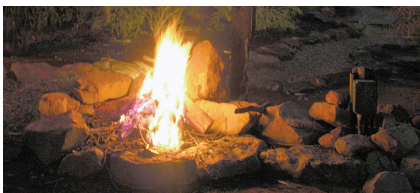


PHOTOS BY MELISSA BALDWIN, LEFT, AND HANS PROPPE

ALL AROUND US ARE RADIANT SPECIES, SAYS CHICKASAW POET AND NOVELIST **LINDA HOGAN**. YET WE'VE CREATED A CULTURE OF WOUNDING THAT IS DEVASTATING THE NATURAL WORLD—AND OURSELVES. WHAT CAN THE FIRST PEOPLES TEACH US ABOUT RESTORING OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH ANIMALS?

I wake this morning to the bugling elk. They are gathered out beyond the horses, hooves opening the smell of mint, wild catnip, and dried grasses in crisp autumn air. Morning sun filters through the trees, touching both the antlers of the elk and branches of trees behind them, antlers of the forest.

The Pueblo Christmas dances are how my family celebrates the holidays. Last Christmas Eve, from out of a kiva at one of the Pueblos, six beautiful white elk danced into the world from the dark, from smoke and sparks—then three buffalo, deer, the bird women with eagle feathers, and the antelope children. Burning stacks of wood heated my face in the cold night as I stood by the fire watching the dancers all in step, the singers and drummers all wrapped in brightly colored blankets. Some of the older men walked around with evergreen sprigs, handing them to people to remind them of the change of light, season, the forest. The firelight on the great antlers, the outlines of the animals dancing, was all a weave of magic, an enchantment that took every human in.



Ceremony and Stories Build Connection

Both the bugling elk and the dancing of the people are ancient events. The dancers know the antlered ones, their stories, the deep mythologies of their relationships, and where and how they dwell together.

Something universal is held within our indigenous

ceremonies, a relationship built on far-reaching, old knowledge.

At the deer dance, I notice that the men wear white buckskin clothing painted with a horned, winged serpent. The serpent is the same one other tribal nations paint, etch, or carve. It is also a part of our world and sky, those of us from the Southeastern tribes. It is a creature within the indigenous astromythology. It travels between the worlds, moving through the night sky toward the horizon, then dropping beneath the edge, falling into an underworld.

A few years ago, on another continent where many snakes live in trees, as we lay on our bunks at a marine biology research station on an island off Brisbane, Australia, my friend Polly read aloud a story written by an Aboriginal woman about her husband's clan animal, a carpet snake. She was of a different clan than her husband, and she was concerned about the presence of a large python in the house with her children. Because these snakes reach an enormous size, and since she had young children, her worries would be understandable to an outsider.

One day after the birth of a new infant she found the large reptile near the crib. She told her husband the snake must leave, but he said it was his clan animal; it would be difficult to send it away. She returned to check her newly born child and found the snake coiled at the head of the crib, watching the child and, not wanting to leave the side of the infant, it was crying. The woman's heart changed toward the snake. She saw that it was a protector and accepted it into her home.

Years later, after a long illness, her husband passed from this world. After he was gone, she searched the house for the gentle reptile who had watched over their growing family, but never again saw it. The snake was gone, and the woman and grown children grieved the loss of both. The snake had become a relative.

I am not from that continent, and it is not my story, although I love it. »



THE COMPASSION WE OFFER TO ANIMALS IS THE SAME MEASURE OF LOVE WE ARE CAPABLE OF OFFERING OTHER HUMAN BEINGS. THE SUFFERING AND PAIN OF ONE IS UNIVERSAL.



PHOTO BY BECKY GREGORY

The horses that roam the Outer Banks are believed to be relatives of the original Chickasaw breed. They are the only remaining wild herd east of the Rocky Mountains.

Our Histories Are Intertwined

Those of us from the Southeastern tribes of this North American continent are among the most unknown indigenous peoples. Like other tribal peoples, our traditionalists had special relationships with animals from as far back as archaeologists have found our bones and intricate artwork, our pyramids and mounds, including the Great Serpent Mound and other animal-shaped earthworks that remain in the thousands.

Our oldest artwork was of animals, such as the ivory-billed woodpecker, now extinct, the wood duck, frog, the alligator that once filled the Mississippi River from Memphis to the Gulf of Mexico, and most prevalent, the winged serpent that was incised into shell, created of clay, carved of stone. We also had copper antlers of deer worn in ceremonies.

Later, we Chicaza, or Chickasaw, had a breed of pony that was special to us. It did not, as some think, come from our initial contact with de Soto, but originated with a smaller breed, the Spanish Barb, which probably came up through Mexico.

The horse was the only item the invaders introduced that was special enough to enter the myth systems of peoples across the continent. The Aztecs laid down red cloth for horses to walk upon. We called them Holy Elk, Sacred Dog, Holy Wolf. Most nations had horse songs and special accoutrement for their horses.

We had a close relationship with our ponies, and they were plentiful but also in demand. There was a time when all the horses in the South were simply called Chickasaws, as they were sent by flatboats and over land, up and down the Mississippi. They were a trade item for us. We traded our beloved ponies for the weapons we needed to protect ourselves, for copper and galena, and for medicinal plants from other regions.

We unwillingly left our homelands in Mississippi and Tennessee 200 years later, in 1837. We brought hundreds of these horses with us on the Trail of Removal to Indian Territory, as well as our dogs, kittens, and other animals. As we traveled, thieves followed alongside us, and the small horses vanished into their hands, one at a time, day by day, night by night. We walked through cholera, smallpox, without the food or water we had paid in advance to have delivered. We lost our wisdom-keepers, our elders, and even children killed by soldiers for slowing the journey. We walked from one history into more difficult times, and by the time we reached Indian Territory, Oklahoma, none of our ponies remained.

Today it is thought that our short, muscular breed of pony was bred out of existence into the larger "American" quarter horse, but some obviously escaped into the wilderness.

PERHAPS THAT HISTORY IS WHY the wild mustang entered my life. She was at the farm where I kept my other rescued horse. I noticed the odd-colored little pony, pregnant with a foal too large for her to birth, and I came to think that her ancestors walked with mine through history. I call her a Chicaza. Short, sturdy-legged, muscular, this pony changes color through the seasons, shedding

out overnight. Short in stature, different in conformation than the horses most desire, she had no one to care for her, no shelter from cold weather except a piece of cloth thrown over the fence.

I began to walk her, to bring her carrots and apples, and when it was time for her to give birth, I felt it and packed my truck with everything I needed to camp for the night. My friend, Lori, and I made a foaling bed for Chicaza, and we placed straw in a corner for ourselves. After a night of the horse's terrible suffering, the vet returned for a second time, and said she had to be trailered to the hospital. I was sent for a whip to force her to stand and walk into the trailer, but I could not do it. Instead I stood before her and with my arms, I motioned for her to stand. Miraculously, she rose immediately and went into the horse trailer and was hurried to the hospital.

The dead infant was beautiful, too large, and removed by terrible means, and yes, it was black as the owners wanted. Yet no one could pay the bill. No one had even paid the board, and so the vet said he would have to "put her down." I had little at the time, but I paid her bill with a Mastercard, which, as I look back on it today, is humorous. The most expensive purchase of a mustang ever known.

These wild horses are considered a problem. It is believed their lives have so interfered with the big business of ranching that they are being rounded up, slaughtered, and even shot for practice.

This Chicaza and I have lived together for many years, and we speak without words. She runs to meet me and we run together. She knows where I am in the house. I feel her where she is in the field. I tell others that her ancestors knew mine, but the relationship is more than that. We have a bond of love, a communication, as if we have become the same animal.

Each Animal Supports Many Other Lives

In our language, one term for animal is *Nan okcha*, which means, "all alive." We have songs for the animals, even a tick dance song. It is understood by traditional peoples that each kind of animal has its own expansive intelligence, each its own ways, own mind. The mind of the horse is not the same as the snake or crow.

I recall the morning I was lectured by a crow with an entire paragraph and not one word repeated. I listened carefully but was not intelligent enough to understand. The horse has never lectured me, but I do remember one man telling me he respected crows most of all birds for their desire to live. This was after one bit me hard enough for a bruise to appear, leaving more damage than any of the long-beaked, clawed raptors I worked with.

All around us are radiant species. The prairie dogs call the rain, it is said. They are integral to our aquifers and are a keystone species supporting many other lives. They know us well, have a language, and yet most humans have not bothered to open a current of understanding between us and them. Instead, they are poisoned and shot because they are thought to be in the way of development or because it is believed that their tunnels trip cattle and horses.

The animals are leaving us and will not return. The mustang, rounded up, sold for food to other countries. Alligators poisoned by agricultural toxins and other environmental changes. Prairie dogs, lost to development.

We face even more losses than we can count as temperatures change. Those changes affect ocean, land, ice, not to mention the indigenous peoples who are losing food sources and places of history, stories, and memories. Their lives are being uprooted as their lands are covered with water, as melting glaciers in Tibet rush down from the mountains picking up sewage, chemicals, and agricultural runoff along the way. Rain abandons the deforested rainforests and falls elsewhere. Rivers dry out and give off poison gas.

A Culture of Compassion for Animals, Including Humans

I live in country with regions of deforested, ruined land, where chemicals used to grow non-native species of grasses for grazing enter the creeks and aquifer. Trees are bulldozed, the cattle given steroids, antibiotics, and growth-enhancers, their urine also entering water.

Without forest, land no longer attracts or holds water. Now we have drought. Cedar trees appear in fields to shade and cool the earth, a natural process. They also preserve the water, but many ranchers believe they use too much, so they are poisoned, continuing the new cycle. I remember »



THE MERE WEIGHT OF THE ANIMALS' HOOVES ON THE EARTH BROUGHT WATER TO THE SURFACE. CREEKS AND STREAMS CAME BACK. THESE RETURNED THE INSECTS AND THE BIRDS.



HAMNER FOTOS

Buffalo graze on Pine Ridge Reservation lands. Lakota Buffalo Caretakers Cooperative reintroduced buffalo in 2005 to restore the land and the Lakota way of life.

a woman once saying that when a cougar kills a deer it is god, but when we do this to the animals, land, and water, it is “Not god.”

The traditional relationship between indigenous peoples and their environments is well documented, but this relationship is more complex than realized by Western thinkers. It is neither simple, nor is it primitive. It is a science maintained by more than 20,000 years of observation.

Navajo elders, with a long knowledge of plants in their region, have more known categories or classifications for each plant than do Western-trained botanists. Indigenous peoples have knowledge systems derived from a language of place, plants, and animals—the whole that is now called an ecosystem. Some know the changes in river flows and currents along the Mississippi, or the numbers of migratory birds that pass through their regions each year.

Traditionalist and activist Dennis Martinez, tells of a nation of indigenous people in South America who make the sounds of each species that is gone in order to keep a place within the ecosystem for that bird or animal to return. This is how significant we take each species to be.

The compassion we offer to animals is the same measure of love we are capable of offering other human beings. The suffering and pain of one is universal. When there is a wound in our world, we must do our best to heal it, and yet we live in a culture of wounding that could just as easily become one of healing for animals and humans.

We Can Restore Ourselves to this Land

Our truths come from tenure on this land. The animals known by ancestors meet us still in some way, despite the passing of histories.

I remember when the buffalo were returned to Lakota land. Long grasses not seen in years by the elders returned and grew. The mere weight of the animals' hooves on the earth brought water to the surface. Creeks and streams came back. These returned the insects and the birds. A great restoration of the land began after the reintroduction of the bison. Several years later the tribe released a herd of wild horses. The bison stood quietly on the top of a ridge and watched the horses come out of the trailer and begin their run toward freedom.

IT IS NIGHT NOW. The mustang stands outside, the elk and deer are bedded down in dry grasses beneath trees on the hillsides. An owl speaks. Beneath stones, snakes hibernate, but the winged serpent moves slowly across the dark starlit sky toward the edge of Earth, the edge where all things will fall if we are not more careful in this world with other lives who see us and know us, who welcome us as we, too, restore ourselves to this land.



Linda Hogan, Chickasaw novelist and poet, works for the Chickasaw Nation. She is a Pulitzer finalist for her book *Mean Spirit*; her book *People of the Whale* was just published in Chinese. Her website is LindaHoganWriter.com; she is offering her performance piece, *Indios*, for the first time this autumn.

YesMagazine.org/mustangs
Saving wild mustangs and at-risk children

Should we eat animals?



Just the Facts

Alyssa B. Johnson

1

We lose nutrition when we feed grain to animals.



Estimates vary, but it takes around **10** units of grain to produce **1** unit of beef ...



... and about **4** units of grain to produce **1** unit of pork.

2

If humans ate the grain instead, we could eliminate world hunger.



As of 2000, **18%** of the world's population was undernourished and underweight, while **35%** of global cereal production was being fed to livestock.

3

But that doesn't mean we can't eat meat.



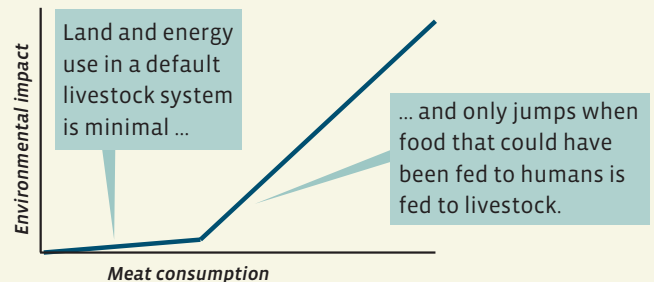
"Default livestock" only eat food that humans can't or won't eat, the way it's done in much of the world—and in permaculture. If we raised all livestock that way, we'd end up with more food.



4

Default livestock use minimal land and energy.

A 2006 study of Dutch food consumption—which is similar to other Western diets—found that if the Netherlands relied solely on default livestock, each citizen could eat about 27 grams of pork protein a day—about one pork chop.



5

We can feed everyone and still eat meat. But only a little.



Researcher Simon Fairlie estimates that a worldwide default livestock system would provide the equivalent of three cheeseburgers a week for everyone on the planet—and free up enough cropland so no one would go hungry.



Should we eat animals?

