

Faculty Work Comprehensive List

Spring 2015

Presenting the Key Value of Decentralism (Part Two)

Jeff Taylor

Dordt College, jeff.taylor@dordt.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/faculty_work



Part of the [Political Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Taylor, J. (2015). Presenting the Key Value of Decentralism (Part Two). *Green Horizon*, 12 (1), 23.
Retrieved from https://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/faculty_work/977

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by Dordt Digital Collections. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faculty Work Comprehensive List by an authorized administrator of Dordt Digital Collections. For more information, please contact ingrid.mulder@dordt.edu.

Presenting the Key Value of Decentralism (Part Two)

Keywords

decentralization in government, value, democracy, liberty, community, morality

Disciplines

Political Science

Comments

This article is based on Jeff Taylor's book, *Politics on a Human Scale: The American Tradition of Decentralism* © Lexington Books, 2013. Used by arrangement with the publisher. All rights reserved. No part of this excerpt may be reproduced or printed without permission in writing from the publisher.

Online access to article:

http://green-horizon.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/GHM_31.pdf

NUMBER 31

SPRING/SUMMER • 2015

FIRST ISSUE OF VOLUME XII

NEWSSTAND \$3.00



GREEN HORIZON

Magazine

AN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL PUBLISHED BY THE GREEN HORIZON FOUNDATION

GOING Beyond the Obvious *and the* Political Status Quo

AN ENSEMBLE OF ARTICLES
THAT HELP SHAPE THE ACTIONS WE TAKE
TO CHANGE THE WORLD IN A GREEN DIRECTION



TABLE of CONTENTS

Turning to One Another 2
MARGARET WHEATLEY

The GHM Team 2

Provocative? Yes! 3
JOHN RENSENBRINK

Greening the Population Issue 4
LINDA CREE

Collaboration in a Complex World . . 8
CHRISTIAN MONÖ

Loving Rules/Hating Rules 11
PAUL KRUMM

Neither Left Nor Right But in Front . . 12
STEVEN J. SCHMIDT

The United Nations
is a Failed Institution 15
JON OLSEN

Force and Fraud in Hawai'i 17
ROB SHETTERLY REVIEWS JON OLSEN'S BOOK

Thoughts for my Grandchildren 19
STEVE WELZER

Presenting the Key Value of
Decentralism (Part Two) 23
JEFF TAYLOR

Hubris or Humus 26
MAYNARD KAUFMAN

The Perils of Winner-Take-All in Diverse
America 29
ROB RICHIE

Review of *Daddy: What's the Middle
Class?* 31
PAT LAMARCHE & TOM FUSCO

More on Nader & Gore 2000 32
JOHN HOWARD WILHELM WEIGHS IN
JUSTINE MCCABE RESPONDS
SAM SMITH PROVIDES FURTHER COMMENTARY

Mourning and Celebrating Betty Zisk and
Edmund P. (Terry) Fowler 33

The Green Movement's Ten Key Values . . 33

Fable: Barnyard Democracy 34
HERSHEL STERNLIEB

Sustainers 2014-2015 35

Check out our website for articles
www.Green-Horizon.org
Donations via PayPal are welcome. Thank you!

Turning to One Another

MARGARET WHEATLEY

There is no power greater than a community discovering what it cares about.

Ask "What's possible?" not "What's wrong?" Keep asking.

Notice what you care about.

Assume that many others share your dreams.

Be brave enough to start a conversation that matters.

Talk to people you know.

Talk to people you don't know.

Talk to people you never talk to.

Be intrigued by the differences you hear.

Expect to be surprised.

Treasure curiosity more than certainty.

Invite in everybody who cares to work on what's possible.

Acknowledge that everyone is an expert about something.

Know that creative solutions come from new connections.

Remember, you don't fear people whose story you know.

Real listening always brings people closer together.

Trust that meaningful conversations can change your world.

Rely on human goodness. Stay together.

Editor's note: Meg Wheatley first came to my notice at the urging of Doug Hufnagel, a fellow member of the Maine Green Independent Party. He strongly recommended her book shortly after it was published in 1996 on *Leadership and the New Science: Discovering order in a chaotic world*. I was immediately drawn to her thinking and her refreshing outlook about life and organization. In one place she describes her work as opposing "highly controlled mechanistic systems that only create robotic behavior." She has been and continues to be a sought after consultant to organizations in all the continents. Her work is a superb application of post-mechanistic, quantum physics-based science to human organization and behavior. I particularly like her strong emphasis on organizations as self-starting and along with that her affirmation of human individual spontaneity. I felt when I read her and have felt so ever since how pertinent her thinking is to Green thought and values. I hadn't known that she also writes poetry until my friend and Green Party organizer Jacqui Deveneau sent me the above poem. If you have not already done so, get acquainted with Wheatley's writings! -JR

THE TEAM

PUBLISHED BY THE GREEN HORIZON FOUNDATION • SPRING/SUMMER, 2015 • VOLUME TWELVE #31

EDITORS:

John Rensenbrink: john@ensenbrink.com
Steve Welzer: stevewelzer@msn.com

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF GREEN HORIZON FOUNDATION:

Ted Becker, Alabama
Edmund P. Fowler, Ontario, Canada
(PLEASE TURN TO PAGE 33, SECOND COLUMN)
Greg Gerritt, Rhode Island
Rhoda Gilman, Minnesota
Ellen LaConte, North Carolina
John Rensenbrink, Maine
Liz Rensenbrink, Maine
Sam Smith, Maine
Steve Welzer, New Jersey

EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD:

Holly Hart, Iowa
Sam Smith, Maine

Inquiries, submissions,
subscriptions, letters:

GHM, PO Box 476
Topsham, ME 04086 USA

GRAPHIC DESIGN: Sharon Pieniak
www.bluecatmedia.com

LOGO DESIGN: Sean Hill

EDITORIAL ASSISTANCE:
Carla Rensenbrink

MEMBERSHIP & BOOKKEEPING:
Liz Rensenbrink

**MARKETING AND
COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER:**
Brielle Welzer

WEBMASTER: Evie Leder

Green Horizon Magazine is indexed in the Alternative Press Index, which is available from:
Alternative Press Center, PO Box 33109, Baltimore, MD 21218

Provocative? YES!

As you move through the pages of this issue, I think you will agree with me that the articles are particularly provocative. This is the way they seemed to me as I did the editing, and I became enthusiastic.

Different people with different experiences, lifestyles, and perspectives each and all reveal nimble and serious minds at work. They probe. They are not satisfied with the “givens” of conventional understanding, whether of the right or angled from the left—or even from the center. There is a will not just to tear down or scoop the other guy. They are not trying to feed you a line. They want to ferret out a new way to think about answers to problems—problems that seem settled but on closer examination are not settled; problems that need to be subject to new questions, new possibilities, new answers.

What I also like so very much is they do not retreat from puzzles and contradictions. They do not shirk the hardest discipline of all for any writer—to see where the argument takes you and pose questions and answers that pulsate with the call for action; not just any action, but one that flows from the argument and offers a way to practical solutions—often in spite of formidable barriers.

This includes the inevitable presence of risk in taking an action. You are schooled by our writers to realize that changing the world, making a difference, is fraught with the realization that life is broader and deeper than the best laid plans, the best laid argument. Risk is not only part of life, it is part of thought as well.

Life is open, thought is open. In that awareness and with willing and purposeful intent, we can and do change the world. I will not as I usually do on this page, describe how and what the people writing the articles are up to. I want this to be wholly open for you, dear reader. Linger in the articles that attract you. Touch base with others that perplex you or even repel you. Figure out what they think, what you think, and let the reading of this *Green Horizon* be an experience for you. —JR

Greening the Population Issue

LINDA CREE

[D]espite our scientific expertise, or perhaps because of the false sense of control it gives us, we seem to think carrying capacity doesn't apply to us.

Greens have always been associated with cutting edge thinking on environmental problems, yet we've been slow to lead on one of the most critical issues facing us today—that of human over-population. Such hesitation is understandable. In a world of resource wars, entrenched racism, and ethnic strife, how can we talk about “too many people” in a way that doesn't diminish, but enhances, the value of each and every human life? The issue is a moral and political minefield. Nonetheless, as one of the three root causes of our deteriorating biosphere – the others being over-consumption and over-industrialism – it urgently needs addressing.

The concept of carrying capacity has long been understood. We know what happens when a species grows beyond the ability of the resources of its territory to sustain it. It's called “overshoot,” and the result is a die-back to supportable numbers. Lesser known is the fact that the carrying capacity for a species that overshoots can be much less than it was before over-population occurred. This is the way Nature works. Unfortunately, despite our scientific expertise, or perhaps because of the false sense of control it gives us, we seem to think carrying capacity doesn't apply to us.

It wasn't always so. For most of our time on Earth, humans lived in a great variety of culturally rich societies well adapted to their local ecosystems. Diverse customs made each society unique, but the successful ones shared several important concepts. Among them was a belief that all of Nature was sacred and needed to be respected. Another was the understanding that humans were a part of Nature – not separate or superior – and the other animals and plants were our relatives. The Anishinaabe have a phrase for this sense of relatedness, “dinawaymaaganinaadog,” which translates as “all our relations – not just those with two legs, but also those with four legs, or wings, or fins.” The traditional view is that land does not belong to people; people belong to the land as part of a community of living things.¹

Our hunter-gatherer and horticultural ancestors knew the importance of carrying capacity and put a premium on maintaining population equilibrium. Anishinaabe elders teach that, although children were deeply loved, the traditional Ojibwa of northern Wisconsin deliberately kept their family size small in order to stay in balance with their environment.² This is typical of small-scale hunter-gatherer and horticultural societies, according to anthropologist John Bodley. “[P]opulation control has been practiced by virtually all tribal societies to some degree. In practice it is family planning within households and usually carried out by women. Tribal foragers have . . . achieved remarkably stable populations that must have maintained a long-term dynamic equilibrium with shifts in their environments.”³

HOW DID WE GET SO OUT-OF-BALANCE?

Somewhere after the transition to agricultural lifestyles, we lost the sense of the world's sacredness and our relationship with and obligations to other life forms. We came to see ourselves as outside of and above Nature – a sort of “species exceptionalism” that excused our treatment of the rest of creation. We began to think of the land as “belonging” to humans. Since the deer and bear, the wolves and trees were not our relations and no longer had intrinsic value, we could appropriate their home territories

for our own exclusive use. Carrying capacity didn't apply to us! We could always plant more fields to accommodate our growing numbers. And, when we ran out of arable land in our own territory, we could always take over the land of our less powerful human neighbors. Population equilibrium was forgotten, growth took the throne, and the rest, as they say, is history.

Demographers chart the growth in human populations after the Agricultural Revolution as a gradual, then sudden and prolonged incline called the Population J-Curve. Although recent lower birth rates have slowed the climb, the top of the J is still growing steeply, with 80 million more people added to our current seven billion each year.⁴

Numbers can be meaningless unless put into context. It wasn't until 1804, after at least 200,000 years, that the number of *Homo sapiens* reached one billion. It took only 123 years after that for us to reach our second billion (in 1927), and only 33 years (in 1960) to add another billion. By October of 2011 we had 7 billion people⁵ and by 2025 we are expected to reach eight billion people.⁶ That means that we're projected to add our next billion in only 14 years!