YES. SUSTAINABLE FOOD MEANS MEAT, TOO

AN INTERVIEW WITH FOODIE FARMER JOEL SALATIN

Interview by Madeline Ostrander

Joel Salatin is no simple farmer. When he speaks, he at times takes on the air of a Southern preacher, philosopher, heretic, businessman, activist, or ecological engineer. Since Michael Pollan's book *The Omnivore's Dilemma* and the film *Food, Inc.* brought him to fame as the man who raises meat the right way, Salatin has become a sought-after speaker. But he still spends most of his time on his rural Virginia farm—with the chickens, baling hay, moving cows from one paddock to another. He is a self-described “Christian libertarian environmentalist capitalist lunatic” and has a penchant for perplexingly long catchphrases. It is perhaps Salatin's unwillingness to compartmentalize that has made him such a compelling moral voice for the food movement. For Salatin, farming is inseparable from ethics, politics, faith, or ecology.

Salatin's farm, Polyface or “the farm of many faces,” has been in his family for 50 years. At its heart is a practice called “holistic range management,” where cattle mimic the grazing patterns of wild herd animals. The strategy cuts feedlots out of the equation altogether and stores carbon deep in the roots and soil of Polyface's lush perennial pasture.

There's a missionary quality to Salatin's farming. He speaks of his work as a ministry and as healing. He calls his animals “co-laborers” and “dance partners” and says he respects each animal's distinctiveness. Who better to articulate an ethic of how, when, and whether we should raise and eat our fellow animals?

Madeline Ostrander: What do you think a sustainable diet should look like?

Joel Salatin: What would a sustainable diet look like? Oh, my!

Ostrander: Because it's often talked about as a vegetarian diet.

Salatin: No, not at all. I think we need to go back to localized diets, and in North America, yes, we can really grow perennials, so there would be a lot of herbivore—lamb, beef—in a diet. And our fruits and vegetables, which have a high water content, would be grown close to home, preferably in our backyards. In 1945, 40 percent of all vegetables consumed in the United States were grown in backyards.

I think a local diet would have an indigenous flair. If you're along the coast, you'd eat more seafood. If you're inland, you would eat more herbivore and vegetables. If you're in Florida, you would eat more citrus. Historically, it's not about the relationship of meat to vegetables or whatever. It's more about, what does this area grow well with a minimum of inputs?

»





A LOCAL DIET WOULD HAVE AN INDIGENOUS FLAIR. IF YOU'RE ALONG THE COAST, YOU'D EAT MORE SEAFOOD. IF YOU'RE INLAND, YOU WOULD EAT MORE HERBIVORE AND VEGETABLES.

» **Ostrander:** Cows have gotten a bad rap lately for their contributions to environmental problems. What's your response?

Salatin: Don't blame the cow for the negatives of the industrial food system. All of the data that the anti-meat people use assumes an irrigated, concentrated animal feeding operation. Over 50 percent of the annuals that we grow in American agriculture are to feed cows. Cows aren't supposed to eat corn. They're supposed to mow forage. It's completely inverted from nature's paradigm. To use that inverted paradigm to demonize grazing, the most efficacious mechanism for planet restoration, is either consciously antagonistic to the truth or is ignorant of the kind of synergistic models that are out here.

Here's the thing. There's no system in nature that does not have an animal component as a recycling agent. Doesn't exist. Fruits and vegetables do best if there is some animal component with them—chickens or a side shed with rabbits. Manure is magic.

Now, we could argue about how many animals we should be eating. I really don't think Americans should be eating so much chicken. Because chicken requires grain; it's an omnivore. Historically, herbivores—beef, lamb, goat—were every man's meat because they could be raised on perennials. The kings ate poultry because they're the only ones who had enough luxury of extra foodstuffs for birds.

Poultry used to fill a recycling niche. Today, if every single kitchen had enough chickens attached to it, there would not be egg commerce in America. All the eggs could be produced from kitchen scraps. What a wonderful thing that would be. There's no excuse for an egg factory.

Beef cattle—there's no excuse for

a feedlot. We don't need all those irrigated acres in Nebraska. See? And suddenly all of the data that the animal demonizers are using just crumbles like a house of cards.

Ostrander: Your website says that your farm respects and honors the animals you raise. What does it mean to respect an animal and then eat it?

Salatin: It is a profound spiritual truth that you cannot have life without death. When you chomp down on a carrot and masticate it in your mouth, that carrot is being sacrificed in order for you to have life. Everything on the planet is eating and being eaten. If you don't believe it, just lie naked in your flower bed for three days and see what gets eaten. That sacrifice is what feeds regeneration. In our very antiseptic culture today, people don't have a visceral understanding of life and death.

Ostrander: What do you feel is your responsibility to the animals that you raise on Polyface Farm?

Salatin: Our first responsibility is to try to figure out what kind of a habitat allows them to fully express their physiological distinctiveness. The cow doesn't eat corn; she doesn't eat dead cows; she doesn't eat cow manure, which is what is currently being fed to cows in the industrial food system. We feed cows grass, and that honors and respects the cow-ness of the cow.

Chickens—their beaks are not there for us to cut off, as industrial operations do. Their beaks are there for them to scratch and to hunt for insects. So we raise them out on pasture, in protected enclosures, in a free environment, so they can be birds.

We look at nature and say, "How do these animals live?" And we imitate

that template.

We have the chickens follow the cows, the way birds follow herbivores—the egret on the rhino's nose. The chickens sanitize behind the herbivores, scratch in the dung, eat out the parasites, spread the dung into the pasture, and eat the insects that the herbivores uncovered while grazing.

The pigs make compost from cow manure, which we mix with wood chips. They love to do it, and they don't need their oil changed, they don't need spare parts, and they're fully allowed to express their pig-ness. Then animals become team players—partners in this great land-healing ministry.

This is all extremely symbiotic and creates a totally different relationship than when you're simply trying to grow the fatter, bigger, cheaper animal.

But the animals also have an easier life than they would in nature. Nature is not very philanthropic. I mean, every day the gazelle wakes up and hopes she can outrun the lion, and every day the lion wakes up and hopes she can outrun a gazelle. We protect our animals from predators and weather. We give them good food and care for them, and in return, they are more prolific.

Ostrander: So honoring the pig-ness of the pig is about ecology as much as ethics.

Salatin: Honoring the pig-ness of the pig establishes a moral and ethical framework on which we build respect for the Mary-ness of Mary and the Tom-ness of Tom. It is how we respect and honor the least of these that creates an ethical framework on which we honor and respect the greatest of these.

A culture like ours—that views plants and animals as inanimate piles of protoplasmic structure to be manipulated however cleverly we, in

our hubris, can imagine—will soon view its citizens and other cultures in the same kind of disrespectful way.

Ostrander: You claim that the kind of agriculture that you do could feed the world. How would that work?

Salatin: Well, for example, take cows. If we do what I call mob-stocking herbivorous solar conversion lignified carbon sequestration fertilization, we could triple the number of herbivores and the amount of carbon we're storing in the soil.

of 8 percent organic matter today. That cycle of herbivore, perennial, and predation builds up root biomass below the ground and sequesters carbon and organic matter. It's the same process that built all the deep soils of the world—the Pampas in Argentina, outer Mongolia with yaks and sheep, the American plains with the buffalo.

Now, if you consider vegetables, we could do edible landscapes. There are 35 million acres of lawn in the United States. I tell people, we'll know that we're running out of food when the golf courses around Phoenix start

Ostrander: Is there a different emotional experience that people have when they're eating food raised on Polyface than if they're eating a McDonald's hamburger?

Salatin: We have a 24/7, open-door policy. Anyone is welcome to come at any time to see anything, anywhere without an appointment or a phone call. We encourage anyone to come and walk the fields, pet the animals, bring their children, gather the eggs out of the nest boxes—in other words, to build a relationship and create a

EVERYTHING ON THE PLANET IS EATING AND BEING EATEN. IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE IT, JUST LIE NAKED IN YOUR FLOWER BED FOR THREE DAYS AND SEE WHAT GETS EATEN.

Ostrander: What was that long phrase?

Salatin: Mob-stocking herbivorous solar conversion lignified carbon sequestration fertilization. The idea is you're mob-stocking: Herbivores in nature are always mobbed up for predator protection. Now we don't have predators, so we use an electric fence to keep them mobbed up. So we're not Luddites. We're using high-tech.

We farm grass, and we harvest that grass with cows. But we don't just turn the cows out into a field. We move them every day from paddock to paddock and only give them access to a single spot a couple days a year. We let the grass grow to what we call full physiological expression, the juvenile growth spurt. By doing that we're actually collecting a lot more solar energy and metabolizing it into biomass than you would if the grass were kept short like a lawn.

The difference is, for example, Augusta County, where we are, averages 80 cow days per acre (a cow day is what one cow will eat in a day). On our farm we average 400 cow days per acre, and we've never bought a bag of chemical fertilizer and we've never planted a seed. We've taken the soils on our farm from 1.5 percent organic matter in the early 1960s to an average

growing food instead of petroleum-based grass to be irrigated with precious water. We'll know that we're short of food when we can't run the Kentucky Derby anymore, because we need that land for farming. Go to Mexico. They don't mow the interstates. Every farmer along the highway has a staked-out milk cow.

Ostrander: Can you describe how you slaughter animals at Polyface?

Salatin: Well, the chickens, for example, are taken from the field right into our open-air slaughter facility, and we don't electrocute them like the industry does. We do a kind of a *halal*, or a kosher type of kill, which is just slitting the jugular, and they gradually just faint or fade away.

We have raised them. We have nurtured them and cared for them. It's different from the compartmentalization of the industrial system, where we have people who have never seen the animal alive doing the slaughter.

And frankly, I believe it is psychologically inappropriate to slaughter animals every single day. Even in the Bible, the Levites drew straws; they ran shifts in the tabernacle where they did animal sacrifices.

memory that can follow them all the way to the dinner plate.

Our culture has systematically alienated people from the experience of dining. I can't believe how many kids come here and watch a chicken lay an egg and then say, "Oh, is that where they come from?" The amount of culinary and ecological real-life ignorance in our culture is unbelievable.

So what we want to do at Polyface is provide a platform, so that anyone can come and partake of this marvelous theater that was all a part of normal life 150 years ago. We want to create a greater sense of all the mystery and appreciation for seasons and for the proper plant-animal-human relationships.

Some people even want to process some chickens with us. And that is a very powerful memory to take to the table with you. If the average person partook of the processing of an industrial chicken, for example, they probably wouldn't eat chicken. But by coming here and seeing the respect that's afforded to that animal all the way through, we can create a thankful, gracious, honoring experience when we come to eat. 🍷

Madeline Ostrander is senior editor at YES!

🎧 YesMagazine.org/salatin

Listen to the extended interview

TEMPLE GRANDIN

How Happy Was Your Meal?

Madeline Ostrander

Dr. Temple Grandin says she knows the mind of a cow.

It's not a fuzzy assertion—Grandin, an animal scientist at Colorado State University, is one of the hardest-nosed researchers you'll ever meet. She is autistic and claims that she literally thinks like an animal—in pictures. She notices details that most people tune out—such as a hat dangling on a fence or a shiny reflection that could spook cattle.

Grandin brought sweeping change to the meat industry 10 years ago, when McDonald's and Wendy's—under pressure from animal rights activists—hired her to improve how their beef suppliers treat animals. Now half of U.S. cattle end up in slaughterhouses designed by Grandin. Even PETA founder Ingrid Newkirk has blogged about her admiration for Grandin's work. *Time Magazine* named her one of the 100 most influential people of 2010. And the HBO movie about her early life won five Emmys last August.

Through research, Grandin has learned what makes cattle frightened, agreeable, or curious. There are tangible measures of cattle happiness, she says, such as how often they moo or whether they have parasites.

So I asked her whether sustainable agriculture makes cattle happy.

"The organic standards are a whole lot better about pasture," Grandin told me at an event for Food Alliance, an organization that certifies sustainable farms and ranches. "That's going to make it more humane."

"But I'm concerned about the internal and external parasites. There are some people in organic agriculture who think a whole lot of lice on cattle is normal," she said. "This is what I call 'bad becoming normal.'"

Labels like "free-range" guarantee little about ranches—federal law doesn't require an on-site audit of them. Grandin said some farms that claim to be sustainable still treat their animals poorly—often because of poorly defined standards.

She is an expert on writing standards that work. "People want to write fake stuff like 'handle them properly,' 'give them enough space.' So what does that mean?" she said. "What is a pasture? I know that



WORKMAN PUBLISHING

Temple Grandin uses her unique perspective as an autistic person and a scientist to get better, more humane treatment for cattle.

sounds like a silly question, but when you're developing an auditing system you've got to define what a pasture is. It's certainly not a dirt lot. If you lock animals up in a pen and they just chew the grass all down to the ground until it's dirt, at what point does that go from being a pasture to a feedlot?"

Grandin has praise for sustainable farms and especially for farmers who still raise heritage breeds. We'll need the genetic diversity that these farmers have preserved, she wrote in her book, *Animals Make Us Human*. Many old breeds do better on pasture and need fewer antibiotics.

But she gives organic ranchers and farmers a mixed report card. Organic farms sometimes fail to treat animal diseases because, by law, an animal can't keep its organic label if it's given antibiotics. Grandin cites one U.S. farm where about a third of the Holstein calves died because they weren't treated for disease.

Today, the strongest certification programs for animal welfare are run by private organizations, outside of the federal Organic Standards Act. These groups have turned to Grandin for her expertise. She has consulted with the dairy cooperative Organic Valley; helped Niman Ranch, a network of small farms and ranches, improve its animal treatment; and assisted Food Alliance with its new, more stringent standards for humanely raised beef. The nonprofit Global Animal Partnership (GAP) has launched an animal-welfare certification program that has Grandin's fingerprints on it. You can now buy GAP-certified meat from Whole Foods.

More change is on the horizon. Grandin said the U.S. Department of Agriculture has asked for her input on adding animal-welfare guidelines to organic standards. If Grandin can bring change to burger behemoths like McDonald's, perhaps her canny, nuts-and-bolts approach to ranching can transform the meat industry overall so that good, sustainable, and humane become normal. **Y**

YesMagazine.org/buy-happy

How to buy "happy" eggs and meat



Should we eat animals?

NO. MY DISABILITY GIVES ME A UNIQUE VIEW ON THE OXYMORON “HUMANE MEAT”

Sunauro Taylor

I recently debated Nicolette Hahn Niman at an art event in California. Niman is a cattle rancher and author of *Righteous Porkchop*. I am a 28-year-old disabled artist, writer, and vegan. The event was held in a largely inaccessible building in front of an audience that had just dined on grass-fed beef—a rather ironic scenario for a wheelchair-using animal advocate like me!