It doesn't take a genius to figure that this kind of growth comes at great cost to other living things and puts an intolerable strain on Earth's web of life and the resources we depend on. Our current population is already several billion people over what the Earth can sustain at a European standard of living, and our lifestyle in the U.S. is 50% more demanding on resources than Europe's.⁷

Take one resource alone – water. The ominous truth is we are using our vital freshwater supplies faster than they can be replaced. This is happening all over the world and even in areas of our own country. (Much of this is due to the irrigation involved in industrial agriculture, with a surprising amount also used by the telecommunications industry.) The United Nations projects that by 2025 two-thirds of the world's population will experience serious water shortages, with one third dealing with true water scarcity.^{8,9} Other critical resources are being depleted in similar ways.

We are also experiencing alarming climate changes, massive desertification, and such a die-off of other creatures it's called the Sixth Mass Extinction. The biggest driving force behind these extinctions is human-caused habitat loss.¹⁰ We're simply appropriating more and more of the Earth for ourselves without concern for other creatures or for those who will come after us.

THE EFFORT TO ADDRESS OVER-POPULATION NEEDS TO BEGIN AT HOME

If people think of population at all, they tend to point fingers at poorer, "developing" countries. Most Americans are shocked to learn that the U.S. is the third most populous country in the world, and that we've had the highest and most sustained growth rate of any developed nation in modern times.¹¹ Our nation has tripled its population in the last century, going from its first 100

million around 1916, reaching 200 million around 1966, and now expanding to over 300 million. Even with today's lower birth rate, we're adding the equivalent of another Wisconsin every two years. Most of this, from 60 to 70 percent, is due to natural increase, with legal and illegal immigration together amounting to 30 to 40 percent of our growth.¹²

Since we're so urbanized and technologically sophisticated, with all of the disconnect from nature that implies, most Americans are oblivious to the negative impact our growing numbers are having. Those feeling it most keenly are probably those with a passion for our vanishing wilderness, those who care about things like the disappearance of 50% of our native songbirds since the 1960s, and rural people who have seen beloved landscapes degraded first-hand by the proliferation of powerlines, cell towers, oil derricks, highways, pipelines, suburban sprawl, etc. Others include social scientists worried about the depersonalization and social stress that comes with growing scale, and, of course, ecologists, whom Aldo Leopold described as "living in a world of wounds" unnoticed by most.¹³

Also, due to what's called "the Netherlands Fallacy," we don't recognize wealthy nations as overpopulated because they obtain needed resources from other people's territory when they've exceeded their own land's carrying capacity. The power imbalance inherent in such resource extraction is graphically illustrated by the Potato Famine in Ireland in the mid-1800s when over a million Irish starved while England shipped wheat grown on Irish soil to feed its own already excessive population. Globalization and resource wars represent today's version of such exploitation.¹⁴

Negative population growth through a drop in birth rates has become imperative, although there will be much hand-wringing about "birth dearth" among growth-oriented economists. Twenty nations now have negative population growth including Germany, Italy and Japan.¹⁵ Birth rates, however, tell only part of the story of population overshoot. For the full story, we have to pull in the other two root causes of our unprecedented shredding of the biosphere: over-industrialism and over-consumption.

Physicist John P. Holdren and biologist Paul Ehrlich did just that when they came up with the I=PAT formula to measure the impact, I, of any given population on the environment. Take the number of people, P, multiply it by the group's affluence or measure of consumption, A, and then multiply that by T, which stands for the disruptiveness of the technologies used. To get a quick read on over-population according to the I=PAT equation, take a look at the well-known light-pollution map. Using such data, we see that the need to address population overshoot begins right here at home.

ANTHROPOCENTRIC SOLUTIONS WILL PROVE MORALLY AND ECOLOGICALLY INADEQUATE

We also have to take care not to approach the issue of overpopulation as simply a matter of the Earth's carrying capacity

*Somewhere after the transition to agricultural life styles
... [w]e came to see ourselves as outside of and above
Nature – a sort of “species exceptionalism” that excused
our treatment of the rest of creation.*

for humans. To frame the issue in that way is to continue to accept human appropriation of the Earth-for-humans-only as ecologically and morally defensible. It is neither.

Acting within that old paradigm negates the needs of all other creatures unless we find them useful to us. It has led to the devaluation of the entire natural world, and to the development of “world-eating” cultures that are destroying the biosphere itself to feed their gargantuan appetite for resources.

Such an approach has led to a world where over half of the land has been transformed for human use (40% for human food production alone), where 50% of its fresh water is appropriated by humans,¹⁶ and where we are shoving literally thousands of other species over the cliff of extinction¹⁷ in what Dave Foreman has called the First Mass Murder of Life.

Those stuck in the current paradigm ask: “How can we squeeze more humans onto the Earth?” Such a question leads to the technophiles’ densely populated, hyper-industrialized, hyper-urbanized and – ultimately – unsustainable future. It impoverishes the land and future generations, and its arrogant faith in technological fixes leads to desperate, life-destroying technologies such as nuclear power and to an eventual ecological collapse that calls into question our very survival as a species.

Greens need to ask a very different question: “What should we do if we want a naturally beautiful, diverse, and healthy world in which all of the human family has the opportunity for a good quality of life, and all of the wonderful variety of living things can flourish?” That answer is far different. It becomes clear that we need to recognize our relatedness and responsibility to all life on Earth and to gradually bring our numbers and lifestyles back into harmony with the relatives with whom we share this planet.

A GREEN VISION TO RESTORE POPULATION EQUILIBRIUM

As Greens, we can look to our Ten Key Values for guidance on this difficult issue. Our value of Personal and Global Responsibility tells us we cannot shirk meeting the complexities and controversies head on. Our values of Social Justice and Future Focus compel us to frame the issue in a way that recognizes the worth of every human life and the importance of not compromising the ability of future generations to make a living on Earth. Ecological Wisdom and Respect for Diversity

demand that we acknowledge our dependence on the entire web of life, and our obligation to respect other beings and allow them what they need to thrive. Non-violence inculcates a much-needed reverence for life. Feminism calls on us to emphasize nurturance and the role of women. Decentralization, Grassroots Democracy and Community-based Economics lead us toward egalitarian and sustainable ways of living as we gradually reduce our numbers over the coming generations.

The challenge for Greens is how to translate our above values into actions and policies. While the GPUS Platform contains good planks on birth control, women’s health, and family planning, it stops far short of what we need to say. To provide new vision on this issue, Greens could also:

- develop educational materials to acquaint everyone with the following important concepts: the Population J-Curve, carrying capacity, population overshoot, the Sixth Mass Extinction, the Netherlands Fallacy, the I=PAT equation, negative population growth, biodiversity, sustainability, bioregionalism, and population equilibrium
- promote the desirability of a slow, natural but constant, decrease in human numbers to somewhere around two billion people by 2200 AD.
- encourage women to delay childbearing until after age 25 – important for slowing the cycle of generations – and to have no more than two children
- keep a celebration of the wonder and value of each individual at the forefront of any population policy discussion, and do all we can to nurture love and respect for all of the human family, which includes rejecting as inhumane and counter-productive exigencies such as eugenics and “lifeboat ethics” (we need an expansion of our hearts, not a contraction!)
- create bioregional maps and encourage people to meet more of their needs from their own territory and develop a caring relationship with their particular place
- speak out clearly on the intrinsic value and rights of “all our relations” (that is, species other than humans) including their right not to have their home habitats degraded by human activity
- support efforts at “rewilding” and continue to push back against the industrialization and degradation of rural and wilderness areas
- urge “voluntary simplicity” for those living in the affluent, industrialized world, where we must end the maladaptive habits of growth, waste, and over-consumption
- insist that a thorough understanding of ecology be taught in our schools
- assure that any international programs to encourage lowered fertility be geared to the grassroots level, involve local women in their formation, and be specific to the culture of the people
- support revitalization of the traditional knowledge and skills of Indigenous and rural peoples

We...have to take care not to approach the issue of overpopulation as simply a matter of the Earth's carrying capacity for humans. To frame the issue in that way is to continue to accept human appropriation of the Earth-for-humans-only as ecologically and morally defensible.

- adopt a more comprehensive population plank for the GPUS Platform and encourage state parties to add or update their own population planks to include ideas such as those suggested in this paper.

We must move beyond industrialism's reductionist, mechanistic paradigm. Thinking in that box cannot help us on this issue; indeed, it is a large part of the problem. Despite its emphasis on growth, our culture's paradigm is profoundly anti-life and entirely devoid of ecological wisdom.

Anthropologist Loren Eiseley tells us we are creatures of an ancient and more powerful Green Enchantment - a birthright that even centuries of industrialism have not obliterated. That "green enchantment" can help us recover the understanding we

need of our intricate and sacred relationship with life on Earth, with the beauty, mystery, and obligations that entails. In the end, only that deep love for all creation will save our home, all our relations, and ourselves.



LINDA CREE

first became involved as a Green in the late 1980s during the efforts to support Chippewa treaty rights and oppose sulfide mining in northern Wisconsin. Today she makes her home in the rural-wild heart of Michigan's Upper Peninsula, where she is active in the Green Party of Michigan and as a delegate to the GPUS National Committee. Recently retired from teaching, she is enjoying her family, the woods, and trying to capture her love for the land in folk art paintings.

RESOURCES USED:

1. LaDuke, Winona. "Aspects of Traditional Knowledge and Worldview – The People Belong to the Land" in *Paradigm Wars: Indigenous Peoples' Resistance to Globalization*, Jerry Mander and Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, Eds. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 2006.
2. "Wa swa go ning Traditional Ojibwa Village" tour at Lac du Flambeau, WI, field trip for "Kinomaage: The Earth Shows Us the Way" class, 2011.
3. Bodley, John H. *Anthropology and Contemporary Human Problems*, 4th Ed. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing Co. 2001.
4. Ornstein, Robert and Ehrlich, Paul. *New World, New Mind*. New York: Doubleday, 1989.
5. http://www.worldpopulationbalance.org/3_times_sustainable.
6. Ornstein, Robert and Ehrlich, Paul. *New World, New Mind*. New York: Doubleday, 1989.
7. http://www.worldpopulationbalance.org/3_times_sustainable.
8. http://www.worldpopulationbalance.org/3_times_sustainable.
9. Juhasz, Antonia. "Global Water Wars" in *Paradigm Wars*.
10. <http://ecowatch.com/2012/06/08/is-the-current-rate-of-population-growth-sustainable/>.
11. Statistical Abstract of the United States. 1992.
12. <http://populationpress.org/population-essays/population-policy-for-the-21st-century/>.
13. Leopold, Aldo. *A Sand County Almanac*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1949.
14. Tauli-Corpuz, Victoria. "World Bank and IMF Impacts on Indigenous Economies" in *Paradigm Wars*.
15. <http://www.geographyabout.com/od/populationgeography/a/zero.htm>.
16. <http://ecowatch.com/2012/06/08/is-the-current-rate-of-population-growth-sustainable/>.
17. <http://www.geographyabout.com/od/populationgeography/a/zero.htm>

COLLABORATIONSHIP *in a Complex World*

CHRISTIAN MONÖ

*Our view of the
world will affect
our behavior.*

COLLABORATIONSHIP

In the 2014 spring issue of GH, I discussed something I call collaborationship - the process in which people collaborate and build synergies in order to reach a common goal. Collaborationship is a natural process and has been a vital part of human interaction for more than 200,000 years.

The human ability to make use of each other's strength is astonishing and has played a central role in human development. For example, scholars build their theories on what others have discovered. A writer, no matter how creative, is influenced by what others have written. Every new product on the market is to some degree a mixture between the inventor's idea and other people's thoughts, knowledge, skills and technology.