My perspective as a disabled person and as a disability scholar profoundly influences my views on animals. The field of disability studies raises questions that are equally valid in the animal-rights discussion. What is the best way to protect the rights of those who are not physically autonomous but are vulnerable and interdependent? How can society protect the rights of those who cannot protect their own, or those who can't understand the concept of a right?

Throughout the debate I argued that limited interpretations of what is natural and normal leads to the continued oppression of both disabled people and animals. Of the 50 billion animals killed every year for human use, many are literally manufactured to be disabled—bred to be “mutant” producers of meat, milk, eggs, and other products but unable to function in many ways.

Niman and her family are leading proponents for raising animals humanely for slaughter. But during the debate, we agreed on something rather »



“Self-Portrait Marching With Chickens”

Sunauro Taylor
Oil on wood, 12" x 12"
2008



BUT DURING THE DEBATE, WE AGREED ON SOMETHING RATHER SURPRISING—A BASIC TENET OF ANIMAL RIGHTS: ANIMALS ARE SENTIENT, THINKING, FEELING BEINGS.

» surprising—a basic tenet of animal rights: Animals are sentient, thinking, feeling beings, often with complex emotions, abilities, and relationships. We agreed that livestock animals can experience deep suffering and pleasure.

Former cattlemen Howard Lyman and Harold Brown also agree that animals are sentient, but this realization led them to become vegan. They gave up their livelihoods and risked alienation from their communities for something greater: their consciences.

Lyman and Brown reject animal slaughter on both practical and moral grounds. They point out that meat is not necessary for human health, a position endorsed by organizations from the World Health Organization to the American Dietetic Association. They cite growing evidence that animal agriculture is a major contributor to environmental problems: A 2009 report from Worldwatch Institute estimated that livestock production generates close to 51 percent of global greenhouse gases.

But Lyman and Brown go beyond the merely practical: An animal, they say, is not a piece of property for human beings to use but instead an individual creature living a life that should belong to him or her alone. As Brown says on his website, “Animal rights, to me, is quite simply respecting animals as the sentient beings that they are.”

But Niman—along with others who support sustainable meat—says that animals’ emotions are not an argument against eating meat—just an argument against cruelty. These conscientious omnivores argue that the justification for meat-eating lies elsewhere. They say we must overcome our empathy with an individual animal’s will to live to grasp something greater—Nature.

Nature is one of the most common justifications for animal exploitation.

The arguments range from romantic declarations about the cycles of nature to nuanced discussions of sustainable farming. But the assertion that something is “natural” (or “unnatural”) has long been used to rationalize terrible things.

As a disabled person I find arguments based on what’s “natural” highly problematic. Throughout history and all over the world, I would have, at worst, been killed at birth or, at best, culturally marginalized—and nature would have been a leading justification. Disability is often seen as a personal tragedy that naturally leads to marginalization, rather than as a political and civil rights issue. Many people now reject using “nature” to justify things like sexism, white supremacy, and homophobia but still accept it as a rationale for animal exploitation and disability discrimination.

Michael Pollan, one of the pioneers of the conscientious food movement, would say I am missing the point when I apply human standards to animals. Pollan argues that animal husbandry isn’t oppression but rather a “mutualism or symbiosis between species”—the very reason domesticated animals exist. But our understanding of nature cannot be separated from human culture and biases, especially because we understand nature through a long and pervasive historical paradigm of human domination over animals.

The distinction that Pollan makes is especially troubling when one considers that slavery and patriarchy were both seen as simply natural at one time. The argument that co-evolution justifies animal exploitation is similar to an argument that patriarchy is justified by thousands of years of history, culture, and genetics. One cannot argue that the domesticated animal chose slaughter

any more than one could argue that women chose patriarchy.

Niman uses nature as a justification for animal slaughter in another way, arguing that, since it is normal and natural for animals to eat other animals and humans are animals, we are justified in eating meat. But violent, painful deaths are also “normal and natural” in nature. Would Niman argue that we have no moral obligation to kill animals humanely?

Niman and others have suggested that vegans aren’t helping to change the world’s food production systems, whereas conscientious omnivores are. I’d suggest it’s the opposite. For a movement that supposedly advocates eating minimal meat, the humane-meat movement sure praises and glorifies the stuff. Trendy, socially conscious events serve sustainable animal products, while articles praise the mouth-watering taste, showing glamorous photos of young hipster butchers and “compassionate” farmers.

Of course all of these articles mention that we need to be eating less and better meat, but one doesn’t have to be an advertising expert to see that what is being sold is “delicious” animal foods—not lentils and kale.

A 2008 Carnegie Mellon University study showed that avoiding red meat and dairy one day a week achieves more greenhouse gas reductions than eating a week’s worth of local food. A vegan is also able to easily buy organic and local or, if that’s not possible, to buy fair trade, which, according to the book *The Ethics of What We Eat*, is arguably just as environmentally vital as buying organic and local, if you are considering issues of global justice.

Studies show that being a vegan or a conscientious omnivore (whose animal products actually come from small, sustainable farms) are about equal in

WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF THOSE WHO ARE NOT PHYSICALLY AUTONOMOUS BUT ARE VULNERABLE AND INTERDEPENDENT?



"Chicken Truck"

Sunaura Taylor
Oil, 126" x 96"
2008

environmental impact.

But I believe we must weigh environmental impact against other ethical concerns, such as the treatment of animals and global access to food and water. The more important question is which diet is more just for animals and more realistic for a planet with nearly 7 billion people and counting? The Worldwatch Institute calls for quick replacement of livestock products with other protein sources. Scientists are not saying that sustainable animal farming can't be done, but many are saying that it's not a realistic solution for a planet as hungry as ours.

Another argument is that veganism isn't realistic—that we can't grow sustainable food without farm animals.

The principal claim is that manure is necessary to maintain soil fertility. But animals do not need to be killed to poop. In fact all of the supposedly necessary effects that domesticated animals have on crops and soil come while the animals are alive.

Even if a practical argument in favor of eating small amounts of meat can be made—whether based on soil fertility or on use of land that can't support food crops—that doesn't answer the moral argument against it.

In fact, vegan-organic farming may be a realistic option. Farmers in the United Kingdom have developed a certification process for "stock-free" farming, a term that "broadly means any system of cultivation that excludes

artificial chemicals, livestock manures, animal remains," and so forth.

Humans have not prioritized farming methods that minimize harm to animals so we actually have no idea what is possible. That animal-free methods are not widely known says more about the belief in human domination over animals than it does about the possibility of sustainable, compassionate agriculture.

Humane meat is an oxymoron—and it seems that its advocates' consciences know it. Conscientious omnivores appear to struggle with their own empathy toward animals: From Michael Pollan overcoming his hesitance and shame in hunting a wild boar, to newspaper stories on the new meat movement where people try to overcome their uneasiness about killing animals by taking a butchering class, to the Nimans' own stories of their grief when sending their animals to slaughter.

Ex-cattlemen like Lyman and Brown show that empathy should be something that human beings have toward animals not only while they are living on our farms or after they have been killed and are on our plates being thanked or prayed over, but at that crucial moment when the decision is made to kill them for food or not.

Nicolette Hahn Niman and I agree about the horrors of factory farming. We also agree on the importance of environmentally sustainable agricultural practices. But I don't agree with her that slaughtering sentient animals for food is righteous—even if it's done on a small family farm.

There are better ways to be humane. 



Sunaura Taylor is an artist, activist, and writer. She's currently working on a book on animal rights and disability, forthcoming from the Feminist Press. sunaurataylor.org.

**Eagle Poem***By Joy Harjo*

To pray you open your whole self
To sky, to earth, to sun, to moon
To one whole voice that is you.
And know there is more
That you can't see, can't hear,
Can't know except in moments
Steadily growing, and in languages
That aren't always sound but other
Circles of motion.

Like eagle that Sunday morning
Over Salt River. Circled in blue sky
In wind, swept our hearts clean
With sacred wings.
We see you, see ourselves and know
That we must take the utmost care
And kindness in all things.

Breathe in, knowing we are made of
All this, and breathe, knowing
We are truly blessed because we
Were born, and die soon within a
True circle of motion.

Like eagle rounding out the morning
Inside us.
We pray that it will be done
In beauty.
In beauty.
In beauty.

Source: Joy Harjo, *In Mad Love and
Wax*, Wesleyan University Press, 1990.
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PHOTO BY DAVID CARTER, SR.





What other animals teach us

Warrior Baboons Give Peace a Chance

BORN VIOLENT? A TROOP OF BABOONS CHOOSES AN ENDURING

Robert M. Sapolsky

The evolutionary biologist Theodosius Dobzhansky once said, “All species are unique, but humans are unique.” Humans have long taken pride in their specialness. But the study of other primates is rendering the concept of such human exceptionalism increasingly suspect.

We now know, for example, that other species invent tools and use them with dexterity and local cultural variation. Other primates display “semantics” (the use of symbols to refer to objects and actions) in their communication in ways that would impress any linguist.

Our purported uniqueness has been challenged most, however, with regard to our social life. Like the occasional human hermit, there are a few primates that are typically asocial (such as the orangutan). Apart from those, however, it turns out that one cannot understand a primate in isolation from its social group. Humans are just another primate with an intense and rich social life—a fact that raises the question of whether primatology can teach us

something about a rather important part of human sociality, war and peace.

It used to be thought that humans were the only savagely violent primate. That view fell by the wayside in the 1960s as it became clear that some other primates kill their fellows aplenty. Males kill; females kill. Some kill one another’s infants with cold-blooded stratagems worthy of Richard III. Some use their toolmaking skills to fashion bigger and better cudgels. Some other primates even engage in what can only be called warfare—organized, proactive group violence directed at other populations.

As field studies of primates expanded, what became most striking was the variation in social practices across species. Yes, some primate species have lives filled with violence, frequent and varied. But life among others is filled with communitarianism, egalitarianism, and cooperative child-rearing.

The most disquieting fact about the violent species was the apparent inevitability of their behavior. Certain

species seemed simply to be the way they were, fixed products of the interplay of evolution and ecology, and that was that.

After decades more work, the picture has become quite interesting. Some primate species, it turns out, are indeed simply violent or peaceful, with their behavior driven by their social structures and ecological settings. More important, however, some primate species can make peace despite violent traits that seem built into their natures.

Pax Bonobo

Primatology has long been dominated by studies of the chimpanzee, due in large part to the phenomenally influential research of Jane Goodall. *National Geographic* specials based on Goodall’s work would always include the reminder that chimps are our closest relatives. Goodall and other chimp researchers have carefully documented an endless stream of murders, cannibalism, and organized group violence among their subjects.

»



CULTURE OF PEACE



PRIMATE SPECIES WITH SOME OF THE MOST AGGRESSIVE AND STRATIFIED SOCIAL SYSTEMS HAVE BEEN SEEN TO COOPERATE AND RESOLVE CONFLICTS—BUT NOT CONSISTENTLY ...



Baboons are exceptional subjects for studying social stress, says behavioral scientist Robert Sapolsky, above, because they usually live in large, complex groups with plenty of food and few predators. They therefore devote minimal time to surviving and have ample free time to make life miserable for each other.

» But all along there has been another chimp species, one traditionally ignored because of its small numbers; its habitat in remote, impenetrable rain forests; and the fact that its early chroniclers published in Japanese. These skinny little creatures were originally called “pygmy chimps” and were thought of as uninteresting, some sort of regressed subspecies of the real thing. Now known as bonobos, they are recognized as a separate and distinct species that

taxonomically and genetically is just as closely related to humans as the standard chimp. And boy, is this ever a different ape.

Male bonobos are not particularly aggressive and lack the massive musculature typical of species that engage in a lot of fighting (such as the standard chimp). Moreover, the bonobo social system is female-dominated, food is often shared, and there are well-developed means for reconciling social tensions. And then there is the sex.

Bonobo sex is the prurient highlight of primatology conferences, and leads parents to shield their children’s eyes when watching nature films. Bonobos have sex in every conceivable position and some seemingly inconceivable ones, in pairs and groups, between genders and within genders, to greet each other and to resolve conflicts, to work off steam after a predator scare, to celebrate finding food or to cajole its sharing, or just because. As the sound bite has it, chimps are from Mars, and bonobos are from Venus.

The trouble is, while we have a pretty good sense of what bonobos are like, we have little insight into how they got that way. Furthermore, this is basically what all bonobos seem to be like—a classic case of in-their-nature-ness. So—a wondrous species (and one, predictably, teetering on the edge of extinction). But besides being useful for taking the wind out of we-be-chimps fatalists, the bonobo has little to say to us. We are not bonobos and never can be.

Warriors, Come Out To Play

In contrast to the social life of bonobos, the social life of chimps is not pretty. Nor is that of rhesus monkeys, nor savanna baboons—a species found in groups of 50 to 100 in the African grasslands and one I have studied for

close to 30 years. Hierarchies among baboons are strict, as are their consequences. Among males, high rank is typically achieved by a series of successful violent challenges. Most males die of the consequences of violence, and roughly half of their aggression is directed at third parties (some high-ranking male in a bad mood takes it out on an innocent bystander, such as a female or a subordinate male).

Primate species with some of the most aggressive and stratified social systems have been seen to cooperate and resolve conflicts—but not consistently, not necessarily for benign purposes, and not in a cumulative way that could lead to some fundamentally non-Hobbesian social outcomes. The lesson appears to be not that violent primates can transcend their natures, but merely that the natures of these species are subtler and more multifaceted than previously thought. At least that was the lesson until quite recently.

Left Behind

In the early 1980s, “Forest Troop,” a group of savanna baboons I had been studying—virtually living with—for years, was going about its business in a national park in Kenya when a neighboring baboon group had a stroke of luck. Its territory encompassed a tourist lodge that expanded its operations and, consequently, the amount of food tossed into its garbage dump. Baboons are omnivorous, and “Garbage Dump Troop” was delighted to feast on leftover drumsticks, half-eaten hamburgers, remnants of chocolate cake, and anything else that wound up there. The development produced nearly as dramatic a shift in the social behavior of Forest Troop. Each morning, approximately half of its adult males would infiltrate Garbage Dump Troop’s

territory, descending on the pit in time for the day's dumping and battling the resident males for access to the garbage. The Forest Troop males that did this shared two traits: they were particularly combative (which was necessary to get the food away from the other baboons), and they were not very interested in socializing (the raids took place early in the morning, during the hours when the bulk of a savanna baboon's daily communal grooming occurs).

Soon afterward, tuberculosis, a disease that moves with devastating speed and severity in nonhuman primates, broke out in Garbage Dump Troop. Over the next year, most of its members died, as did all of the males from Forest Troop who had foraged at the dump.

evolutionary biologists term a "selective bottleneck"—had produced a savanna baboon troop quite different from what most experts would have anticipated.

But the largest surprise did not come until some years later. Female savanna baboons spend their lives in the troop into which they are born, whereas males leave their birth troop around puberty; a troop's adult males have thus all grown up elsewhere and immigrated as adolescents. By the early 1990s, none of the original low aggression/high affiliation males of Forest Troop's tuberculosis period was still alive; all of the group's adult males had joined after the epidemic. Despite this, the troop's unique social milieu persisted—as it does to this day, some 20 years after the

that it makes them potential aggressors in every situation." Thus the savanna baboon became, literally, a textbook example of life in an aggressive, highly stratified, male-dominated society. Yet within a few years, members of the species demonstrated enough behavioral plasticity to transform a society of theirs into a baboon utopia.

The first half of the twentieth century was drenched in the blood spilled by German and Japanese aggression, yet only a few decades later it is hard to think of two countries more pacific. Sweden spent the seventeenth century rampaging through Europe, yet it is now an icon of nurturing tranquility. Humans have invented the small, nomadic band and the continental

WITHIN A FEW YEARS, MEMBERS OF THE SPECIES DEMONSTRATED ENOUGH BEHAVIORAL PLASTICITY TO TRANSFORM A SOCIETY OF THEIRS INTO A BABOON UTOPIA.

The results were that Forest Troop was left with males who were less aggressive and more social than average, and the troop now had double its previous female-to-male ratio.

The social consequences of these changes were dramatic. There remained a hierarchy among the Forest Troop males, but it was far looser than before. Aggression was less frequent, particularly against third parties. And rates of affiliative behaviors, such as males and females grooming each other or sitting together, soared. There were even instances, now and then, of adult males grooming each other—a behavior nearly as unprecedented as baboons sprouting wings.

This unique social milieu did not arise merely as a function of the skewed sex ratio. Other primatologists have occasionally reported on troops with similar ratios but without a comparable social atmosphere. What was key was not just the predominance of females, but the type of male that remained. The demographic disaster—what

selective bottleneck. As defined by both anthropologists and animal behaviorists, "culture" consists of local behavioral variations, occurring for nongenetic and nonecological reasons, that last beyond the time of their originators. Forest Troop's low aggression/high affiliation society constitutes nothing less than a multigenerational benign culture.

Natural Born Killers?

Are there any lessons to be learned here that can be applied to human-on-human violence—apart, that is, from the possible desirability of giving fatal cases of tuberculosis to aggressive people?

In the early 1960s, a rising star of primatology, Irvén DeVore, of Harvard University, published the first general overview of the subject. Discussing his own specialty, savanna baboons, he wrote that they "have acquired an aggressive temperament as a defense against predators, and aggressiveness cannot be turned on and off like a faucet. It is an integral part of the monkeys' personalities, so deeply rooted

megastate and have demonstrated a flexibility whereby uprooted descendants of the former can function effectively in the latter. We lack the type of physiology or anatomy that in other mammals determine their mating system, and have come up with societies based on monogamy, polygyny, and polyandry. And we have fashioned some religions in which violent acts are the entrée to paradise and other religions in which the same acts consign one to hell. Is a world of peacefully coexisting human Forest Troops possible? Anyone who says, "No, it is beyond our nature," knows too little about primates, including ourselves. ●

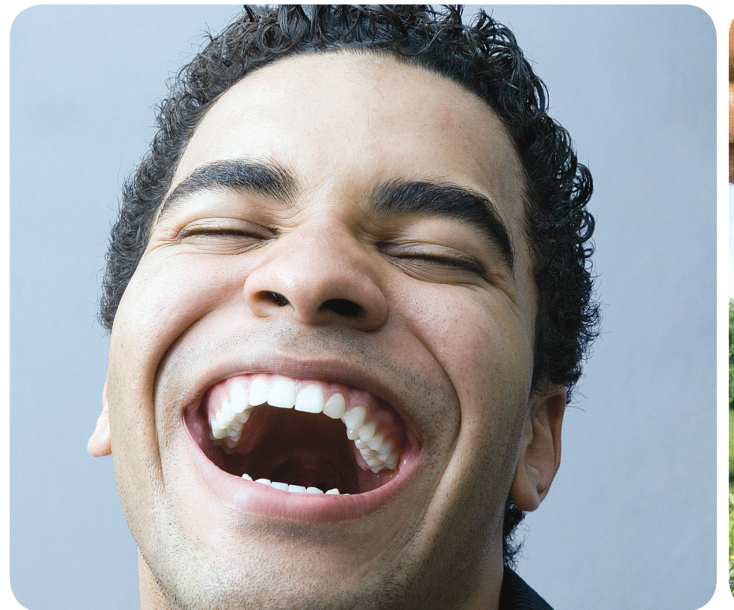
Robert M. Sapolsky is John A. and Cynthia Fry Gunn Professor of Biological Sciences and Professor of Neurology and Neurological Sciences at Stanford University. His most recent book is *Monkeyluv: And Other Essays on Our Lives as Animals*.

Excerpted from "A Natural History of Peace" in Volume 85, Number 1 of *Foreign Affairs*. Used with permission.

 YesMagazine.org/sapolsky
Sapolsky on aggression, pleasure, and the golden rule.



What other animals teach us



We Second That Emotion

Marc Bekoff

Scientific research shows that many animals are very intelligent and have sensory and motor abilities that dwarf ours. Dogs are able to detect diseases such as cancer and diabetes and warn humans of impending heart attacks and strokes. Elephants, whales, hippopotamuses, giraffes, and alligators use low-frequency sounds to communicate over long distances, often miles; and bats, dolphins, whales, frogs, and various rodents use high-frequency sounds to find food, communicate with others, and navigate.

Many animals also display wide-ranging emotions, including joy, happiness, empathy, compassion, grief, and even resentment and embarrassment. It's not surprising that animals—especially, but not only, mammals—share many emotions with us because we also share brain structures—located in the limbic system—that are the seat of our emotions. In many ways, human emotions are the gifts of our animal ancestors.

GRIEF IN MAGPIES AND RED FOXES: SAYING GOODBYE TO A FRIEND

Many animals display profound grief at the loss or absence of a relative or companion. Sea lion mothers wail when watching their babies being eaten by killer whales. People have reported dolphins struggling to save a dead calf by pushing its body to the surface of the water. Chimpanzees and elephants grieve the loss of family and friends, and gorillas hold wakes for the dead. Donna Fernandes, president of the Buffalo Zoo, witnessed a wake for a female gorilla, Babs, who had died of cancer at Boston's Franklin Park Zoo. She says the gorilla's longtime mate howled and banged his chest; picked up a piece of celery, Babs' favorite food; put it in her hand; and tried to get her to wake up.

It once happened upon what seemed to be a magpie funeral service. A magpie had been hit by a car. Four of his flock mates stood around him silently and pecked gently at his body. One, then another, flew off and brought back pine needles and



PHOTOS FROM ISTOCK.COM

twigs and laid them by his body. They all stood vigil for a time, nodded their heads, and flew off.

I also watched a red fox bury her mate after a cougar had killed him. She gently laid dirt and twigs over his body, stopped, looked to make sure he was all covered, patted down the dirt and twigs with her forepaws, stood silently for a moment, then trotted off, tail down and ears laid back against her head. After publishing my stories I got emails from people all over the world who had seen similar behavior in various birds and mammals.

EMPATHY AMONG ELEPHANTS

A few years ago while I was watching elephants in the Samburu National Reserve in Northern Kenya with elephant researcher Iain Douglas-Hamilton, I noticed a teenaged female, Babyl, who walked very slowly and had difficulty taking each step. I learned she'd been crippled for years, but the

other members of her herd never left her behind. They'd walk a while, then stop and look around to see where she was. If Babyl lagged, some would wait for her. If she'd been left alone, she would have fallen prey to a lion or other predator. Sometimes the matriarch would even feed Babyl. Babyl's friends had nothing to gain by helping her, as she could do nothing for them. Nonetheless, they adjusted their behavior to allow Babyl to remain with the group.

WATERFALL DANCES: DO ANIMALS HAVE SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES?

Do animals marvel at their surroundings, have a sense of awe when they see a rainbow, or wonder where lightning comes from? Sometimes a chimpanzee, usually an adult male, will dance at a waterfall with total abandon. Jane Goodall describes a chimpanzee approaching a waterfall with slightly bristled hair, a sign of

heightened arousal. "As he gets closer, and the roar of the falling water gets louder, his pace quickens, his hair becomes fully erect, and upon reaching the stream he may perform a magnificent display close to the foot of the falls. Standing upright, he sways rhythmically from foot to foot, stamping in the shallow, rushing water, picking up and hurling great rocks. Sometimes he climbs up the slender vines that hang down from the trees high above and swings out into the spray of the falling water. This 'waterfall dance' may last 10 or 15 minutes." After a waterfall display the performer may sit on a rock, his eyes following the falling water. Chimpanzees also dance at the onset of heavy rains and during violent gusts of wind.

In June 2006, Jane and I visited a chimpanzee sanctuary near Girona, Spain. We were told that Marco, one of the rescued chimpanzees, does a dance during thunderstorms during which he looks like he's in a trance. »

YesMagazine.org/animal-emotions
Dog rescues rabbit, and other stories

SHIRLEY AND JENNY: REMEMBERING FRIENDS

Elephants have strong feelings. They also have great memory. They live in matriarchal societies in which strong social bonds among individuals endure for decades. Shirley and Jenny, two female elephants, were reunited after living apart for 22 years. They were brought separately to the Elephant Sanctuary in Hohenwald, Tenn., to live out their lives in peace, absent the abuse they had suffered in the entertainment industry. When Shirley was introduced to Jenny, there was an urgency in Jenny's behavior. She wanted to get into the same stall with Shirley. They roared at each other, the traditional elephant greeting among friends when they reunite. Rather than being cautious and uncertain about one another, they touched through the bars separating them and remained in close contact. Their keepers were intrigued by how outgoing the elephants were. A search of records showed that Shirley and Jenny had lived together in a circus 22 years before, when Jenny was a calf and Shirley was in her 20s. They still remembered one another when they were inadvertently reunited.

A GRATEFUL WHALE

In December 2005 a 50-foot, 50-ton, female humpback whale got tangled in crab lines and was in danger of drowning. After a team of divers freed her, she nuzzled each of her rescuers in turn and flapped around in what one whale expert said was "a rare and remarkable encounter." James Moskito, one of the rescuers, recalled that, "It felt to me like it was thanking us, knowing it was free and that we had helped it." He said the whale "stopped about a foot away from me, pushed me around a little bit and had some fun." Mike Menigoz, another of the divers, was also deeply touched

by the encounter: "The whale was doing little dives, and the guys were rubbing shoulders with it ... I don't know for sure what it was thinking, but it's something I will always remember."

BUSY BEES AS MATHEMATICIANS

We now know that bees are able to solve complex mathematical problems more rapidly than computers—specifically, what's called "the traveling salesman problem"—despite having a brain about the size of a grass seed. They save time and energy by finding the most efficient route between flowers. They do this daily, while it can take a computer days to solve the same problem.

DOGS SNIFFING OUT DISEASE

As we know, dogs have a keen sense of smell. They sniff here and there trying to figure who's been around and also are notorious for sticking their noses in places they shouldn't. Compared to humans, dogs have about 25 times the area of nasal olfactory epithelium (which carries receptor cells) and many thousands more cells in the olfactory region of their brain. Dogs can differentiate dilutions of 1 part per billion, follow faint odor trails, and are 10,000 times more sensitive than humans to certain odors.

Dogs appear to be able to detect different cancers—ovarian, lung, bladder, prostate, and breast—and diabetes, perhaps by assessing a person's breath. Consider a collie named Tinker and his human companion, Paul Jackson, who has Type 2 diabetes. Paul's family noticed that whenever he was about to have an attack, Tinker would get agitated. Paul says, "He would lick my face, or cry gently, or bark even. And then we noticed that this behavior was happening while I was having a hypoglycemic attack so we just put two and two together." More research is

needed, but initial studies by the Pine Street Foundation and others on using dogs for diagnosis are promising.

IT'S OKAY TO BE A BIRDBRAIN

Crows from the remote Pacific island of New Caledonia show incredibly high-level skills when they make and use tools. They get much of their food using tools, and they do this better than chimpanzees. With no prior training they can make hooks from straight pieces of wire to obtain out-of-reach food. They can add features to improve a tool, a skill supposedly unique to humans. For example, they make three different types of tools from the long, barbed leaves of the screw pine tree. They also modify tools for the situation at hand, a type of invention not seen in other animals. These birds can learn to pull a string to retrieve a short stick, use the stick to pull out a longer one, then use the long stick to draw out a piece of meat. One crow, named Sam, spent less than two minutes inspecting the task and solved it without error.

Caledonian crows live in small family groups and youngsters learn to fashion and use tools by watching adults. Researchers from the University of Auckland discovered that parents actually take their young to specific sites called "tool schools" where they can practice these skills. **Y**



Marc Bekoff has written many books and essays about the emotional and moral lives of animals, including *The Smile of a Dolphin*, *The Emotional Lives of Animals*, *Wild Justice: The Moral Lives of Animals* (with Jessica Pierce), and *The Animal Manifesto: Six Reasons for Expanding Our Compassion Footprint*. Marc's homepage is marcbekoff.com and, with Jane Goodall, ethologicaethics.org.

Some of these stories have appeared in other forms in Marc Bekoff's writing.



Saving our Wild Things



PHOTO BY MARTIN KLEIN, BLUEVISIONS.EU

20,000 New Species Under the Sea

Lynsi Burton

When thousands of biologists from more than 80 countries collaborated on the Census of Marine Life, they knew the underwater world was largely a mystery. But they didn't realize how much they could discover, even in their own back yards.

In what scientists called the first global effort of its kind, the census, released in October 2010 after a 10-year effort, increased the estimate of known marine species from about 230,000 to 250,000. It found more than 6,000 potential new species and produced descriptions of more than 1,200 of them.

"We found new species everywhere we looked, even in some of the most well-known areas," says Paul Snelgrove, who wrote a book based on the studies, *Discoveries of the Census of Marine Life*.

The findings not only lay the foundation for future research but offer

insight on the extent of human impact on the ocean.

The new species include a six-and-a-half-pound lobster in Madagascar and deep-sea octopus, squid, and fish.