Interestingly, despite the fact that our world is a result of our ability to collaborate and build synergies, we seem determined to believe that most often people cannot collaborate unless someone tells them what to do and how to do it.

I challenge that belief.

A COMPLEX WORLD

Before we begin, there is one factor that needs mentioning. Our world is very complex. No one can fully understand or foresee the multitude of factors that influence our day-to-day lives or how they will affect us. To complicate matters, the world is changing at an ever faster pace. As one journalist put it, "what works today won't work tomorrow".

In a world of such complexity, how do we build strong collaborative networks? The answer lies in how we view the world.

OUR VIEWS DEFINE OUR ACTIONS

Many years ago I was studying conflict management at university. One day, we were paired up and told to grab each other's hand as if we were about to arm-wrestle.

"Every time your partner's hand touches the table, you get a point", our teacher said. "Your objective is to get as many points as possible." The room then exploded in grunts and hoots as we began to arm-wrestle. After a minute or so, our teacher told us to stop.

"How many of you collaborated?" he asked. Seeing our confused expressions, he continued; "I told you you'd get a point each time your partner's hand touched the table, but I never said it was a competition. You could have collaborated and synchronized your movements, so that you repeatedly moved your hands from one side of the table to the other. Doing so would have given you a higher score than what you got competed against each other."

The moral of the story is twofold. First, *we sometimes expect things to be in a certain way because of habit*. Secondly, these expectations (even if they're wrong) will influence our actions. In other words, *our view of the world will affect our behavior*.

Leaders are thought to create order in this complex world.

These two factors play an important role when understanding why people don't primarily focus on collaboration.

THE PROBLEM WITH LEADERSHIP

In my previous article, I discussed the importance of moving beyond leadership and followership. One of the reasons is that 'leadership', much like the word 'arm-wrestle', tends to trigger a whole range of emotions and expectations that influence our actions. For example, it is often assumed that leaders will guide people in a certain direction and motivate them into action. Consequently, *leaders are thought to create order in this complex world*. They make people collaborate, hence, without leaders, there would be chaos!

This view is so established that nearly all states, associations and companies organize themselves in very hierarchical structures. They also tend to invest large sums of money on leadership development in order to improve and control the performance of others. The objective, they say, is to create stability and productivity.

I believe, in fact, that this approach instead creates long term instability and prevents us from maximizing the performance whether we work in a state, company or other organization structure.

WHY HIERARCHIES DON'T WORK WELL IN A COMPLEX WORLD

Hierarchies are generally drawn as a pyramid, which says a lot about how we perceive them. A pyramid has a wide base making it a stable structure. The person at the top will look down and see the entire organization. This is where we imagine the decision-maker to be, the one with most power. The further down we go in the organization, the less powerful people become. Remove one of individuals at the base of the pyramid and the structure will remain stable.

However, I believe hierarchies tend to reflect the opposite – a pyramid standing on its head. At the bottom we have the decision-maker. He/she holds up the entire structure by being the one who makes all the decisions. The further up we go, the less powerful people become. If we remove the decision-maker at the bottom, the entire structure will collapse.

In a hierarchy, control also becomes important. The decision-maker has to ensure that every individual obeys his/her demands. If people stray too far from the center of the up-side-down pyramid, they shift the balance of the structure and the decision-maker loses control. Again, the structure will collapse.

This makes the decision-maker a very important person. He/she is responsible for the order, structure, progress and development of the organization. This might be nice for the individual in question, but hardly for the organization which instead becomes vulnerable and easy to conquer. All you have to do is to take out the decision-makers.

Another problem with hierarchies is its insufficient adaptability. This can be explained by imagining the decision-maker sitting in the center of a spider's web. Around him sit his closest subordinates. Around them sit their subordinates and so on until we reach the edge of the web.

The people at the edge are the least powerful but they are the first to observe what goes on in the world outside their structure. If they see a threat, they must pass on the information towards the center. Then the decision-makers, despite not having seen the actual threat, will decide what the organization must do. Once a decision has been taken, it will be passed back to the people by the edge, informing them what to do.

This process is ineffective and as a result, hierarchies have difficulty adapting to the ever-changing world. They're just not fast enough to tackle the challenges that face them.

DECENTRALIZATION AND COLLABORATION

The alternative to a hierarchical structure is a decentralized structure. With a traditional mindset, it's easy to assume that decentralization without decision-makers lead to disorder and therefore reduced effectiveness. This does not at all seem to be the case.

I've mentioned the speed at which technology is developing and the effect it has on the world. Remarkably, there's not a single person who runs or coordinates this significant process. Instead it's a *self-regulated market* where inventors get ideas based on current needs or believed desires of the general public. If a product is good, people will use it. If not, it'll soon vanish from the market.

Hierarchies are generally drawn as a pyramid, which says a lot about how we perceive them.

Even modest input can, in cooperation with others, produce a monumental output.

A similar, well-known example is the food distribution process. Take a city like New York. No one controls the entire distribution process. No one even knows exactly how much food is in stock, yet this self-regulating process works beautifully and provides people with food.

Other examples of more specific organizations and networks are Alcoholic Anonymous, open source software, the Internet, peer-to-peer file sharing etc. The appearance of social media has also opened up for collaborationship. People who share the same views can now network with one another across borders without delay, build synergies by sharing ideas and knowledge.

All of these organizations and networks work without hierarchy and decision makers, yet they are successful, powerful and more stable than hierarchies.

MAKING COLLABORATIONSHIP WORK

So how can an organization like the AA, and a complex process like food distribution work without decision-makers?

It boils down to two main factors. First of all there is a clear objective or goal. Be it selling food, helping people deal with alcoholism, or producing a free computer program, the people involved know what their objective is. This is vital if we want to build any form of collaborationship.

Secondly, these networks have rules and values that define a clear framework. For example, law regulates food distribution, AA has anonymity and its 12 step program, and open source programmers know their coding can be used and copied by others.

The values or rules are then monitored either by an authority or by the participants of the network/organization. What's important is that as long as people abide by these rules or values, they are free to act as they see fit. This allows the networks/organizations to adapt to their surroundings much faster and better than in a hierarchy.

The difficulty lies in setting the optimal number and level of rules and regulations. Too many rules will limit people's freedom to act and are difficult both to remember and follow. But without rules or values there will be anarchy. It's the balance that's important.

Often we need much fewer rules than we think. As a colleague of mine pointed out "the game of soccer only has 17 rules and they're so simple a child can understand them." It is simplicity and restriction of rules that open up for a multitude of strategies.

CHANGE THE GAME, CHANGE THE WORLD

If we want to make a difference in this world, we should avoid structuring ourselves as yet another hierarchy. Instead, we ought to focus on building collaborationship, finding people who share our vision or interests and start building synergies.

This can be done without the need of large, existing organizations or networks. Begin by talking to people. Listen to their ideas, interests, goals and visions. Then tell them yours. Network! This is how you find like-minded people with whom you can collaborate. It's also a fantastic way to gain new ideas.

Once you start collaborating, keep your focus on the main objective (your desired goal), but remember that there are many paths to a destination. Stay true to your main objective but avoid locking yourself in a position that you have taken to obtain the goal. It's not collaborationship anymore if one person dictates the actions of the others (that's hierarchy). A good rule to remember is to *focus on the objective and maximizing your own performance while letting go of your ego*.

It's also important to accept different levels of engagement. We can't make a change if people don't participate because they cannot choose their level of involvement. Even modest input can, in cooperation with others, produce a monumental output. The Montgomery bus boycott that started in 1955 is seen by many as the beginning of the end of segregation in America. It was made possible by African Americans simply refusing to ride the city buses in Montgomery.

Once your network starts to grow, identify a few key values/ rules that define the framework of your collaboration. Once this is done, let people act freely within this framework. This can lead to unexpected and positive developments. The 12 step program of Alcoholics Anonymous, for example, is now used to help people with other addictions.

To summarize, if we want to change the world for the better, the answer is not found in leadership, hierarchies and control, but in collaborationship, decentralization and minimum control. Not because it sounds better or is more democratic, but because it is more effective!

Each and every one of us have valuable knowledge and skills that can be used to make this complex world a better place. It's our ability to build collaborationship that will determine how successful the result will be.

So don't play the game played by traditional decision-makers. Change the game, and by doing so you will change the world.



CHRISTIAN MONÓ

is an accomplished speaker and the author of *Beyond the Leadership Myth: Why we follow leaders and lead followers*. You can read the first chapters of his book at www.collaborationship.se. Christian has worked at the UNDP in Serbia, where he led trainings in conflict management for NGOs, amongst other responsibilities. Since his return to Sweden in 2006 Monó has studied the art of followership and its relationship with leadership, while simultaneously testing his theories in practice - both as a subordinate and a manager.

Loving Rules/Hating Rules

[Please note how this article dovetails with the last part of the previous article by Christian Monö. — Editors]

PAUL KRUMM

Greens (though no different in that regard than many others) have a love hate affair with rules. I believe that our issues with rules is the same one that is exemplified by the old Jewish story comparing the response to a man who came to Shammai and Hillel asking that the Torah be explained to him while he stood on one foot. Shammai dismissed the man as asking for something that was not possible, but Hillel simply told him “What is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow: this is the whole Torah; the rest is the explanation; go and learn.”

Shammai was immersed in the need to have rules to prevent bad behaviors, and found it necessary to have a complex system of rules to do that. Hillel on the other hand, saw the issue as reinforcing good behaviors. In Hillel’s paradigm, rules were simply guidelines for good behavior, fleshing out the Golden Rule.

Complex rules are an artifact of living in rigidity, fear, intolerance and power; the old paradigm we as Greens are hopefully trying to replace. Simple rules/guidelines are an artifact of living in flexibility, trust, respect, community and compassion.

As I see it, one of our important issues is how to teach and practice living in flexibility, trust, respect, community and compassion, and aiding those to get there who are still immersed in the rule of rigidity, power, intolerance and fear in making the transition. A part of that process involves the inverse negative of Christ’s positive statement of the Golden Rule. The inverse negative is a logical corollary of any if/then statement. It states “Do not allow others to do unto you that which you would not do to them.”

In other words, allowing anyone to act out of rigidity, fear, intolerance, and power without contrary action is not following the Golden Rule! However in preventing or deterring such action, it is necessary to “Do unto others as you would not have them do unto you”. This is the essence of Gandhi’s Satyagraha. It is a set of guidelines for living all of the time, not just in decision making—whether Green or non-Green decision making.

We need to learn to disagree without having to insist on one unified set of tactics and rules. In rule making this means promoting rules that prevent undue influence by those who dominate discussion, rule making and decision making and that promote working together as equals. This is the reason that I have promoted limits on posting, which have been opposed

by those who have historically used that technique. This is much more important than whether we use a forum or email list. Moving discussions into silos, as may happen in a forum, makes it more difficult to participate in and integrate policy.

We need new rules. Let us develop simple ones that give us broad guidelines that aid in having our actions be reflective of the Four Pillars and Ten Key Values, all of which are specific reflections of the Golden Rule. We have to require more of ourselves than we require of those who espouse ideas that we feel are not consistent with the Golden Rule. The Four Pillars are from the German Green Party: Ecological Wisdom, Personal and Social Responsibility, Grass Roots Democracy, and Non-Violence. The Ten Key Values are from the American Greens: Ecological Wisdom, Social Justice and Personal Responsibility, Grass Roots Democracy, Non-Violence, Decentralization, Community-based Economics, Respect for Diversity, Gender Equality, Global Responsibility, and Thinking to the Seventh Generation (sustainability).

Only by promoting trust, respect, community, compassion and flexibility in our own individual and group actions will we truly get to the other side of (and creatively beyond) the issues before us.

So in our deliberations let us remember that rules are just guidelines in that process, and that we, as well as our rules, need built-in flexibility.

There is this pithy saying by Claudia Ellquist of the Arizona Green Party that hangs on the wall by my desk and helps me remember how to live in this way:

“People who disagree with you are not your enemies. Only people who try to dominate you are your enemies.” Learning the difference can make us all so much more effective.



PAUL KRUMM

is a semi-retired maker and repairer of things who lives off the grid with his wife Micki in an earth sheltered home in Kanopolis, Kansas which he designed and built. Paul’s other interests include applied Sociology, money theory, and alternative energy. Paul’s present project is making the lavender processing equipment that he designed for a local grower, who is now merchandising the design for him. Paul is among the founders of a nascent Green Party in Kansas.

Neither Left nor Right, but in Front GREEN DREAMS, DETOURS & NEW VISIONS *From Here to There and Back Again*

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Steve Schmidt is introducing a theme that we want to build on. Please consider getting into the discussion. The theme can be variously described as "The Green Party: Neither left nor right, but in front." Or as "The Greens: historic harbingers of a new beginning for humanity and the planet." Or as "The Green Party: Picking up the ball fumbled by the dominant parties." Or pick your own way of putting it. Write your thoughts and send them to me, John@Rensenbrink.com*

STEVE SCHMIDT

From the outset, nonviolence and peace are Green core values that have been pursued across the political spectrum. In this way the Greens are neither Left nor Right; they work across-the-spectrum, out in front of conventional thinking

The origins of the Green Party go back to 1972, to Tasmania and New Zealand. Rugged, remote country, the landscape there soars wondrously. Recently, the filming of the *Lord of the Rings* saga in this part of the world brought to millions New Zealand's 360-degree vistas, awesome nature writ large. The Greens began their quest in this land that is magical in many ways and clearly brings forth the message of nature worth protecting – and not only protecting but learning to live with and enjoy.

Origin stories, as Joseph Campbell also reminds, bring a challenge, a call, warnings and a quest. The quest of the fictional Hobbits in LOTR, based on author J. R. R. Tolkien's own experiences during World War 2, reveals a war-and-peace story at its core. The diminutive, human-like Hobbits, attempting to live their daily lives, are confronted by a rising power in a distant realm. The threat of doom and the necessity to adventure to Mount Doom to destroy a ring of power raises allegory to the next level — succeed or die. The Hobbits, of course, would rather cavort and have a fine meal and wine, but times being what they are, they have no choice but to directly confront the powers that threaten to end life as they know it. The Hobbit story remains a relevant tale. If the enemies have changed, the message is the same: there is a danger, grievous danger, afoot, and it must be confronted—or else.

Just as Mordor is depicted in LOTR, there are today forces at work forging powerful weapons of warfare. The allegory of the LOTR trilogy, with its pursuit of the ring of power, delivers a deeper meaning to those who look past the colorful characters, the Hobbits and wizards, elves and dwarves, eagles and dragons, spiders and trolls. In Tolkien's time, the evil forces were Hitlerian, a nation gone mad with revenge. Today the threats come not from a mustachioed villain and Axis nations at war with an Allied world, but from a gathering, ill-defined and seemingly endless global war, stockpiles of nuclear weapons, coupled with natural devastation brought on by a system at war with itself.

In Europe, halfway across the world from the magical, pristine setting of New Zealand, where the Green party originated as what was then known as the Values Party, the Greens began their political reality and began an international journey.

The destruction of Germany and its war machine—the Mordor of LOTR—has led to a sequel to Tolkien’s tale and contains a warning not to be ignored. World War 2 gave way to a new war, a Cold War and world on the brink of global disaster. The frontline of this Cold War was the ruined country of Germany, which was being rebuilt by a younger generation. This new generation, and Green Party, confronted the threat of nuclear weapons poised to fire, delivering a flash of Armageddon not in the form of End Times eschaton announced by Gabriel’s horn, but delivered via a human finger poised above a button. Pushing it would trigger what was not so euphemistically called “MAD” for “mutually assured destruction.”

The political arena that birthed the Green Party in Europe was set amidst an East-West standoff and post-war/new-war, high-alert, launch-ready nuclear weapons. The United States and the Soviet Union showdown threatened almost instant obliteration. Into this setting the newly named Greens began their journey to become a transformative realpolitik on the Continent. The Green Party in Europe was rooted in a set of values to prevent war and at its core held to an anti-nuclear belief in peace. It advanced on a forward-looking path different from continued Cold War thinking and mobilization. It brought forward four pillars, which were to become a foundation for the U.S. Green key values: <http://www.gp.org/tenkey.php>

- Ecological wisdom
- Social justice
- Grassroots democracy
- Nonviolence

The beginning of a Green Party in Europe wasn’t easy. But then, being Green has never been easy. It happened first in what was then West Germany. One of the leading voices was Petra Kelly, a daring peace and human-rights activist who later was

tragically murdered. I want to remind Green Horizon readers of one of Petra’s sayings, which has stood the test of time:

Neither left nor right, but (we are) in front.

Green parties have continued to be in front, forward-looking, envisioning politics, policies, leading-edge solutions that defy politics (and business) as usual. Greens should remember that its pillars and key values are the foundation of the Green Party and burgeoning worldwide green movement. From the outset, nonviolence and peace are Green core values that have been pursued across the political spectrum. In this way the Greens are neither Left nor Right; they work across-the-spectrum, out in front of conventional thinking. The Greens are a visionary party, a values party, a diverse movement that is out in front with ideas that orthodox parties and factions will not and cannot take up, however evident the need or necessity.

The role of Green parties around the world is to quest for better solutions, to picture landscapes of what can be, should be. Greens draft platforms with ideas designed to be realized. The Greens are in front of the proverbial curve and, as independent political parties, are pushing a rights agenda (and pushing back against countries with rights violations). The Green task is to advance ideas whose time has come: human rights, women’s rights, civil rights, ecological rights, peace strategies, new roles for the military (e.g., military operations other than war and environmental security aligned with national security), sustainable economic development, and more.

GREEN POLITICS

The Global Promise

www.charlenespretnak.com/green_politics___the_global_promise_117208.htm

by Charlene Spretnak and Fritjof Capra

“We are neither left nor right; we are in front”

—a Green slogan

The Greens are a visionary party, a values party, a diverse movement that is out in front with ideas that orthodox parties and factions will not and cannot take up, however evident the need or necessity

As Green parties look forward to advancing a wide-ranging rights agenda, forward-looking practical solutions, and green-best practices, it's important to remember that the original vision of the Greens arose from spiritual values that align with Green principles and positions. One of the many cofounder Greens who originated Green ideas and ideals in the United States, Charlene Spretnak, wrote of "ecological wisdom, social responsibility, grassroots democracy, nonviolence, and gender equality." Charlene's book, *Green Politics*, coauthored with physicist Fritjof Capra, helped birth the beginning of the U.S. Green movement that led, in the 1990s, to the establishment of the U.S. Green Party. The value beliefs are expressed in Green founding documents - <https://www.scribd.com/collections/4165209/Green-Party-of-the-US>

Again, it can be and should be recalled that the Green parties began in beauty, in New Zealand settings that feature sublime nature, and then came of age in a challenging, confrontational post-war setting that featured imminent threats of nuclear war. The Greens were at the forefront of the anti-nuke movement in European politics and, in the years since the Greens' founding, a popularly supported drawdown of nuclear weapons systems in Europe and nuclear energy in Germany came to be. Unfortunately, although having reduced the threat of cataclysmic nuclear war with a series of agreements and START treaties, the trend toward peaceful coexistence is now being reversed. New definitions of national security are needed as a new Cold War and new "modernized" nuclear weapons are on the horizon.

The current situation politically in Europe and across the region into the Middle East is a rising, palpable threat of nuclear escalation. Threats of larger conflict are set against ongoing regional wars, specifically, the current crisis in the Ukraine; the escalating tension and conflict between the United States, the EU/NATO, and the Russian Federation; the entangling alliances with Iran and China; and the Mideast's multigenerational conflicts. Against this backdrop, the United States intends to introduce a next generation of nuclear weapons (the B61-12),

to be carried by squadrons of next-generation F-35 fighters, the most expensive weapons system in the nation's history.

Within this provocative setting, the work of the politics of peace by Greens continues. The threats of continued war, the potential for flashpoints, mistakes, or provocation, remind us of the fundamental reason the Green parties started their work at the frontlines. The fact that weapons of nuclear annihilation are being forged anew in "usable" configurations, planned for deployment to the frontlines of Europe and the Mideast, the Near East, and Asia, demands a continued Green quest for peaceful solutions. The Green parties, now in over 100 countries, have a mission: to stay out in front, to speak of values, and envision better solutions and policies than unending war, escalating threats of nuclear delivery, and the continuing and inexplicable assault on the natural world on which we depend for our very lives.



STEVEN SCHMIDT

founded Global Policy 360 and Green Institute online. He is co-author, with Roger Morris, of *Strategic Demands of the 21st Century: A New Vision for a New World* bit.ly/12DWYAB, the Green Institute's initial policy paper and organized the Surviving Victory conference in Washington

DC with the Institute bit.ly/1277ZiX. A key drafter of the founding national Green Party Platform <http://www.gp.org/platform2000.shtml>, Schmidt chaired the original platform committee, serving from 1995 to 2001. He initiated the first Common Ground platform between the Association of State Green Parties and European Federation of Green Parties and assisted in the proposal to draft the first Green Global Charter. In 1994 he ran for Lt. Governor on the Green ticket in New Mexico with Roberto Mondragon, achieving major party status for the New Mexico Green Party, and over the course of the 1990's worked to organize a legally recognized U.S. Green Party http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steven_Schmidt. From 1995-1999, he served with distinction on the New Mexico State Board of Education. Recently president of a leading interactive firm, he established M Channel to set up a forward-looking online media company <http://mchannelonline.com/>. Steve can be followed on Facebook, Twitter, Strategic Demands and GreenPolicy360.

REFERENCES

- Joseph Campbell — http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Hero_with_a_Thousand_Faces
- The New Zealand Values Party (the Green Party of NZ) — http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Values_Party
- Climate Change Brings World Closer to 'Doomsday' Now "Three Minutes to Midnight" — <http://nation.com.pk/national/23-Jan-2015/climate-change-brings-world-closer-to-doomsday>
- Military Operations Other Than War — http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Military_operations_other_than_war
- Green Politics: The Global Promise by Charlene Spretnak and Fritjof Capra — http://www.charlenespretnak.com/green_politics__the_global_promise_117208.htm
- B61-12 by Hans M. Kristensen — <http://fas.org/blogs/security/2013/04/b61-12tail/>
- Green Party of the US – Platform and Key Values — <https://www.scribd.com/collections/4165209/Green-Party-of-the-US> , <http://www.gp.org/tenkey.php>
- New Definition of National Security — http://www.greenpolicy360.net/w/Nuclear_Weapons
- http://strategicdemands.com/blip_on_the_screen/
- http://strategicdemands.com/going_bzhkr/
- http://www.greenpolicy360.net/w/Pope_Francis_on_the_Environment
- http://www.greenpolicy360.net/w/New_Definitions_of_National_Security

The United Nations is a *Failed* Institution

JON OLSEN

Recent issues of Green Horizon Magazine have discussed the relation of local to state to national to international government in the context of the myriad problems facing humanity. I would like to weigh in on getting the right balance.