Scientists also spotted never-before-seen behaviors in animals, says Jim Bolger, executive director of the Pacific Ocean Shelf Tracking Project, a program of the census. For example, scientists thought green sturgeon stayed near the California and Oregon streams where they are born, but they instead migrate up to 1,000 miles north to Vancouver Island in the winter—following the opposite route of most migrating species.


Scientists also say the research offers a sobering look at thousands of years of human impact on ocean health and fish populations.

"A lot of these resources have been depleted before we really had the chance to characterize them,"


Snelgrove says, citing the near-disappearance of tuna in the North Sea and even the shrinking size of prizewinning game fish in Florida.

The census has already changed environmental policy. Findings on the green sturgeon led to the expansion of protected habitat for the fish.

Historically, most human damage to the ocean was caused by overfishing, Snelgrove says, but biologists believe the biggest impacts of the future will come from ocean acidification and warming. They are studying how these factors will affect marine life.

"There's still spectacular life in the ocean that's well worth preserving," he says. "It gives me a lot of hope that it's well worth the effort." 

Lynsi Burton is a freelance writer based in Bremerton, Wash.

 YesMagazine.org/marine-census
A stunning retrospective on the ocean's first census



Saving our Wild Things

BIG MAMMALS SHOULDN'T BE A CASUALTY OF MODERN SOCIETY. THEY COULD MAKE A COMEBACK—IF WE GIVE THEM WHAT THEY NEED MOST: ROOM TO ROAM.

Wildlife Right of Way



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY BEN HEINE



Sarah Kuck

Vast as Yellowstone National Park is, it's not big enough for grizzlies. Before European settlement, an estimated 50,000 grizzlies lived in North America. They ranged from Alaska to Mexico, and across the Great Plains. Since then urban sprawl, deforestation, pollution, and climate disruption have destroyed almost all of their historic habitat. Researchers estimate that in the lower 48 states only 2 percent of the mountains, forests, and prairies that grizzlies once called home still support their seasonal diets and migration patterns. Now there are scarcely 1,000 grizzly bears in the contiguous United States, confined to a few pockets of protected wilderness in Idaho, Montana, Washington, and Wyoming.

But biologists like Michael Soulé and Reed Noss say grizzlies, wolves, and other big mammals shouldn't be a casualty of modern society. They could make a comeback—if we give them what they need most: space. Soulé and Noss presented a new method for conservation in their 1998 paper, "Rewilding and Biodiversity: Complementary Goals for Continental Conservation." They discussed how the expansion of national parks and protected lands is necessary but only part of the answer. To piece back together the vast ecosystems that once stretched across North America, rewilding suggests an additional focus on reconnecting the scattered pockets of remaining wilderness, and on re-establishing predator populations. These methods have now evolved from conservation idea to practice and have become promising tools for fighting biodiversity loss.

Conservation is often about saving one dwindling population, one small remnant. Rewilding asks us to think big—to envision a continent-wide conservation strategy, with large core areas of protected land linked by lush, safe passageways for migrating species. Rewilding says that, although saving big spaces is critical, linking the spaces is

just as crucial to stem rapid species loss.

Predator Power

Each creature plays a role in creating and maintaining the complex ecosystems we all live in. But Soulé and Noss found that carnivores are most often the head engineers that keep systems in balance. Without carnivores, Soulé says, ecosystems have a tendency to collapse. The gray wolves of Yellowstone, for example, helped regulate elk populations, which protected young plants like cottonwood saplings from overgrazing. But wolves were systematically hunted down in Yellowstone and disappeared from the park in 1926. Seventy years later, the ecosystem was collapsing: The elk population had exploded; young trees rarely made it to adulthood; birds, bugs, and other small animals had to compete for space; and soil was rapidly eroding, clouding streams and damaging fish habitat.

Wolves needed to make a comeback. In 1995, biologists from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service began reintroducing wolves to the park. About 10 years later, Oregon State University conducted two studies to measure the health of the ecosystem. They found a direct correlation between the reintroduction of wolves and the recovery of Yellowstone's nearly extinct cottonwoods. With wolves back, elk were less likely to forage in the open streamside areas, giving seedlings time to grow. With more cottonwoods and willows surviving, fewer areas suffered soil erosion, and birds, insects, fish, and other creatures benefitted from a larger variety of habitats for nesting and foraging. Park managers used wolves to help them restore habitats essential for the survival of hundreds of species.

"When we are planning for the healthy functioning of ecosystems, we must consider the daily, seasonal, and generational needs of creatures," says Soulé. "Now the need for movement is even more critical because habitats are shifting rapidly due to climate disruption and stress. Therefore we must

ensure that plants and animals have the ability to move long distances."

Wildlife Interstates

Many conservation leaders see the benefits of rewilding and have created groups that work on building major links between habitats. The conservation group Yellowstone to Yukon, for example, focuses on the western region of North America. They are working with landowners, tribal groups, and government agencies from Canada and the United States to weave together a corridor of restored and protected habitat for grizzlies, birds, and fish in the region. Their grizzly conservation strategy includes a suite of ideas for increasing the size of core protected areas, improving safety for bears as they migrate, educating local communities about grizzlies, and making it easier for the bears to cross major transportation routes.

Wildlands Network (WN), another organization applying the principles of rewilding, works with landowners and regional conservation groups in an effort to link together and protect pieces of land essential to migration and habitat restoration. Soulé, who sits on the WN board of directors, says many ranchers and farmers realize that revitalizing a stream, for example, can help their business to be more successful in the long run. When working with landowners, Soulé says, WN often suggests making small but important changes in the way they manage their property or livestock that will allow grasses and vegetation to recover, eventually improving stream and soil health.

"We're bringing landowners together across the country and saying, 'You can help in making small changes in management to protect the world and save North America from what's going to happen if we don't do anything.'"

The long-term vision for WN is to create four major migration corridors that will extend over North America's »



PHOTO BY DARYL L. HUNTER - THE HOLE PICTURE
DARYL-HUNTER.COM

Wolves in Yellowstone's Lamar Valley regulate elk populations, which helps to restore habitats essential for the survival of hundreds of species. The wolves have also revitalized public interest in wilderness preservation.



PHOTO BY TIM HIGGINS

» Eastern, Western, Pacific, and Boreal regions. Currently, they are focusing their efforts on the East Coast, from the Everglades and Appalachians to the Arctic; and the West Coast, from Alaska to Mexico and inland to the Rockies. WN is using scientific models and mapping to plan paths that help creatures migrate from one ecosystem to the next with the least possible interaction with industrial or urban areas.

Soulé believes that we can restore these pathways. We just need the commitment. He says that many people now recognize our ethical obligation to “protect creation, and to maintain the biodiversity that is our final insurance against our own collapse.”

“For example,” Soulé says, “military planners now predict that the next big threat to our way of life is the lack of sufficient fresh water. Already water security is a major cause of conflict and unrest globally. If you’re an ecologist, you immediately realize that we really can’t protect watersheds and rivers if animals such as beavers and carnivores cannot be repatriated.”

International governments and nongovernmental organizations have begun to understand that ecosystems do a lot of work for humans—such as soil creation, crop pollination, and air purification—and if we don’t protect the wild creatures responsible for maintaining these systems and cycles,

we’ll have to do that work ourselves. Through projects like The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity study, an international research partnership, economists are documenting the many ways in which saving nature is cost-effective: For instance, it’s much cheaper to maintain marshland, which helps control floods, than it is to build dams and levees to handle stormwater.

Rewilding the World

The promise of rewilding has taken hold globally, and efforts to give creatures the space they need to migrate are underway in places as diverse as Nepal, Australia, and across Europe.

Author Caroline Fraser took a global expedition to visit rewilding projects, documenting her findings in the book *Rewilding the World: Dispatches from the Conservation Revolution*. Fraser found that the rewilding projects that work best are ones that incorporate communities into conservation work.

“If you don’t provide real economic opportunities for people to support and preserve wildlife and wild areas, then it’s just not going to happen,” Fraser says. “The problem is figuring out ways to do this that really let the communities themselves choose how they want to organize them.”

Fraser found that the most successful programs were voluntary to join and beneficial to the community. The

Lewa Wildlife Conservancy in Kenya, for example, invites local people to participate in wildlife preservation and ecotourism by turning over a percentage of their land to the conservancy. The landowners can still continue their pastoral traditions, and they gain shared revenue from ecotourism, which they use to fund a variety of community programs, such as tree nurseries and sustainable irrigation.

Since 1995, the conservancy has provided space and protection for animals like the black rhino, Grevy’s zebra, and sitatunga, a species of antelope. The sanctuary now includes more than 62,000 acres of grassland, acacia groves, and wetlands.

Reconnecting

For too long the Western world has tried to live separately from—or in opposition to—nature. Ignorance of the deep interconnectivity of life is dangerous not only for wolves, bears, and zebras but also for us. As our air and water grow dirtier and our soil thinner, animal species suffer, but ultimately so will humans unless we act. Rewilding offers a way to revitalize biodiversity, rebuild our environment, and reconnect on a large scale what has become disconnected: humans and natural landscapes.

Sarah Kuck is a freelance writer and a graduate student in media studies at The New School.



Saving our Wild Things

WE TAKE FOR GRANTED THAT HUMANS
HAVE RIGHTS. COURTS SAY CORPORATIONS DO, TOO.
NOW, THERE'S GROWING INTEREST IN
RIGHTS FOR NATURE AND ANIMALS.

James Trimarco

When the first abolitionists declared that slaves should be freed, their opponents argued that blacks were the property of their owners and giving them rights would cripple the American economy. The arguments were different when the suffragists demanded rights for women, but the predictions the same: The economy, and perhaps civilization itself, would crumble if their rights were recognized.

Today, similar claims are being made about a new effort to expand rights. But the recipients of these rights are not human beings—they're animals and ecosystems. Advocates from Pennsylvania to Bolivia are using ancient traditions, new scientific research, and a growing body of legal scholarship to argue that society can and should recognize these rights.

Ecuador's new constitution formally recognizes the rights of nature, and more than 100 municipalities in the United States have enacted ordinances giving citizens the ability to file lawsuits on behalf of natural resources and ecosystems. Meanwhile, in 2008, activists in Spain came within a hair's breadth of gaining legal recognition for the rights of great apes, and an international »

What's So Special About Humans?

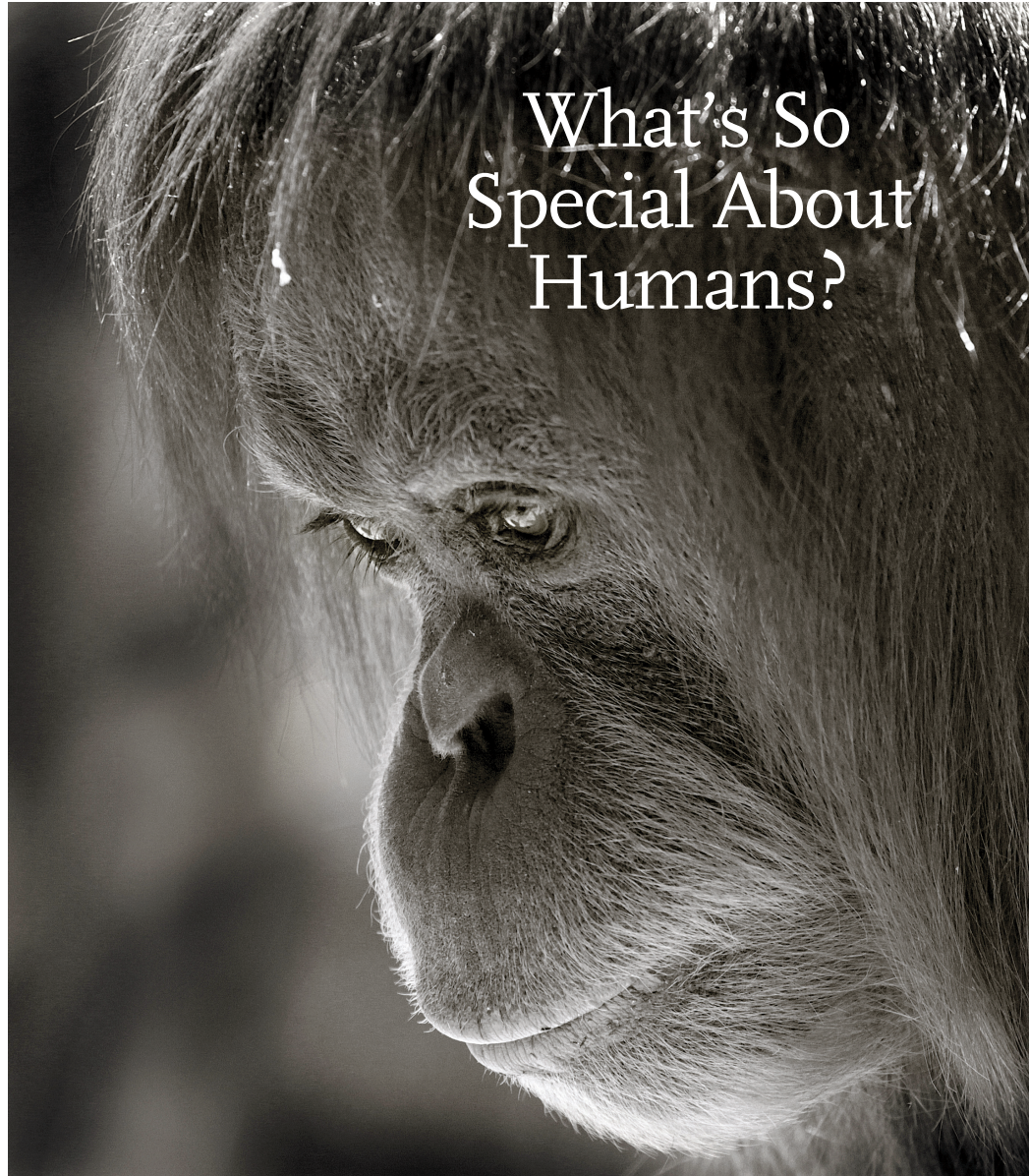


PHOTO BY NATALIE MANUEL, ANIMUSPHOTOGRAPHY.COM

YesMagazine.org/rights-of-nature
Orangutans have their day in court?



» coalition of scientists and philosophers is urging policymakers worldwide to recognize a draft declaration of rights for whales and dolphins.

Proponents of rights for nonhumans acknowledge that they are raising complicated issues. How many trees, for instance, can be taken from a forest before the logging constitutes an impediment to the ecosystem's right to "flourish"? The details won't be entirely clear until they are worked out in court over decades.