The concept of “subsidiarity” mentioned in earlier GH articles makes sense to me. What can effectively be done locally, consistent with democratic input, is essential. By contrast, note “The New World Order” as proclaimed often by the heavies of the corporate world, including famously, George H.W. Bush. Intriguingly, this is the real bogey man for the far right and also ought to be for the left as well—one area in which there can be agreement. The New World Order envisioned is essentially a corporate world-wide unified fascist regime, embracing the famous Thatcherite slogan of TINA: There Is No Alternative.

Despite the original design and presumably the intention of the United Nations to prevent wars and ensure human rights, I have come to the conclusion that abject failure is the appropriate designation for that once-proud body. I came to this conclusion some years ago after having read accounts of the Sudan-government-backed militias herding children in Darfur into thatched huts and setting the huts on fire, then shooting parents who tried to rescue their desperate children. Words fail me, as actions have failed in the U.N. Such behavior exceeds our vocabulary—beyond barbarity and genocide. Yet governments do nothing because they are unable to get the “permission” of the Sudanese government! On a microcosm, imagine policemen being called to a home where a woman was being brutalized by her male partner, then being required to ask his permission to rescue her! Upon being told “No,” they leave the scene!

Unfortunately the case of Sudan is one of a long legacy of low points since the founding of the U.N. right after WW II: Indonesia, Cambodia, Guatemala, East Timor, Bosnia, Rwanda and recently Darfur and Syria. The same verdict can and should be applied to recent revelations about the CIA torture program.

I write this essay to try to point a direction away from such unspeakables.

Why has the U.N. been so grossly impotent? The essential reason is that the U.N. is organized in a profoundly undemocratic way to protect the interests of the global powers, not to prevent atrocities. What castrates the effectiveness of the institution are two interlocked structural matters:

1. The channeling of all truly important measures to the “Security”(sic) Council rather than the General Assembly. This SC is composed of the most powerful countries, along with a few 2nd or 3rd rate powers who can usually be bullied by one or more of the major powers. It is only via votes in the SC that allow for military intervention. The General Assembly is devoid of such power.
2. The power of the veto, reinforcing the power of the five largest world powers. The interest of these countries often conflict, so vetoes are common.

Added to these structural flaws is the consistently meek subservience of the Secretary-General (s) of the U.N. They resemble puppets with many strings attached.

So, what is to be done? Looking to the origin of the U.N after the Nuremberg trials and the slogan “Never Again!” we come across The Nuremberg Principles:

"Any person who commits an act which constitutes a crime under international law is responsible therefore and liable for punishment. The fact that internal law does not impose a penalty for an act which constitutes a crime under international law doesn't relieve the person who committed the act from responsibility under international law. The fact that a person who committed an act which constitutes a crime under international law acted as Head of State or responsible governmental official does not relieve him from responsibility under international law."

Among the crimes subject to prosecution under international law are:

Crimes against peace:

"Planning, preparation, initiation, or waging a war of aggression or a war in violation of international treaties, agreements or assurances; participation in a common plan or conspiracy for the accomplishment of any of the acts mentioned."

War Crimes:

Violations of the laws or customs of war which include, but are not limited to, murder, ill-treatment or deportation... murder or ill-treatment of prisoners of war or persons on the seas, killing of hostages, plunder of public or private property, wanton destruction of cities, towns, or villages or devastation not justified by military necessity." Similar descriptions come under

Crimes against humanity.

Portion of the Preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

"Whereas Member States have pledged themselves to achieve, in cooperation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms..."

"Article 2: Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status..."

"Article 3: Everyone has the right to life, liberty, and security of person.

"Article 4: No one shall be held in slavery, or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

"Article 5: No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

"Article 6: Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

"Article 8: Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.

"Article 9: No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

"Article 30: Nothing in the Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group, or person any rights to engage in

any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein."

Note: There is no exclusion for the invented term "enemy combatant." The meaning is very clear: these rights belong to every PERSON. It is evident all over the world, including most definitely in the United States, that all of these provisions have been flagrantly violated, with impunity. Hence, the U.N. as an entity to enforce such a body of wisdom is utterly ineffective. Despite its promising beginning, the U.N. as presently constituted is beyond help and hope for the suffering people of the world. What is needed is the formation of a new, truly democratic organization of nations located on neutral ground (obviously NOT in the country which is, in the words of the late Martin Luther King, "the greatest purveyor of violence on Earth.")

I hasten to point out that I am in NO WAY calling for a world government, nor abandonment of national sovereignty, but merely stating that there are conditions (like gross lawlessness, genocide, and barbarity) under which the sovereignty of nations must not be supreme. What is needed is not the centralization of power into one universal government, but rather the effective empowerment of the many governments to stop atrocities in their tracks. How is this to be achieved? Not with the lame and tepid threat or implementation of "sanctions," but a robust multinational peace force consisting of many dozens of nations acting quickly and decisively to intervene, not for the purpose of taking sides in civil conflict but rather to enforce peace, and forcing matters to be brought for negotiation.

Let such a new organization begin at once, instituted first of all by the smaller, non-warmongering states, set in a neutral locale, and emphatically reaffirming the original principles set forth above.

Once implemented, these founding members can then freely withdraw en masse from the corporate-corrupted United Nations, which then would be a hollow shell of an organization, the continuation thereof would constitute a farce. If the big powers refuse to cooperate, they will become pariah states, rogue states, outside the common rules by which civilized nations abide. Our survival depends on it, as does that of our descendants.



JON OLSEN

is a long time peace and justice activist and a Green Party member for 25 years. A graduate of Bates College in Maine with a degree in philosophy, he went to the University of Hawai'i for a Master's Degree in the same field. He returned to Maine in 2001, serving twice on the Steering committee of the Maine Green Independent Party. He has conducted town caucuses and gathered signatures for Green Party gubernatorial candidates. His recent book, *Liberate Hawai'i*, describes the legal and historical research done by Hawaiian scholar-activists. The book documents the illegal claim of the US to the sovereignty of Hawai'i and demonstrates its fraudulent nature as well. Olsen draws a parallel with the similar fraudulent attempt by the late USSR to do the same to Lithuania.

Force and Fraud *in* HAWAII

Review of *Liberate Hawai'i ! : Renouncing and Defying the Continuing Fraudulent US Claim to the Sovereignty of Hawai'i*, Jon D. Olsen, Goose River Press, Waldoboro, Maine, 2014. \$17.00. [www.liberatehawaii.thebook.com]

ROBERT SHETTERLY

Jon Olsen's excellently researched book on the history of Hawai'i explores the US intrigue to undermine its sovereignty and annex it. He also explores what possibility there may be for Hawai'i to regain its independence. Reading it I was reminded of the words of Chief Joseph of the Nez Perce. I had recently been in several middle school classrooms teaching about the US Civil Rights Movement where we were discussing the legitimacy of power. I thought this quote from Chief Joseph was helpful:

"I have asked some of the great white chiefs where they get their authority to say to the Indian that he shall stay in one place, while he sees white men going where they please. They cannot tell me."

I asked the students where the 'great white chiefs'' authority came from. Some moral precept? The students immediately said that this authority came from power, nothing else. What kind of power? Military, they said. When I pushed them further, white supremacy and racism were mentioned and economic profit.

I was surprised reading Jon Olsen's book how little of the history of Hawai'i I knew, and what a sad and unexceptional story it is. Unexceptional because it's like so many other stories of US hypocrisy and imperialism. But it does have many startling and exceptional moments. The plot to annex Hawai'i was not made by the US government although there was plenty of support in Washington. Rather, in 1887 a small group of conspirators first re-wrote the Hawai'i constitution, what was referred to as the "Bayonet Constitution" because of the way it forced the queen's brother King Kalakaua into mere figurehead status, and then they forcibly ousted the popular Queen Lili'uokalani in January 1893. The conspirators, led now by the US minister John Stevens, ordered 160 US marines to land from the ship Boston and surround the Queen's palace. No shots were fired. The Queen, sure that a later appeal to the US president Grover Cleveland would reverse the coup, chose not to resist militarily, but to resist diplomatically. She wanted no blood shed.

*It's not so much cynical
to describe the ethic of
US foreign policy as
might makes right, as
it is inaccurate. The
proper phrase would be
might makes fact. Might
establishes ownership.*

And, curiously, Queen Lili'uokalani was both right and wrong. Grover Cleveland was appalled at the arrogant greed of this gang of rogue conspirators. Cleveland pulled the annexation treaty from the Senate and ordered a full investigation. He understood both the financial interests (sugar) and the military interests (strategic port) of the plotters but, unlike President Polk who in 1846 conspired to create the Mexican War in order to steal the Mexican territory that would become a great portion of the western US, Cleveland thought that US political ideals were more important than added wealth and power. In his emphatic speech to Congress denouncing the coup in Honolulu Cleveland said:

"By an act of war, committed with the participation of a diplomatic representative of the United States and without authority of Congress, the Government of a feeble but friendly and confiding people has been overthrown. A substantial wrong has thus been done which a due regard of our national character as well as the rights of the injured people requires we should endeavor to repair."

The president ordered Lili'uokalani reinstated but the conspirators refused. The matter ended there in a stalemate until the Spanish American War in 1898 when the US president William McKinley corrected Cleveland's faulty assumption that the United States' primary values were not wealth and power. The annexation was approved, not by a treaty (which had failed due to lack of a 2/3 vote) but by a simple majority vote as a joint resolution of Congress. Jon Olsen comments at this point that as the US grabbed not just Hawai'i, but also, the Philippines, Guam, Puerto Rico and Cuba, it "ceased to be a nation and became an empire."

One cannot read Olsen's fine book without thinking of another famous American quotation. This one from Margaret Mead:

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

Margaret Mead was thinking of positive change, but it would seem, sadly, that more often we can say the same about negative change. Simply replace her words 'thoughtful' with 'scheming,' and 'citizens' with 'conspirators.' Think of the handful of neo-cons who engineered the Iraq War, or the coterie of LBJ's cronies who lied about the Gulf of Tonkin. It would seem that the only time the US has appropriately used its political and moral ideals to justify the birth of a country was when they were used to midwife its own birth --- and then for the sake of convenience.

It's not so much cynical to describe the ethic of US foreign policy as might makes right, as it is inaccurate. The proper phrase would be might makes fact. Might establishes ownership. Might

wins. Right is really irrelevant for fact and is the concern of prissy moralists. Might is the Ship of State steaming into the future, right is the life raft disappearing in the ship's wake. Once the liferaft is out of view, it will have no claim on the facts of power.

That last sentence is why Jon Olsen's book is so important. It makes sure we can still see the legitimacy and possibility of Right bobbing along somewhere far behind. And in a fascinating chapter about how Lithuania regained its sovereignty after a 50 year hiatus, Olsen suggests how the citizens of Hawai'i might use the example of Lithuania to free themselves from the US, and what in fact today amounts to a genuine national liberation movement growing in Hawai'i.

Another strange chapter in this history happened in 1993 when the Clinton administration, together with Congress, issued a formal apology to Hawai'i for the overthrow of Queen Lili'uokalani. Olsen explores what a curious event this was morally and politically. The powerful burglar, the US, apologizes to its victim, Hawai'i, but condescends to do nothing to rectify the crime. The annexation was not apologized for. Power remains the determining factor. Usually a criminal is in a subservient position, at the mercy of the victim, and apologizes to seek clemency or forgiveness. Here the moral order is inverted. The criminal acts the part of the moral superior; the criminal controls the misused law. The apology really becomes an insult because it flaunts international law and is meant to sanction the power of the imperialist occupier. Hawai'i is meant to be grateful for its role as collateral damage in the growth of empire. The US claim to Hawai'i as territory and state remains fraudulent under international law.

Jon Olsen makes clear that the US acquisition of Hawai'i had nothing to do with morals or ideals --- only with power, resources, exploitation and the strategy of how to expand that power.

And then he stands in solidarity with the Hawaiian people who are organizing to separate themselves from the behemoth that continues to despoil the land with its military and warp Hawai'i's values with its materialism.

If, as Dr. King urged, we recouple power with moral purpose, anything can be done. Even repudiating a make-believe "statehood" in the name of sovereignty and law.



ROBERT SHETTERLY

is an artist and writer who lives in Brooksville, Maine. His collection of portraits — Americans Who Tell the Truth — has been traveling around the country for the past eight years. (www.americanswhotellthetruth.org)

THOUGHTS for My Grandchildren

...on What You'll be Facing

This is the sixth and final article in a series by Steve Welzer

STEVE WELZER

Grandchildren, in this final notebook entry I'm going to start dispensing Advice. I don't blame you for reaching for your earplugs. But, humor me...

We've noted that you'll be living through special times in the sense that there will be a growing background buzz associated with the looming civilizational-ecological crisis. But for you, as middle class Americans, there won't necessarily be dramatic shifts of circumstance in your day-to-day existence. Most likely, yours will be the common challenge of living in this world as it is.

Still, that's quite a challenge. We've discussed before how being human has some inherent issues. Consciousness and self-consciousness result in a unique degree of anxiety and "existential" discomfort. That's one reason why we need the cocoon of culture. Relative to other animals, it's hard to be a human being.

But the point of these notebooks is that it shouldn't have to be this hard. Look around the world at the stress and the suffering. It will be presented to you as normal. Don't believe it. Life could be better, it should be better, and we can make it better.

Our movement has a slogan: "A Better World Is Possible." An important step toward realizing that vision is to spread the news that "better" lies in a very different direction than our traditional cultural values might suggest. It will require working patiently to counter a whole variety of deeply ingrained misperceptions.

THE MYSTIQUE: "PROGRESS AND DEVELOPMENT"

The long-ago shift from the Old Ways to the New was traumatic, but it seems that once the developmentalist trendlines were established as our cultural norm a mystique about it took hold. The New Ways were presented as "progressive" by those who most benefited. It was in their interest to foster general acceptance of this idea—even though the truth was that the development of the urban-technological edifice made life harder for the vast majority.

Psychologists tell us that people tend to attribute their struggles to their own shortcomings. It appears to most people that others are coping better. The supposition, then, tends to be: if others can manage it, our social reality must be manageable. Modern youth face a challenge of trying to craft a persona of competence amongst the institutional and technological minefields of the Leviathan. People fall into depression when the maintenance of the persona is too difficult, the air of buoyancy too hard to

*The stress and the suffering
will be presented to you as
normal. Don't believe it.*

*The development of the urban-technological edifice has made life unnecessarily harder
for the vast majority of human beings.*

sustain. This is a widespread affliction. If you understand that the social reality is problematic—hard to manage—then you can have some perspective on your own situation and the frustrations and difficulties you'll encounter as you try to cope.

The frustration was visible on the face of Mario Savio when he spoke at Berkeley's Sproul Hall in December of 1964. But it wasn't fully clear what he had in mind when he proclaimed: "There's a time when the operation of the machine becomes so odious, makes you so sick at heart that you can't take part . . . and you've got to put your body upon the gears and upon the wheels, upon the levers, upon all the apparatus . . . and you've got to make it stop!"

MAKE WHAT STOP?

Mario Savio was a relatively privileged young collegian with a bright future. The Vietnam War was not yet an issue on campus. What was he railing against? racism? poverty? capitalism?

A HISTORY OF "SCARCITY"

Grandchildren, even when I was your age (and by the way, Sarina, I really enjoyed your ninth birthday party last week!) I had the idea that war and poverty didn't make sense in a world that had seen so much progress. In addition to my reading, writing, and arithmetic skills I had fully absorbed the subtle but ubiquitous lessons regarding the touted progress of our society. And I was fully convinced of it, noticing how the cars got bigger and fancier every year.

Later, as a teenager, I made intensive inquiries trying to understand the reasons for the social ills "all around." My readings indicated that many of them could be attributed to scarcity, which had historically caused contention among people, groups, and nations. The contention led to belligerent, acquisitive, and exclusionary behavior. Until the modern era, efforts to overcome scarcity had never gotten far enough as to make much of an impact. But advances associated with the Enlightenment and the Scientific/Industrial Revolutions presented humanity with the opportunity to realize age-old dreams.

This seemed to make sense. But I noticed that there was a raging debate about how to go forward from this point in history.

The conventional wisdom, with which I was thoroughly familiar, held that democracy and freedom of the kind attained under the American Way of Life simply needed to be generalized.

An alternative viewpoint was based on one or another variant of socialism. It maintained that the standard Western "bourgeois democratic" worldview is flawed because it conflates the idea of "freedom" with "free markets"—the latter being a euphemism for an economic system based on private ownership of the means of production. It asserted that a higher stage of social development could be attained only by extending democracy from the political into the economic sphere via collective ownership.

Each of these worldviews offered a trenchant critique of the other. The private enterprise advocates argued that "the people" could never, in reality, collectively own and control the industrial apparatus of a complex modern economy. Rather, socialization of the means of production could only have the deleterious effect of concentrating more power in the hands of the state. Socialists, on the other hand, claimed that under capitalist production relations class division could never be overcome, and as long as society is riven in that way public policy will never be made democratically, it will always be unduly influenced by the owning plutocracy.

I listened to the arguments and made a decision. It seemed to me at the time that the goal of a classless society needed to be central. I thought there must be a way to deal with the caveats about socialism such that an advancement into the "next higher stage" of history would be possible and successful. And for many years I worked hard for that vision of human liberation.

A DEEPER QUESTIONING

When the Green movement first emerged it seemed to many of us activists like just another of the "niche" movements to come out of the Sixties. We were fully supportive of the reforms they all advocated, but we hoped to impress upon them the need for fundamental systemic change, which we interpreted to mean: Capitalist productive relations as the problem, socialism as the solution.

It did concern many New Left activists like myself that the experiments with "really existing socialism" had not often proven

Each of the twentieth century ideologies offered a trenchant critique of the other.

The Greens were questioning the common fundamental assertion of the two dominant worldviews regarding the legacy of the process of “progressive development.”

very satisfactory. We contrived explanations, but during the 1980s I began to notice increasing attention to ideas associated with something heralded as a “new paradigm worldview.” It professed very different explanations. To my surprise, the ideas had originated in the Green movement—which clearly had started to address issues far beyond simple environmentalism. I discovered that the Greens were taking the radical step of questioning the common fundamental assertion of the two dominant worldviews regarding the legacy of the process of “progressive development.”

Whereas the capitalist and socialist ideologues agreed that humanity has “come far” and now just has to take one or another set of further steps in order to achieve abundance, leisure, peace, and security, the Greens pointed out how the reality of our circumstances in the 20th–21st centuries utterly contradicts that sanguine perspective. Instead of abundance, we’re facing depletion; instead of liberation, we’re in jeopardy of collapse! States are failing, safety nets are fraying . . . and beyond the human sphere, the stresses on the planet are shocking. In reference to the fact that we’re living through the sixth great mass extinction of life on earth, John Clark writes: “If an extraterrestrial came to visit and then went back to report on what was happening here, this would certainly be the number one item. News from Earth: ‘They’re going through a kind of planetary disaster that has only happened six times in several billion years!’”

I came to feel that only the Greens could satisfactorily explain how things have arrived at this point. Rather than a beneficial and progressive process of development, they said that our history should be viewed as the chronology of a long aberrant period replete with resource contention, power-lust, war, exploitation, and oppression. Having endured such for hundreds of generations, this state of things has come to seem normal, a characteristic of the human condition. But it’s not so. We entered a unique crucible when the human population bloom reached a critical point prior to the Neolithic Revolution. That crisis forced a transition into very unnatural and uncomfortable lifeways. Values became distorted. We struggled to cope with the situation by straining to expand food supply and increase productivity in general. Doing so only fostered the expansion of the Leviathan, consigning us to the plight of running faster and faster on a treadmill to nowhere.

Scarcity is a concept relative to population numbers and felt needs. It was not an ever-lurking specter until urban life became predominant. Only then did the “New Ways” pattern take hold, the pattern whereby the most aggressive

managed to accumulate wealth and assert elite dominance, while the masses labored to avoid penury. The carrot of aggrandizement and the stick of anxiety fueled growth. The growth demanded more inputs, both objective and subjective, leaving us now on the verge of depletion and exhaustion.

WE’RE NOT FREEING OURSELVES

Grandchildren, you might ask: How is it that the twin ideologies of industrial modernism could have failed to recognize such problematic civilizational trajectories? The answer is that they shared a misguided value system. Their focus was on the “panacea” of alleviating scarcity through increasing productivity.

In 1930 the British economist John Maynard Keynes published an article titled “Economic Possibilities for Our Grandchildren” (he stole the idea from me!). But he actually wasn’t writing about his own grandchildren, he was writing about people who would be in the prime of their lives a hundred years hence, in the year 2030. That’s you! Due to gains in productivity, he predicted that by 2030 a 3-hour daily shift and a 15-hour workweek would become the norm.

Well, since then productivity has actually increased more than he anticipated. Yet the middle and lower classes—even in the most affluent countries—are still working very hard. I think we can view Keynes’s prediction as an exemplar of the mystique of development: We’re “making progress.” We’re “freeing ourselves.” We’re “getting somewhere.” We’re “mastering nature.”

The problem is: we’re not freeing ourselves. We’re burdening ourselves. And the culprit is those hypertrophied civilizational trendlines: More, bigger, faster, farther.

For all the gains in productivity and efficiency, we have not made life easier or better. Under the influence of misguided values we’ve lost things that are more important than “affluence” and technological capability. We’ve lost appreciation for limits. We’ve lost our bearings—due to a lack of grounding in the elemental; due to a preoccupation with the superficial; due to a misconception about what really constitutes freedom.

The focus on productivity has been successful within its self-reflexive domain. We’ve gained the ability to produce an enormous amount of food, energy, goods, services, and amusements. In fact, we can produce so much now that material scarcity would no longer be an issue if it were not for the highly skewed distribution of It All.

But we haven’t considered the extent to which we’ve been increasing the scarcity of things that are much more vital to social and psychological health.

THE SPECTRUM OF THE HUMAN CONDITION

Grandchildren, news reports almost every day now reflect how the civilizational crises are manifesting as “trouble at the periphery.” The result may be that you observe your peers growing conservative. Or maybe we should say “preservative” . . . in the sense that their inclination will be to preserve their relative prosperity and “normalcy” in the face of encroaching pathologies exhibited by the left-behinds, the marginals, and the underprivileged. The social breakdown, terrorism, disease, etc. “out there” will be increasingly disquieting.

The first entry of these notebooks to you contained a succinct Robert Louis Stevenson poem from the first page of the *My Book House* volumes that we read together in your early years:

The world is so full of a number of things,
I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings.