But one thing is certain—granting rights to animals and ecosystems would mean big changes in property law. While U.S. animal-cruelty laws have protected certain animals from abuse since the Animal Welfare Act of 1966, those laws still maintain that animals are property. And just try telling a corporation that local communities should have a say in what the company does with its land. Granting rights to animals and ecosystems would transform them into something resembling people in the eyes of the law, with huge impacts on how communities and corporations interact with nature.

Letting Communities Decide

The idea that nature should have legal standing has been around since at least 1972, when law professor Chris Stone wrote a pioneering article about it. For more than 20 years the idea remained pure theory, until a Pennsylvania environmental group decided to use it as a way of balancing out the overwhelming weight of corporate rights.

Since 1995, Thomas Linzey and his colleagues at the Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund (CELDF) have been helping rural and blue-collar communities fight corporate drilling and mining permits that threatened to contaminate their land and water. Corporations wanted to use rural Pennsylvania as a "sacrifice zone" of toxic industrial practices like drilling for natural gas and dumping toxic sludge, says Mari Margil, CELDF's associate director.

But each time a community won in court, the corporation involved would

resubmit the permit and eventually come out on top. The law was tipped in favor of corporations because it treated them as people whose rights to do what they wanted with their property trumped the rights of communities to enjoy clean land and water. One way to change that, CELDF realized, was to convince local governments—and, eventually, the courts—that local ecosystems had rights of their own.

"The people who adopt these pioneering kinds of laws are not what you would call environmentalists or activists," Margil says. "They're people who want to protect their community."

Tom Gerhard, for instance, is a 54-year-old truck driver and the chair of the board of supervisors for Packer Township. He heard about these ordinances after a supervisor from a nearby town saw pallets of sewage sludge on a farm in Packer. She told Gerhard how her own community had banned the sludge, and he was on the phone with members of CELDF a few days later.

The decision to pass an ordinance was simple, Gerhard says, because the sludge could contaminate the Still Creek reservoir, an important source of drinking water for Packer Township.

The sludge "contains pharmaceutical supplies, human waste, basically anything you might put in your drain," Gerhard says. And even though the corporation that brought it from New Jersey markets the sludge as fertilizer, it didn't sell it to the farmer—it paid him to take it.

Packer Township passed an ordinance in June 2008 that banned application of sludge and recognized the rights of nature. Gerhard soon heard from the state's Attorney General, who threatened to sue the Township for interfering with "normal agricultural operations." While other towns backed down under pressure, Packer stood firm and has been sludge-free ever since.

"We're the first township in Pennsylvania to beat the Attorney General in round one," Gerhard says, the pride clear in his voice. "Without clean air or water, we don't survive."

Indigenous Insights

Rights of nature laws can help communities seeking self-governance, but they are also much more than that. Environmental lawyer Cormac Cullinan believes that they can be a vessel for bringing the wisdom of indigenous people into the courts of modern nations.

After the compromises and failures of the U.N.'s climate change negotiations in Copenhagen in 2009, the Bolivian government of Evo Morales convened an alternative meeting in Cochabamba. Delegates at the World People's Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth spent three days debating and revising a draft and signed the final version of the People's Agreement on April 22, 2010.

Cullinan, who helped write the original text of the Agreement, explains that indigenous people tend to see human beings as a dependent part of a larger web of life and have cultural ways of making sure that people respect the ecosystem. Modern law, however, allows that web to be damaged because it recognizes only the rights of humans and treats nature as property.

The People's Agreement attempts to change that model by translating indigenous doctrines into a legal language that the international community will adopt. "It provides a mechanism for balancing human interests against the interests of earth," Cullinan says, "because if humans are the only ones with rights, the balance is tipped too far in the favor of the humans."

Cullinan hopes that activists for social justice, environmental protection, indigenous people, and animal rights will unite around the People's Agreement. "The one thing that we all have in common is the Earth," he says, "and what we need to do is play by the rules of the Earth."

Nonhuman Persons

One month after the World People's Conference took place in Bolivia, a group of scientists and philosophers gathered in Helsinki, Finland, to make

SENTIENCE, SELF-AWARENESS, AND AUTONOMY: WHALES AND DOLPHINS HAVE BEEN SHOWN TO POSSESS THEM, ALONG WITH A FEW OTHER ANIMALS SUCH AS GREAT APES AND ELEPHANTS.



PHOTO BY DEBORAH BASSETT

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a similar argument in a different context. The group included many of the world's foremost experts on the psychology and behavior of cetaceans, the order of animals that includes whales, dolphins, and porpoises. The convention ended with a Declaration of Rights for Cetaceans, 10 simple statements that recognize each individual animal's right to life, habitat, and freedom.

New research in cognitive science suggests that cetaceans are "nonhuman persons" who deserve rights similar to those enjoyed by humans, says Lori Marino, one of the drafters of the Declaration and a senior lecturer in neuroscience and biology at Emory University. She says this was part of the reason why the scientists chose to use the language of rights in their declaration, as opposed to the traditional

language of conservation.

Dr. Marino suggests that when scientists and philosophers wrestle with the question of what it is about ourselves that makes us human beings with rights, they find that "it has to do with sentience, self-awareness, and autonomy." You don't have to be a *Homo sapiens* to have those traits. Whales and dolphins have been shown to possess them, along with a few other animals such as great apes and elephants.

"These are beings that are aware of themselves, think about their thoughts, and think about their lives," Marino says, and therefore, each one deserves rights. That approach is different from the one taken by traditional conservation biology, which aims to keep populations stable but doesn't consider the rights of individual animals.

New Rights in Balance

Advocates for the rights of cetaceans and apes share general principles and goals with the supporters of the Cochabamba Agreement, but differences do come up.

"Just protecting the ecosystem is not enough," Dr. Marino says, pointing to her group's support for cetaceans in captivity who are no longer part of any ecosystem.

Meanwhile, some advocates of rights for ecosystems take issue with the idea of nonhuman personhood for only those animals whose intelligence resembles our own.

"Are algae sentient or not?" Cormac Cullinan asks. "All of these things have a degree of sentience, but it's in a different form." He says he'd prefer to focus on the health of the whole system.

Yet each of these activists says that their differences are outweighed by the goals and interests they share. Margil says she welcomes the work of advocates like Dr. Marino because "it's all moving forward to an expansion of rights beyond the human."

If that expansion is widely adopted into law, it will demand difficult sacrifices from ordinary people as well as from corporations. But the first few victories for the rights of nature suggest that the idea can empower communities, put a check on the rights of corporations, and create a more ethical society.

With climate change and resource shortages looming, looking after the rights of nature offers a way to protect ecosystems and the animals that live in them—including humans. 📌



James Trimarco is a writer and activist based in New York City and a consulting editor for YES! Madeline Ostrander contributed reporting for this story.

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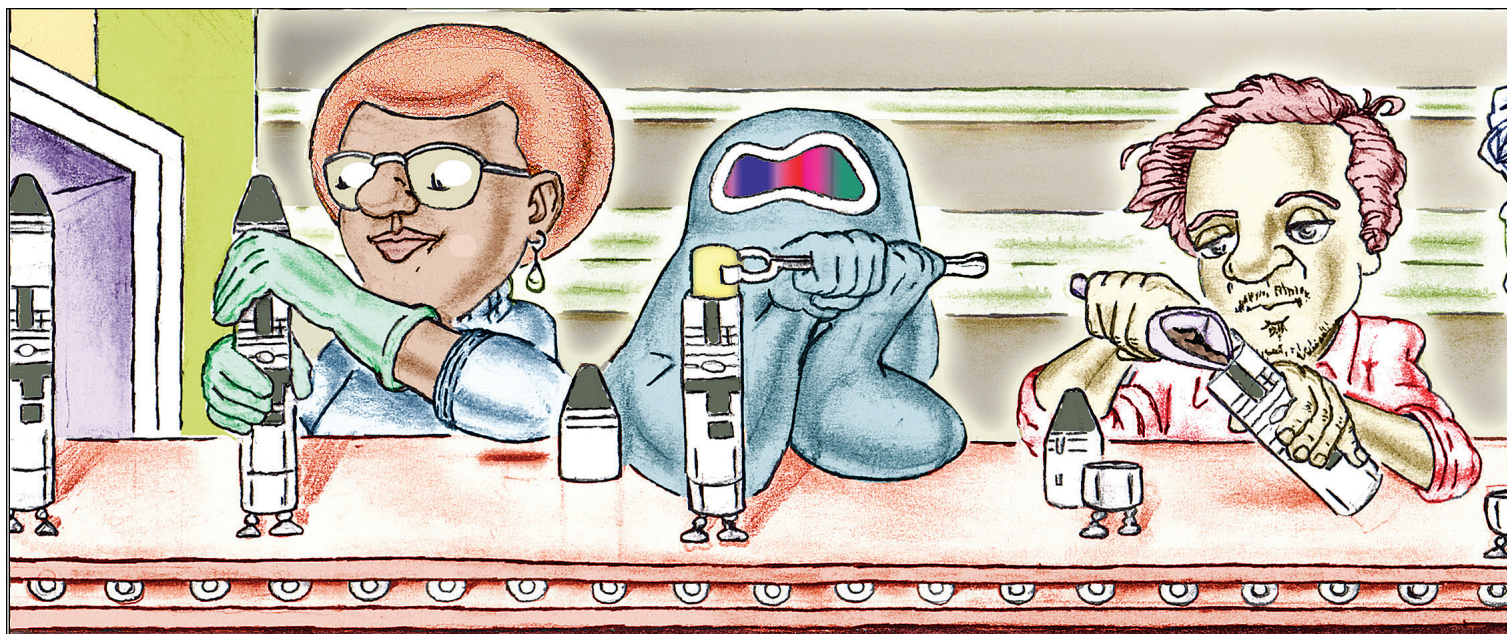


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Nuclear Disarmament



Presidential declarations and filmmakers' scare tactics get the attention—meanwhile, powerful grassroots movements build on 60 years of effort.

Joe Copeland

The people of Hiroshima live with the devastating legacy of nuclear war, juxtaposed with the city's dedication to working for world peace. A mindful American visitor to Hiroshima can't avoid asking: Are people in the United States too comfortable with the existence of nuclear weapons? How do you motivate the public to care about the nuclear threat and instill the hope to work toward change?

At times it seems that a good jolt of fear might be the answer. Maybe then we would finally wake from denial and do something about the dangers of nuclear arms: the risk that one of the

nuclear powers may choose to use the ultimate weapon of mass destruction, the bomb's distortion of power relationships among nations, the potential for accident or terror to unleash some catastrophe.

The difficulty of imparting a vision that enables change is brought home by *Countdown to Zero*, a 2010 film on the dangers of nuclear arms. *Countdown* goes down a dramatic Hollywood path, using fear as a catalyst for action. The film's publicity line, "More than a movie. It's a movement," promised it would focus public concern on nuclear arms in the way *An Inconvenient Truth*, by the same filmmakers, did for climate change. *Countdown* failed to

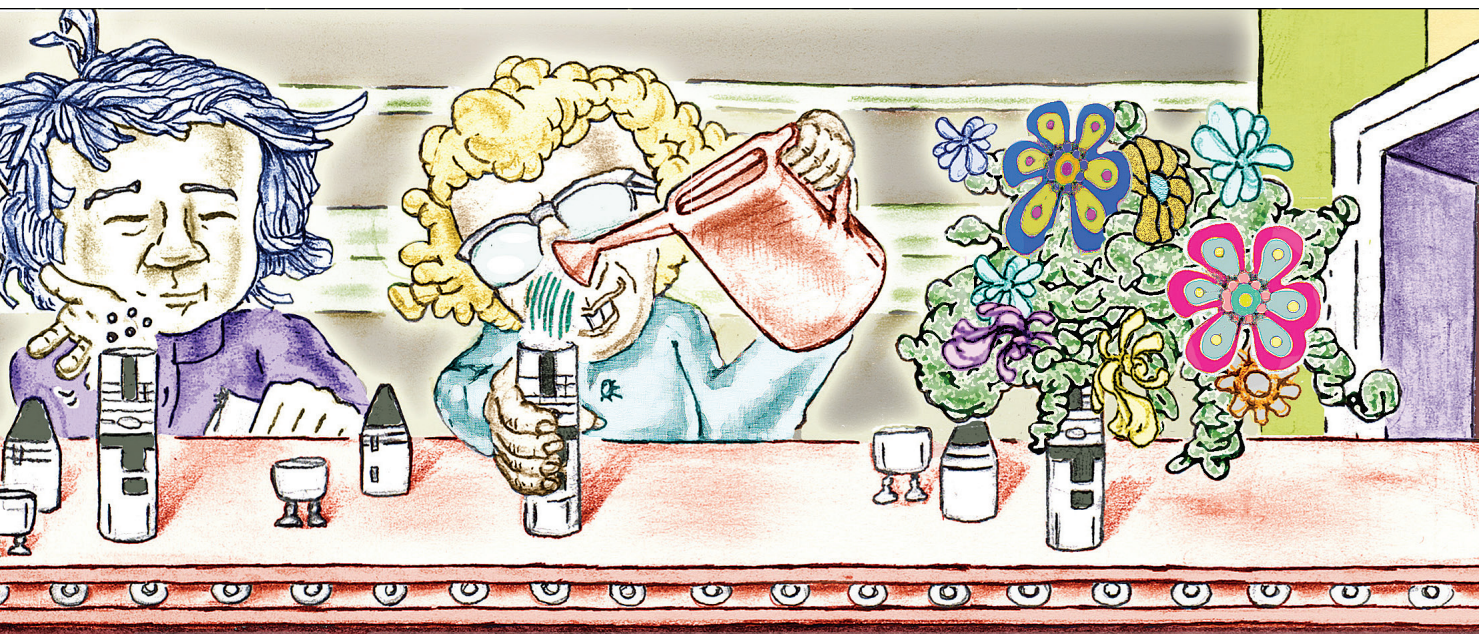
revitalize popular support for nuclear disarmament, but it did provide an insight into the pitfalls of crafting an urgent warning about pervasive danger.

By the end of *Countdown*, wrote Jeannette Catsoulis of the *New York Times*, "all most of us will want to do is duck and cover"—exactly the concern of some of the country's eminent experts and campaigners for nuclear abolition.

"I think that fear shuts people down," says Jacqueline Cabasso, executive director of Western States Legal Foundation, which monitors U.S. nuclear weapons programs.