There is truth in that, but it's a truth related to just one pole of the spectrum of the human condition. For balance, here's another succinct couplet apropos of the other pole:

We live in a sea
Of neurosis and technology.

(Neurosis here is meant to represent both the psycho- and sociopathologies consequential of a civilization in crisis. Technology is meant to represent the entirety of the institutional-technological Leviathan, but especially the hypertrophied aspect of what Barry Commoner calls the “technosphere.”)

The latter is so diametrically opposed to Robert Louis's halcyon representation! . . . purposely, in order to give you a sense of the full spectrum of “What You'll Be Facing.” Because only the full spectrum is the truth.

TOWARD ECOLOGICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

Grandchildren, strive to discern the truth and to find balance. Meanwhile: You can recognize the profound problems of our society without disdaining to participate. Esteem comes from participating and coping. Don't drop out. Live fully (“anyway”), with positive aspiration and even with good humor. Take care of yourselves, your health, your families.

The report of the extraterrestrial visitor might focus on humanity's crisis, but what he might miss—because it's both unprecedented and inchoate—is something else; something that's spreading tenuous roots underground; something that could be a basis for optimism amid the prognostications of civilizational collapse.

If we'd like to feel that the human race is capable of progress, we could re-frame that notion to mean advancement of consciousness. A case then could be made that we're on the verge of a real leap forward.

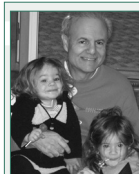
Let's think back again to that fateful crossroad when humanity entered the critical phase of our population bloom ten thousand years ago. Let's remember that most human communities responded appropriately and limited their population growth. It was likely a kind of ecological reflex-response and not a result of deliberation based on consciousness of the macro-situation. There was no “policy decision” on the part of humanity worldwide to do the right thing. Unsurprisingly, some of the tribes did not do the right thing—rather, they endeavored to try to support a too-large population by taking a path that led to the misbegotten transition to the New Ways.

What's hopeful, in our time, is the possibility of a deliberate advancement on the basis of a very new, very real, and increasingly deep ecological consciousness.

The onset of the human species bloom dates to at least a hundred thousand years ago. The urban-technological hypertrophy that has been so problematic was built up over a period of two hundred generations. A perspective on arresting and reversing these trends must be realistic in relation to the timeframes involved. Can we get the human population back to three billion within a couple of hundred years? More generally, can we—with patience, humility, and a new kind of wisdom—shift our civilizational trendlines toward ecological and social sustainability?

I mentioned before about how impacted I was to discover the “new paradigm” analysis of the Green movement. Even more significant than its alternative explication of “where we've been” is the hope it engenders in providing guideposts regarding “where we can go.” Rather than advocating some new socio-economic system, it suggests how we can let go of the mystique, shrug off the burden, stop the machine, and step off the treadmill.

Grandchildren, the world surely is, indeed, full of a large number of felicitous things. The most beautiful and wondrous among them have nothing to do with monetary expenditure, industrial production, or complex division of labor. The monstrous modern reality of states, corporations, remote governments, and impersonal institutions produces little of real value. For the sake of your well-being and peace of mind I hope you'll consider the Green alternative. You could be pioneers of the Great Turning. That may sound like a big job, but it's really as simple as finding your way Home.



STEVE WELZER

a co-editor of this magazine, has been a Green movement activist for over twenty years. He was a founding member of the Green Party of New Jersey in 1997 and recently served on the Steering Committee of the Green Party of the United States. Steve holds a Masters degree in Economics from Rutgers University. He lives in East Windsor, New Jersey, and is pursuing a project to establish an ecovillage in that state.

Presenting the KEY VALUE of Decentralism (PART TWO)

Americans have traditionally been suspicious of highly centralized government... because why? Because it tends to be directed by remote elitists and administered by remote bureaucrats. In their view, neither the elitists nor the bureaucrats are responsive to the actual needs and desires of ordinary citizens. In this way, decentralism is often linked to democracy. Decentralization involves more than states' rights although this principle is enshrined in the Constitution through the Tenth Amendment. It also means minimalistic government at every level. This is the negative state—a “bare bones” approach to government. The ultimate decentralization is individual self-governance (i.e., anarchy) although few Americans have ever embraced this as a goal. Much more common, over the years, is the idea expressed through popular expressions such as “don’t tread on me,” “just want to be left alone,” “live and let live,” “it’s a free country,” and “get the government off our backs.” This presupposes respect for the individual but it does not exclude the value of community.

JEFF TAYLOR

A leader who feels no loyalty to his neighborhood or town is not likely to have a genuine affinity for his nation or world.

THE RULING CLASS

The Tea Party movement is the latest political manifestation of traditional American tendencies: suspicion of power concentrated in the hands of the few, grumbling about big government, preference for state and local control, and protectiveness toward individual liberties. In its own way, the Occupy Wall Street movement represented some of the same tendencies even though it was often depicted as the polar opposite of the Tea Party. Both have been frustrated with a corporate-dominated status quo where Washington seems to be a rigged game while the middle class—or the 99 percent—are given empty promises by politicians who are discreetly leased by a financial elite. Tea Partiers are apt to identify the culprit as big government while Occupiers focused on big business but both have been seeing the same thing: a mutually-beneficial yet often publicly-detrimental alliance between public power and private power.

As Gaetano Mosca observed long ago:

Among the constant facts and tendencies that are to be found in all political organisms, one is so obvious that it is apparent to the most casual eye. In all societies . . . two classes of people appear—a class that rules and a class that is ruled. The first class, always the less numerous, performs all political functions, monopolizes power and enjoys the advantages that power brings, whereas the second, the more numerous class, is directed and controlled by the first . . . In the United States all powers flow directly or indirectly from popular elections . . . The rich ordinarily feel a certain aversion to entering public life, and the poor a certain aversion to choosing the rich for elective office. But that does not prevent a rich man from being more influential than a poor man, since he can use pressure upon the politicians who control public administration. It does not prevent elections from being carried on to the music of clinking dollars. It does not prevent whole legislatures and considerable numbers of national congressmen from feeling the influence of powerful corporations and great financiers.

Mosca's *The Ruling Class* (*Elementi di Scienza Politica*) was first published in Italy in 1896. That was the same year populist William Jennings Bryan made his Cross of Gold speech at the Democratic National Convention in the U.S. and first received his party's presidential nomination.

NATURE AND DECENTRALISM

The matter of scale when it comes to society is analogous to our perception of nature. There are some who are awed by the wonders of nature on a grand scale. Majestic mountains and beautiful beaches are certainly appealing but such macro appreciation of nature does not preclude micro appreciation. There are those of us who developed a love of creation sitting on the lawn looking closely at blades of grass and hills of ants. Or watching the comings and goings of squirrels. To take larger examples, we could mention the look of clouds as they drift through the sky or the feel of wind as a storm is coming up. All of these can be enjoyed in one's own backyard. Such experiences do not need the infrastructure of the federal government or the philanthropy of wealthy private interests. They do not cost money. In their own way, they are as moving and instructive as a trip to the Grand Canyon or Yellowstone.

It could be objected that not everyone has a backyard. This is true. It is also part of the problem. Modern urban life involves a disconnect from nature whereby grass of much quantity is experienced only through a park maintained by government. We cannot all live on farms, and big cities have their charms, but everyone can benefit from easily-accessible spaces that offer dirt, rock, vegetation, wildlife, and open sky for clouds and stars. To think and feel, study and connect, pray and worship. Concrete and plastic and man-made noise can only take us so far. Bill Anderson made this point in the country song "City Lights," distinguishing between the stars that God made and the lights that man makes. One need not be a creationist to recognize the distinction. As wonderful as civilization can be, it is still not the same as nature. The poet William Cowper put it this way: "God made the country, and man made the town."

A true love of nature can be enjoyed in a variety of ways. If you are only interested in the big and showy, the famous and distant, then you may be suffering from shallowness and egocentricity. In the same way, the local and provincial are often scorned by those whose political ambitions and power lusts lie on a national if not global scale. They care about humanity in the abstract but not actual human beings. Instead, the mundane lives of proles in fly-over country and the geopolitically-inconsequential lives of collateral damage victims in foreign wars are of little interest to elite classes. A leader who feels no loyalty to his neighborhood or town is not likely to have a genuine affinity for his nation or world. From the perspective of such a leader, humans are something to be used . . . stepping stones on the way to self-aggrandizement. With that mindset, bigger is always better.

Beware of false messiahs who peddle their wares of national salvation and global utopia. That is the way to regimentation and genocide. Show me a man or woman who truly loves a neighbor and you will be showing me an internationalist in the best sense of the word. Even if susceptible to pro-war propaganda by manipulators in government and media, his or her instincts remain human if not divine. Attachment to the local and love of the little ought to be encouraged by all humanitarians and theists because one needs to know how to crawl before one can walk, one must know the alphabet before one writes a book, and one must care for those who live nearby before one can empathize with those who live thousands of miles away.

Wendell Berry spells out the connection between community and localism: "Community is a locally understood interdependence of local people, local culture, local economy, and local nature. (Community, of course, is an idea that can extend itself beyond the local, but it only does so metaphorically. The idea of a national or global community is meaningless apart from the realization of local communities.)"

FOR GOOD AND FOR SAFETY

Finally, a word of caution is in order. Decentralization of power is not a panacea. The quality of decisions made at a local or state level is not necessarily better than the quality of those made at higher levels. Sometimes such decisions are better than those made at higher levels. Sometimes they are worse. Sometimes they are glaringly worse, as was the case with segregation and Jim Crow laws in the South, among other places, for most of the twentieth century. Fidelity to an abstract principle should not be allowed to obscure the real human impacts on the ground.

The localization of power has both potential and prudential aspects. It can be a force for good and a force for safety. If Lord Acton was correct in asserting that power corrupts—and there is every reason to believe that he was—it stands to reason that power is most safely wielded when it is most widely dispersed and when it is closest to the people being governed. Power is the heart of government. The foundational question for political philosophy, in both the Hebrew and Greek traditions, is "Who rules?" The ancient Jews exchanged the decentralized, quasi-anarchistic governance of judges for the centralized rule of a king. They did so over the objection of the judge/prophet Samuel and despite the warning of God.

Plato was no admirer of democracy yet as a mature theorist he identified rule by the many, in the small-scale context of the Greek city-state, as the best form of government when society is corrupted by self-seeking and disregard of tradition. Under adverse conditions, rule by the common people remains unnatural and inefficient but is the best form of government because it is safest. In his *Statesman*, Plato wrote, "The rule of the many is weak in every way; it is not capable of any real good or of any serious evil as compared with the other two [rule of one

and rule of the few]. This is because in a democracy sovereignty has been divided out in small portions among a large number of rulers. Therefore, of all three constitutions that are law-abiding, democracy is the worst; but of the three that flout the laws [i.e., justice, ethics, social customs], democracy is the best. Thus if all constitutions [forms of government] are unprincipled the best thing to do is to live in a democracy.” Democracy and decentralization go hand-in-hand. Not coincidentally, both are Green values.

I do not mean to sugar-coat reality or inflate the claims of a particular mode of governance. Town hall meetings, municipal government, states’ rights, and other manifestations of decentralism are not perfect. But Plato was correct in his ranking of constitutions. In a corrupt age and a fallen world, a generous sharing of power is best. It does not negate all potential abuse, including oppression of both minorities and majorities, but the damage done by tyrants and oligarchs is confined to a smaller scale. It also increases the likelihood of proximate diversity that can provide counter-examples when one’s own community is experiencing unjust rule. The existence of a multitude of small-scale sovereignties provides for avenues of individual escape if community reform cannot be achieved. In other words, if your city or state is poorly governed, you may be able to move to a nearby community that is better served by its rulers and laws. If the entire region or nation is under the control of a single malevolent power, it becomes more difficult to see alternatives and to flee to those alternatives if need be. Such reform and emigration may not be easy but they are more possible in a decentralized context.