There are other difficulties of

Is People's Work



ROB SUSSMAN FOR YES! MAGAZINE

balance when it comes to presenting the complexities of contemporary nuclear armaments and policy. *Countdown* dwells on the terrifying chaos of our post-Cold-War world—weapons-grade uranium casually smuggled from the insufficiently regulated Russian nuclear industry and the ease with which terrorists could obtain material to assemble a crude but devastating “dirty bomb.”

The film does show one unexpected “benefit” of the threat of terror—getting some traditional supporters of nuclear policy to acknowledge that the United States can no longer hope to maintain a nuclear weapons stockpile while asking others to give up the

bomb. As former Republican Secretary of State George Shultz said in an interview with YES! in 2008, “You’re going to be more secure if there are no nuclear weapons in the world, because if you achieve this goal, you won’t be risking having nuclear weapons blow up in one of our cities.”

But for a film linked to the “Global Zero” movement, ending with the repeated message that the only safe number of nuclear arms is zero, *Countdown* leaves the viewer with little information about how this is to be achieved. It’s particularly striking how vague *Countdown* is about the responsibility of the United States and the other Western nuclear powers for

the proliferation of nuclear weapons in the world—there are about 23,000, according to the film. Nuclear weapons have long held a strong place in U.S. strategic doctrine, not just as a deterrent, and the United States is the only nation ever to have dropped an atomic bomb. The new nuclear states—Pakistan, for example—are portrayed in the film as dangerous, if not unbalanced. But if Western democracies continue nuclear policies that underpin global instability, what hope is there of reigning in nuclear escalation elsewhere?

Dramatic Activism

Telling a true story that instills hope is the greatest opportunity missed »



» in *Countdown*: that of six decades of grassroots activism around the world—activism that is dramatic, impressive, and, to a degree that's easy to forget, sustained.

Many movements have arisen locally to work globally against nuclear weapons since the dawn of the atomic era and the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Japan's modern peace movement began after a shocking 1954 U.S. atomic test in the Pacific exposed Marshall Islanders and the crew of a Japanese fishing boat to serious levels of radioactive fallout. The event shook Japan out of denial about the health effects on survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and brought the idea of nuclear fallout to world attention. The "Ban the Bomb" movement in Great Britain attracted tens of thousands to peace marches, and the concern about fallout spurred peace movements in the United States and the rest of the world. In the decades since, much of the South Pacific has declared itself a nuclear-free zone. There have been periods of higher and lower citizen engagement, but activists have stuck with the issue.

Consider the Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp, formed in 1981 to protest the placement of nuclear-tipped cruise missiles on a British base. The missiles were removed pursuant to the 1987 U.S.-Soviet arms control treaty signed by Gorbachev and Reagan, but the camp stayed in place until 2000, when plans for a historical commemorative site were agreed upon. Nowhere, however, have people campaigned longer for nuclear abolition than in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The cities lead an international, grassroots Mayors for Peace campaign that has grown rapidly in recent years.

Mayors for Peace

Hiroshima Mayor Tadatoshiki Akiba has led the growth of Mayors for Peace, which had 4,467 members (in 150 countries and regions) as of January 1, 2011. Akiba returned to his native Japan after working as a math professor at Tufts University and becoming well-known for educating U.S. journalists about nuclear issues. I remember once asking him about the relevance of mayors' work for nuclear abolition, when such big issues are traditionally seen as the work of world leaders. He replied that mayors are closer to the people, making them a perfect group to advance the cause. Of course, it does take the world leaders to disarm. President Obama took a decisive step with a speech in Prague in 2009, in which he declared a goal of abolishing all nuclear weapons. The Nobel Committee cited the special importance of his "vision of and work for a world without nuclear weapons" when it awarded him the Nobel Peace Prize for 2009.

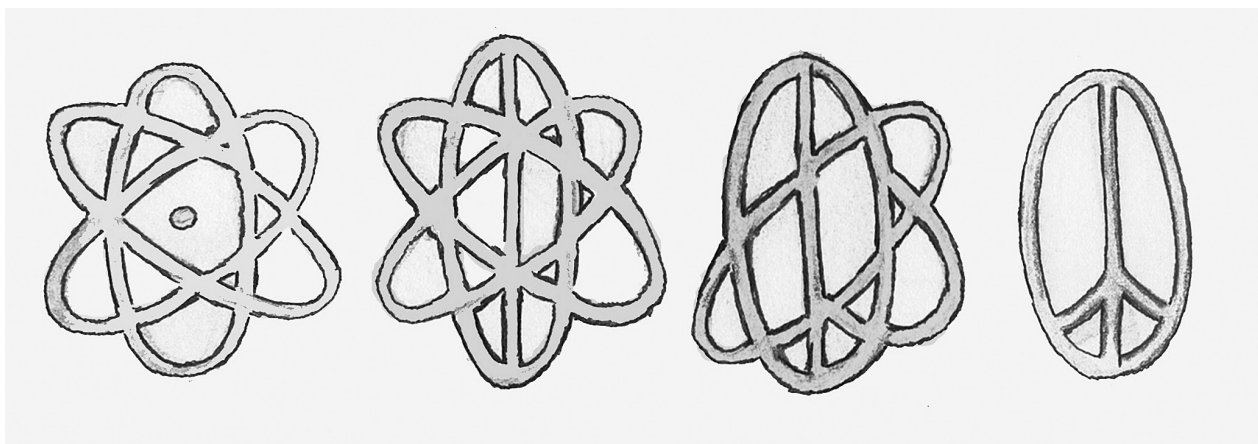
The Prague speech sparked considerable hope in Hiroshima that Obama will become the first U.S. president to visit the city while in office. High school students have mobilized to support efforts by Akiba and prominent

Nuclear Disarmament: Resources For Action

The end of *Countdown to Zero* points viewers to the filmmakers' own website and a single organization, Global Zero. In a field of such longstanding activism, there are many ways to be involved: Urge your mayor to join Mayors for Peace. It's up to 165 in the United States, and that's good, but worldwide the total is already nearly 4,500. Ask your member of Congress to join Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament (gsinstitute.org/pnnd). Get involved with International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War and its International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons. Work with the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation (wagingpeace.org) on its Waging Peace Today campaign.

Follow developments on such websites as Abolition 2000 (abolition2000.org), the Mayors for Peace 2020 Vision Campaign (2020visioncampaign.org), and the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists (thebulletin.org), whose famous Doomsday Clock assesses how close the world stands to nuclear catastrophe.

There are excellent research resources at the Western States Legal Foundation (wslfweb.org). The Hiroshima Peace Media Center (hiroshimapeacemedia.jp) is also excellent, particularly for peace news related to Japan.



ROB SUSSMAN FOR YES! MAGAZINE

THERE IS A SIMPLE, HUMAN DESIRE TO CONVEY HIROSHIMA'S MESSAGE—NO MORE WAR, PARTICULARLY THE NUCLEAR KIND.

survivors to secure an invitation. A presidential visit would provide momentum for nuclear abolition, but more than anything, there is a simple, human desire to convey Hiroshima's message—no more war, particularly the nuclear kind. Jacqueline Cabasso (who also serves as North American coordinator for Mayors for Peace) sees one promising route to nuclear abolition—making the link to other issues, like social justice and how funding for nuclear weapons could be diverted to meet basic human needs. That framing has certainly been a factor in Akiba's ability to draw strong support from The U.S. Conference of Mayors, which has worked closely with Mayors for Peace, passing progressive resolutions to advance both nuclear disarmament and government that prioritizes improved quality of life over nuclear stockpiles.

Nuclear Abolition

Like many in the peace movement, Cabasso was appalled by the huge investment in nuclear-weapons-related plants that Obama promised in order to win Senate support of the recent Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty with Russia.

But activists see encouraging signs. Alice Slater, of the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, suggests that a push for nuclear abolition could come from Asia, where the largest nuclear power, China, has shown surprisingly strong interest in eliminating rather than simply reducing nuclear weapons stockpiles. The real need is to move beyond the current nonproliferation regime, in which nuclear powers say they will eventually abandon their weapons, and toward a true nuclear abolition treaty.

Slater compares stagnation on the issue to the situation a few years ago, where Canada jump-started the process on an international landmine ban treaty that had been stalled by the largest powers. The United States, among a number of other countries, hasn't signed the landmine treaty, but the moral effect of the international consensus has proven powerful in preventing new deployments of mines.

Something similar has already happened with nuclear weapons, in part because the *hibakusha*—survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki—have been so insistent about reminding the world of the fearful realities of nuclear war.

Instead of remaining victims, they are inspiring advocates for saving humanity.

In the face of the difficulties and uncertainties of mobilizing people internationally, the determined hibakusha look ahead toward success. Maybe nothing symbolizes that better than the drive to bring the Summer Olympics to Hiroshima in 2020, the year Mayors for Peace has targeted for achieving nuclear abolition. The thinking is that, if the goal is achieved, there ought to be a huge celebration. If there is still work to do, the Olympics will be an occasion to celebrate progress and spur final steps toward a safer future. For everyone thinking, studying, or working on nuclear abolition, there is something to learn from that optimistic effort. **Y**



Joe Copeland is an editor for Crosscut.com, a nonprofit news site in Seattle. He has written about nuclear issues since visiting Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1986 as part of a program for U.S. reporters. In 2009, he researched the legacy of the nuclear bombings in Hiroshima under a Fulbright grant.

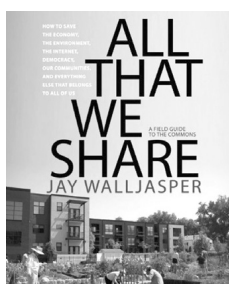


PHOTO BY IAN BREWER

This practical guide reminds us that our “commons” can be found in surprising places

Crissy Field, once an army airfield in San Francisco, is now a popular park.

REVIEWED BY KIM ECKART



All That We Share: A Field Guide to the Commons

JAY WALLJASPER

The New Press, 2010, 268 pages, \$18.95

You—yes, you—are a commoner. Not “commoner” in the sense of class. Think “communal.” Do you shop at a farmers’ market, visit museums, or take your kids to the playground? Do you ride a bike, hop a bus, drive a car, or walk along a sidewalk? Surf the World Wide Web? Those kinds of community spaces and services are “the commons,” and to be a “commoner” is to value these resources and the good they bring to society, according to author Jay Walljasper. Walljasper, a proponent of the commons movement and fellow at On the Commons, has compiled *All That We Share*, a series of essays (many his own) urging us to recognize, celebrate, and work to preserve the commons.

The essays are grouped according to themes such as economics, the environment, and the importance of protecting the commons in today’s

society. Brief stories of “commons heroes,” lists of movies and music that “evoke a spirit of sharing,” and tips for being a commoner break up the text and keep it lively. The guide concludes with Walljasper’s fictional “State of the Commons 2035,” a somewhat tongue-in-cheek report on the success of the commons in unexpected places: rural and suburban communities in so-called red states.

Readers new to the concept of the commons will learn much from this book, starting with a definition. The commons is not, as Walljasper points out, a village green or campus cafeteria. The book reminds readers of the numerous commons encounters they have in a given day, some provided by governments or benefactors, others handed down, in spirit or in deed, from indigenous peoples, all frequently taken for granted. Read this book and start to see the commons all around.

EXCERPT::

Growing numbers of people are taking steps that move us, gradually, in the direction of a commons-based society—a world in which the fundamental focus on competition that characterizes life today would be balanced with new attitudes and social structures that foster cooperation. This vision is emerging at precisely the point we need it most. Deeply held myths of the last thirty years about the magic of the market have been shattered by the implosion of the global financial bubble, creating both an opening and an acute need for different ways of living.

To deliver us from current economic and ecological calamities will require more than administering a few tweaks to the operating system that runs our society. A complete retooling is needed—a paradigm shift that revises the core principles that guide our culture top to bottom. At this historical moment, the commons vision of a society where “we” matters as much as “me” shines as a beacon of hope for a better world. —Jay Walljasper

YesMagazine.org/all-that-we-share for a longer excerpt

Yet the book offers something new even to those who already call themselves commoners. Innovations in acronyms and vocabulary, for starters: “Glocal” (go local), “YO-YO ethic” (You’re On Your Own), “WITT” (We’re In This Together), and “commoning.” To accomplish the latter, contributors to *All That We Share* suggest a number of methods: extend the land-trust concept to watersheds and streets, support the arts through public trusts, save newspapers through reader pledges or the nonprofit model.

For inspiration, look to the efforts of Reginaldo Haslett-Marroquin, who established a Latino food cooperative in Minnesota; the anti-gang, reclaim-the-parks “Summer Night Lights” program in Los Angeles; and the legacy of Enrique Peñalosa, the former mayor of Bogotá, Colombia. Peñalosa’s achievements, from transit to education to pollution prevention, set a high standard for commons protection. Unfortunately for those who might want to replicate his efforts, the book says little

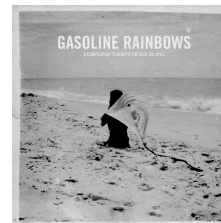
about how Peñalosa—and his people—paid for them.

That is the book’s one shortcoming. After so many motivational essays, the question of “how” lingers. What’s missing from *All That We Share* is a map to All That Lies Ahead. Consider today’s political climate: Momentum is gathering to repeal health reform, not expand it. The tax-cut compromise revealed the obstacles to convincing the wealthy to pay more to finance collective programs. And cap and dividend? In this Congress? The ideas in *All That We Share* are clearly worth fighting for, but there is a lack of specific strategies for the coming battle in a nation that just made a significant electoral swing to the right. The book’s solutions rely on widespread acceptance of commons values and goals, but how will that be accomplished? Who will spread the word?

To that question, Walljasper has an answer. The commoners will. You will. Start small, start local. But start. **Y**

Kim Eckart is a Seattle-based writer.

YES! PICKS :: Musical inspiration while putting out this issue



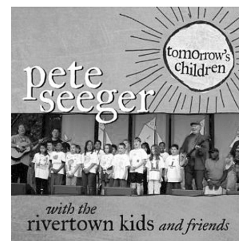
Gasoline Rainbows

As the title suggests, this is a benefit for Gulf oil spill relief. **Passion Pit, Edward Sharpe and the Magnetic Zeroes, The National, Vampire Weekend, Damien Rice**—a perky lineup of indie stars have given songs to the cause. **Amy Kuney’s** “Gasoline Rainbows” is a highlight.



Dear Companion

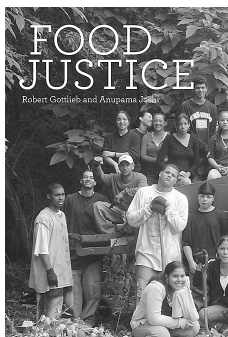
Three indie musicians from Kentucky discovered they all shared the same demon—mountaintop removal. Cellist **Ben Sollee, Daniel Martin Moore, and Yim Yames** of My Morning Jacket tenderly explore their love for their home and draw attention to its plight. A portion of sales benefits the nonprofit Appalachian Voices.



Tomorrow’s Children

Folk granddaddy **Pete Seeger** plays and sings with the children in his hometown of Beacon, NY. **Dar Williams** lends her voice on “Solartopia.”

Y Have a listen at
YesMagazine.org/music



Food Justice

ROBERT GOTTLIEB AND
ANUPAMA JOSHI

The MIT Press, 2010, 304 pages, \$27.95

REVIEWED BY LAURA KALIEBE

Eight million shopping carts were abandoned on the streets and sidewalks of Southern California in 2007. The shopping carts—used by shoppers without access to a car, public transit or other means to carry their heavy groceries home—symbolize one of the food injustices faced by Americans every year.

The emerging food justice movement, chronicled by Robert Gottlieb and Anupama Joshi in *Food Justice*, seeks to attain “equity and fairness in relation to food system impacts and a different, more just, and sustainable way for food to be grown, produced, made accessible, and eaten.” The food justice movement can be loosely defined as farmers, farmworkers, gardeners, and anyone who is working to develop alternative ways to grow, produce, and distribute food.

With such an expansive subject as the basis for *Food Justice*, no topic is too small (vending machines in schools) or company too large (Wal-Mart) to be tackled by Gottlieb and Joshi. The book takes a sweeping look at our food system through a food justice lens. The first section of the book is a history lesson, examining how food is grown, produced, transported, distributed, and eaten in the United States and other parts of the world. The second section is a guidebook,

recounting organizational and political initiatives that have challenged the food system successfully and offering pointed advice to food justice groups.

Filled with the creative vernacular of the food justice movement, the book explores problems such as food deserts, grocery gaps, and food swamps (areas without affordable fresh food); globesity (the global obesity epidemic); and malbouffe (“bad food” stripped of taste, health, and cultural or geographical identity). But for each problem *Food Justice* identifies, it offers a solution: farmers’ markets, community gardens, and CSAs; food sovereignty (each country’s right to maintain and develop basic foods); and *terroir* (a concept that links food to both its growing practices and cultural associations).

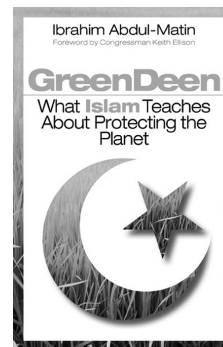
Though optimistic about the fledgling movement’s potential, the authors also point out some of the obstacles that the food justice movement must overcome, such as the debate about whether to address inequities in the food system or to work for system change, and how to facilitate linkage of groups and issues.

Though it is still a work in progress, the food justice movement has the potential to help restructure our food system, starting from the most local of levels. Consider the Rethinkers, a group of middle school students in post-Hurricane Katrina New Orleans, who were able to advocate successfully for more local, healthy fare in school cafeterias across the city. The rest of the country may not be ready to fall in line behind these forward-thinking middle schoolers, but *Food Justice* offers the anecdotes and advice for those ready to do so.

Laura Kaliebe is a Wisconsin-based journalist.

YesMagazine.org/ahmadi

YES! interviews Brahm Ahmadi, co-founder of West Oakland’s People’s Grocery



GreenDeen

IBRAHIM ABDUL-MATIN

Berrett-Koehler, 2010, 232 pages, \$16.95

REVIEWED BY JAMAL RAHMAN

Deen is Arabic for a religion or path, so *GreenDeen* is an apt title for a book that describes a Muslim way of life that celebrates the relationship between faith and the environment.

Author Ibrahim Abdul-Matin gives practical advice on applying Islamic environmentalism to everyday life, explaining the issues posed by waste, watts, water, and food. He provides encouraging examples of Muslim individuals and organizations all over America who manage these problems creatively according to Quranic principles. DC Muslims build coalitions and participate in No Impact Week; a Midwestern Muslim family localizes food and tends their garden; youth and elders cooperate to green their mosque.

Weaving Quranic verses around the issues, Abdul-Matin demonstrates how environmentalism is embedded in the teachings of Islam. We are reminded that in the Quran, God has appointed humanity as vice-regents of the Earth, and that “corruption has appeared on the land and in the sea because of what the hands of humans have wrought.”

To live in balance with nature, to understand the oneness of God and creation, and to be just with others is the “green deen.” The clarity and passion of this book deserve a wide audience.

Jamal Rahman, an author and teacher, is a Muslim Sufi minister at Interfaith Community Church in Seattle, Wash.

FILM ::

The Economics of Happiness

A film by Helena Norberg-Hodge, Steven Gorelick, and John Page, 2011, 72 minutes.

Featuring Vandana Shiva, Bill McKibben, David Korten, Michael Shuman, Juliet Schor, Richard Heinberg, Rob Hopkins, Andrew Simms, Zac Goldsmith, and Samdhong Rinpoche.



REVIEWED BY KRISTY LEISSE

“Lonely people have never been happy people. And globalization is creating a very lonely planet.” So says activist and author Vandana Shiva in *The Economics of Happiness*, an incisive documentary that links today’s global crises (climate change, terrorism, the financial crash) with personal malaise (rising levels of depression and the pervasive emptiness of consumer society). The cause? The macroeconomic structure of globalization, a massive conglomerate of megabanks, multinational corporations, and international financial institutions, all constantly expanding in a deregulated environment that takes profit, and never people, as the *raison d’être* of all things.

The cure? Localization. A return to community, where people can forge connections with neighbors instead of advertising models, and buy food from a nearby farmer instead of the industrial agricultural machine. It is the economic and social bond among fellow citizens, and their very interdependence, insists economic analyst Helena Norberg-Hodge, that allows them to be truly happy.

Interdependence is not something to which we aspire in a culture that glorifies the self-reliant pioneer and

solo entrepreneur. Nor is the local, as the film poignantly shows through the case of Ladakh, a remote Himalayan village that went from self-sufficient, equitable, and compassionate to fragmented, poor, and violent due to economic development along a Western model and the introduction of cheap imported foods and Western media. Globalization convinced the Ladakhis that their culture was shamefully primitive, and they abandoned its best features within a decade, deciding, as so many of us do, to strive instead for a cosmopolitan, “global” life.

The Economics of Happiness captures the incredible waste of global capitalism through eye-opening examples: apples grown in the U.K., flown to South Africa to be waxed, then flown back and sold in British supermarkets; tuna caught on the East Coast of the United States, shipped to Japan for processing, then sold back in America.

The film also reveals the profound unhappiness of such a disconnected world: Ladakhi elders are brought on a “reality tour” of Western culture and witness the desperate loneliness of an old-age nursing home. The sadness in their eyes as they view the end result of a profit-obsessed, people-empty economic system is an anti-globalization statement that needs no words.

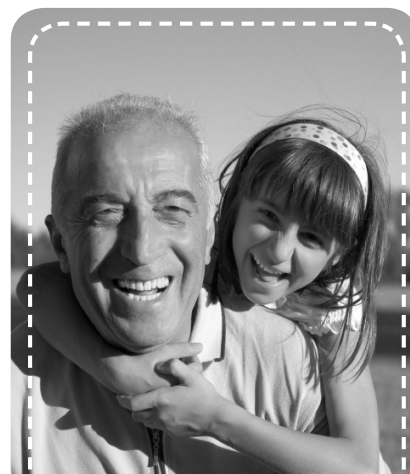
While eight “inconvenient truths”

about globalization—that it breeds insecurity, accelerates climate change, increases conflict, and so forth—dominate the first half of the film, the second half restores hope. Its renowned pro-localization cast, including David Korten, Juliet Schor, and Rob Hopkins, inspires belief that ordinary citizens have the power to delegitimize the institutions of globalization, and reclaim meaningful lives through local ventures. Vivid scenes of farmers’ markets, renewable energy initiatives, and community building from Nicaragua to France, Japan, and Australia show that happiness is possible—and we can welcome it in by embracing the bounty of life that lies close to home.

Kristy Leisse is a writer and professor of Global Studies at the University of Washington, Bothell, where she researches the cocoa-chocolate trade.

YesMagazine.org/economics-of-happiness

Watch the trailer and read the YES! interview with director Helena Norberg-Hodge



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PROPAGATING PLANTS

I'd like to start a garden, but buying plants can be expensive. I've read of propagating cuttings using rooting hormones. Is there a natural way to propagate?

There is—many organic gardeners suggest using “willow water” instead of commercial rooting hormone to get cuttings started. Studies suggest that it works because of a synergistic combination in willows of a growth hormone and salicylic acid.

To make willow water, collect new growth from willow branches, cut into small pieces, immerse in warm water, and soak for at least 24 hours.

There are encyclopedias describing the best propagation methods for individual plant species, but here's the basic process for the casual gardener. Morning, when plants are “rested,” is a good time to take cuttings.

Take a clipping 4-6" long from the plant by cutting less than an inch below a node (where the leaf attaches to the stem). Remove the leaves from the bottom two nodes of the clipping, and soak the stem in the willow water for an hour.

Plant your cutting in soil that is light enough to allow easy root growth. (A recipe for making your own sterile soil

mix is given below.) Place the cuttings in a spot with natural light, and cover them with plastic or an upside-down jar to keep the soil moist.

In a few weeks, when the roots have grown, you will have new plants for free. —C.B.

PEAT-FREE POTTING

How can I make my own environmentally friendly potting soil?

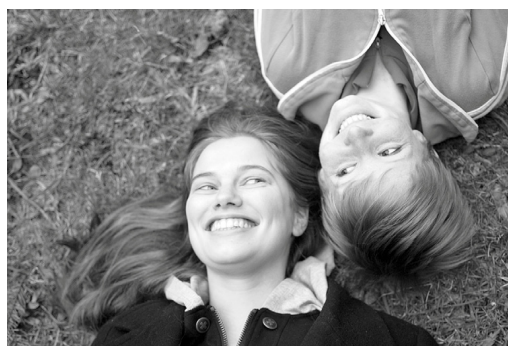
Standard commercial potting soil isn't good for the planet. It usually includes peat, vermiculite, and perlite, none of which is sustainable. Harvesting peat is particularly destructive. When ancient peat bogs are drained, they release carbon into the atmosphere. You can buy a sustainable, organic mix, but not if you're on a tight budget.

Soil-free seed-starting mixes became popular to protect vulnerable seedlings and clippings from diseases and fungi, but sterilizing a homemade potting soil mix is an effective preventative.

The mix should be lighter than garden soil to drain well and allow delicate new roots to spread. A good recipe to start with is in thirds: one part compost or good garden soil for support and nutrients; one part light-textured leaf compost, loam, sawdust, or bark compost to prevent compaction

Our Issue 57 researchers

Alyssa B. Johnson was an environmental consultant for three years. Her two-issue internship at YES! has confirmed her desire to be a journalist. Next stop: volunteering for the Seattle Area Happiness Initiative. **Caitlin Battersby** will take her photojournalism on the road as she travels with her husband learning about permaculture, herbalism, and sustainable building.



Alyssa B. Johnson

Caitlin Battersby

and encourage water retention; and one part coarse sand or grit for drainage.

You can use your oven to sterilize the mix in small batches. Put the soil in a roasting bag or covered dish and heat it for 30 minutes at 160 F, using a cooking thermometer to check that the temperature of the soil doesn't exceed 180 F.

An even greener method is to sterilize the mix outside in a cardboard solar cooker or by solarization under glass or plastic.

Organic gardening sources offer more advice on using available ingredients to create your own soil mix recipes. —C.B.

GROW A CURTAIN

My house gets too hot in the summer. How can I cool it down without using the A/C?

Grow vines as a living curtain or awning to shade your windows, cool your house, and remove carbon from the atmosphere. Deciduous perennials work well for living curtains because they let sun through in the winter and don't require yearly replanting. You'll get the best cooling benefits if you shade south-facing windows (north-facing if you're in the southern hemisphere).

To grow a curtain, plant your vines in the ground, in pots,

YES! BUT HOW ::

or in a window box. Lean a trellis against the wall, then guide your vines up the trellis and over the window as they grow. Using a wooden trellis with pots works well for apartments; it's portable and doesn't require wall fastenings. In permanent settings you can use netting or wire to support the plants instead.

A living awning provides shade without blocking your view. Attach shelf brackets (salvaged, built, or bought) at each side of the window. The awning should ideally extend far enough to cast a shadow below the window in the middle of summer. Fasten wood or wires across the top of the brackets to support the vines, or make a shelf and grow trailing plants in containers above your window.

Double the benefits of your living curtain by growing vines that are beautiful or edible. Runner beans, wisteria, grapes, and hops are good choices, depending on your climate and whether you prefer food, flowers, or beer. —A.J.



GREENAID

YES! PICKS ::

Dispensing Seed Bombs

Seed bombs are a favorite tool of guerrilla gardeners for planting flowers on derelict ground. The simplest seed bombs are made of compostable paper, the most ingenious from a hollow eggshell, while a mixture of compost and clay gives weight for a long-distance throw.

The seed bomb idea was taken up by designers Daniel Phillips and Kim Karlsrud, who customize vending machines to distribute seed bombs instead of gumballs, for 50 cents.

"We really like the idea that seed bombing, while appealing perhaps to our desires to be bad and illicit, actually has the positive result of ecological restoration," says Phillips.

The duo's "Greenaid" seed-bomb vending machines are used to promote public awareness and raise funds by organizations like Project H Design, a nonprofit that runs an education and design project in a high school in Bertie County, N.C. Director Emily Pilloton says they used the vending machines to start discussions about small-scale, local alternatives to large-scale issues.

"Particularly for kids, the vending machines are great conversation starters," she says. "First, people want to know what it is, and then the lightbulb goes off, and it opens up a whole new world of conversation about why it is important to support green spaces and how we can all play a part."

Greenaid supplies localized wildflower seed bombs for the vending machines. Three machines recently placed in Monterrey, Mexico, offer seeds recommended by local experts, including species that were once prevalent in the area—butterfly weed, Mexican hat plant, and cowpen daisy.

Cascadian Edible Landscaping in Seattle is developing their own version of a seed bomb vending machine, offering seeds for salad greens and edible flowers to encourage interest in growing food close to home. The proceeds will go to the Just Garden Project, a nonprofit that establishes edible gardens for low-income families.

—Caitlin Battersby

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