HOPEFUL SIGNS

In an age of centralization, are decentralists doomed to wax nostalgic about the good old days, their engagement with contemporary culture sounding like the plaintive cry of a mourning dove? Maybe it is not as bad as all that. Yes, there is political and economic concentration but there is a countervailing force: social fragmentation. On the one hand, the mainstream media are more highly concentrated than ever, with six giant corporations dominating most of our news and entertainment. Yet there are some hopeful signs.

The Internet provides a wide diversity of opinion and information without the old establishment acting as regulators and gatekeepers. The Web provides the best of both worlds: decentralized yet global. This is a very positive development. Social media such as Facebook and Twitter are often superficial and lacking in intellectual content, but they do provide decentralized communication by linking individuals together in an instantaneous way and allowing them to share comments as they please. The fact that corporate, metropolitan newspapers have fallen on hard times, with some closing down altogether, and that the big television networks have lost most of their influence

when it comes to news are two other signs of positive change. Decentralized, democratized decision-making is becoming the norm in some areas of society despite understandable resistance by established elites.

In an analysis of the future of American democracy, written as the twenty-first century began, political scientist and former Congressman Glen Browder (D-AL) asserted that centrifugal dynamics, driven by demographic changes, are “pushing us toward popular decentralization of the American political system.” He concluded, “While both community and diversity have always been competing strengths of American democracy, the prudent course is one which consciously balances ‘pluribus’ and ‘unum’ (and considers the possible consequences of ‘ex uno plures’ [out of one, many]).” Browder considers not only changes in the ethnic composition of the U.S. but also ideological and theological divisions and partisan polarization: “Whatever their reasons, Americans seem to be settling, residing, working and conducting their public lives in subcultural enclaves (regions, communities, and groupings) distinctly defined by their demographics, lifestyle, philosophical outlook, and voting behavior.”

This does not have to be viewed as a bad thing. Rather than resisting this trend toward centrifugal democracy—emanating from both deep local and regional ties stretching back centuries to more recent waves of immigration and dissatisfaction with mainstream culture—it could be respected and embraced. It would be to acknowledge the point made by Anti-Federalist writer Agrippa that “It is impossible for one code of laws to suit Georgia and Massachusetts” and that it is absurd to force millions of diverse Americans to live under “the same standard of morals, or habits, and of laws.”

In some ways, social fragmentation can be welcomed rather than feared. Leviathan, in its political and economic manifestations, may be forced into dismantlement because it cannot be sustained. The nation has become too large and too diverse. The root word of politics is polis. It was a city, not a colossus. It is time to get back to our roots. To the once-were city states of Greece, to the could-be ward republics of Jefferson, to the should-be reserved powers of the Constitution. We are human beings. We are not cogs in a machine of epic proportions. Let us have politics on a human scale.



JEFF TAYLOR

is professor of political science at Dordt College. He is a former coordinator of the South Dakota Greens, chair of the Missouri Green Party, and chair of the Olmsted Co. Green Party (MN). He can be reached at wherego@aol.com. This article is based on his new book, *Politics on a Human Scale: The American Tradition of Decentralism* © Lexington Books, 2013. Used by arrangement with the publisher. All rights reserved. No part of this excerpt may be reproduced or printed without permission in writing from the publisher.

HUBRIS *or* HUMUS

MAYNARD KAUFMAN

A second issue, also ignored by general writers on climate change, is that carbon dioxide is not simply a pollutant to get rid of, but a much-needed resource for soil improvement."

Organic matter, which is necessary for soil fertility, is 58% carbon.

The solution is to remove the carbon from the atmosphere by using the energy of the sun and the process of photosynthesis to grow plants and thereby restore carbon in the soil.

The General Assembly of the United Nations has declared 2015 the International Year of Soils. This can help to sharpen the focus on a neglected strategy in the mitigation of climate change. This focus on soil includes an emphasis on preventing further soil degradation, such as that caused by plowing, which leads to the loss of carbon in the soil as its organic matter is oxidized and escapes as carbon dioxide. It also includes the recognition that soil can serve as a sink for the excess carbon dioxide in the atmosphere which causes global warming. This excess carbon can be sequestered in plants and soil by photosynthesis and stored in the soil as humus. The word humus is related to human and humility, and can be used to characterize a non-invasive and human-scale approach to reducing global warming.

Although soil has been largely ignored in the discussion of climate change, the fact is that better farming methods, such as growing crops organically and without tillage, are already being practiced. Ranchers are also adopting methods of rotational grazing which restore organic matter in the turf. These methods emerged as farmers and ranchers tried to restore soil fertility. For many of them the issue of reducing carbon dioxide in the atmosphere was secondary. Such methods should have the support of climate scientists and agricultural bureaucracies, along with a more complete reformation of farming methods that can restore carbon from the atmosphere to the soil. This can be done quite naturally, without the hubris involved in "geo-engineering." Hubris is a Greek word implying arrogance resulting from excessive pride. Unfortunately, the focus on technology among many mainstream "scientific" thinkers seems to have blinded them to the power of biological processes. But, as the Dust Bowl has illustrated, it is better to work with nature rather than try to control nature.

A second issue, also ignored by general writers on climate change, is that carbon dioxide is not simply a pollutant to get rid of, but a much-needed resource for soil improvement. Organic matter, which is necessary for soil fertility, is 58% carbon. So-called "carbon farmers" (see their website, Carbon Farmers of America) affirm that it is possible to do both: sequester carbon in the soil and thereby also improve the soil. This "both-and" emphasis is articulated in a new article by Adam Sacks and colleagues on reducing atmospheric carbon dioxide to pre-industrial levels. This article, which has been published in a book entitled *Geotherapy*, generally supports my thinking in this paper with more scientific evidence.

Where does the carbon dioxide in the atmosphere come from? The conventional answer is that two thirds comes from burning fossil fuels. This has led many climate change activists, such as Bill McKibbin of 350.org, to urge that emissions should be reduced by reducing the burning of fossil fuels. This strategy has failed for a quarter of a century, and emissions of carbon dioxide continue to rise. People want to continue an energy-intensive lifestyle and developing countries need fossil fuels to develop. And, of course, the fossil fuel companies are happy to provide the fuel and make record profits. The solution is to remove the carbon from the atmosphere by using the energy of the sun in the process of photosynthesis to grow plants and thereby restore carbon in the soil.

More recently an increasing number of analysts have argued that much more than a third of atmospheric carbon dioxide has come from deforestation and plowing the

land which oxidizes the organic matter in or on the soil. How much carbon was lost in this way depends partly on how far back in time emissions of carbon dioxide are counted. William Ruddiman, while acknowledging that industrial emissions may be greater now, also counts emissions from deforestation and plowing going back to the beginning of agriculture thousands of years ago. While estimates of past emissions are not likely to be accurate, the loss of organic matter from the soil is excessive. According to the Australian soil scientist, Christine Jones, 50 to 80% of the carbon has been lost from the soil. (See her website, www.amazingcarbon.com).

If over half of soil carbon has been lost, the soil can easily accommodate at least twice as much as still remains in it. Percentages of organic matter in soils, now down to 1 to 2% in cropland, should be at least twice as much. Undisturbed prairie soils can contain 10 to 20% of organic matter. In fact carbon constantly moves between air and soil and water, and the soil has a vast capacity to sequester carbon. The authors of the Sacks article, mentioned above, claim that replacing just half of the soil carbon that was lost in the past 10,000 years has the realistic potential for reducing atmospheric carbon to a pre-industrial level of 280 parts per million. The oceans are also a carbon sink, but as they become increasingly acidic as a result of absorbing too much carbon, oceanic life is damaged.

THE NEED FOR MORE ORGANIC FARMING

Soils that are rich in organic matter and humus provide a habitat for microbial life that can feed the plants growing on it. It is this lack of organic matter that has made chemical fertilizers an easy substitute. But chemical fertilizers, according to soil scientists such as Christine Jones or Elaine Ingham, actually disrupt and destroy organic matter and humus in the soil. They are thus addictive, creating a need for more and more, and this is a problem since they require fossil fuels for their extraction and/or manufacturing. Moreover, chemical fertilizers emit even more carbon dioxide. They also emit nitrous oxide, which is 300 times more potent than carbon dioxide as a greenhouse gas. At best chemical fertilizers are a temporary technological fix.

Now, as we think ahead to a time when fossil fuels, as well as the minerals used to make fertilizers, are likely to be increasingly expensive, it will be necessary to restore organic matter, which is 58% carbon, in the soil. A variety of methods have been proposed to accomplish this and some are suitable for large farms and

ranches. These include the Rodale strategy of no-till organic farming with cover crops, grazing ruminants in rotational grazing patterns as specified by Allen Savory in the Holistic Management system, deep sub-soiling using the Yeomans chisel plow, avoiding chemicals for pest control or chemical fertilizers, and pasture cropping, in which annual grains are grown in dormant perennial grasses. Other strategies, such as burning organic materials in the absence of oxygen (pyrolysis) to form biochar and spreading it on soil, returning composted manure to the soil, and gradually substituting perennial for annual food plants, where possible, can be useful in large or small operations. Brian Rumsey reviewed the relevance of perennial food crops under development at the Land Institute to climate change in the Summer, 2014, issue of the Land Report, and found that perennial crops best mimic the productivity of the native prairie with deeper roots and less tillage. All these approaches will also require the avoidance of chemical fertilizers, fungicides, and patented GMO pest control practices.

Soil carbon scientists agree with older organic theorists, such as Sir Albert Howard, that plants thrive best in association with mycorrhizal fungi that not only help to deliver nutrients to plants, (grass and trees) but also help to build soil structure and the aggregation of soil particles in the humification process. Once organic matter is humified it tends to remain in the soil for decades. And all this is helped by cover crops that grow as much as possible on a year-round basis and provide “fuel” for soil microbes.

Rattan Lal, a soil scientist at Ohio State University, is a strong advocate of sequestration of carbon in soils and plants, and he suggests this could be done mainly by avoiding tillage. He does acknowledge that getting the parts per million of carbon dioxide down to pre-industrial levels would happen gradually over a period of 50 years. Other writers and practitioners, such as the Carbon Farmers of America, who are more optimistic about building and storing organic matter in soil, suggest that it could be done more rapidly. Allan Yeomans thinks it could be done in ten years. In any case, carbon sequestration in soil not only restores soil fertility, it buys time to implement the use of more renewable sources of energy and modes of energy conservation which can reduce the burning of fossil fuels.

THE CHALLENGES AHEAD

If reformed food production techniques make it possible to take carbon dioxide from the air and fix its carbon in the soil, and

If reformed food production techniques make it possible to take carbon dioxide from the air and fix it in the soil, and thereby also make the soil more productive, it may be that the nightmare of global warming will be delayed, thus providing more time to make the changes needed to reduce its most extreme impacts.

thereby also make the soil more productive, it may be that the nightmare of global warming will be delayed, thus providing more time to make the changes needed to reduce its most extreme impacts. But the lure of money seems to deter many of us from thinking about a sustainable way of life, so we need a shift in values. One such really fundamental and necessary shift is to convince governmental leaders to move beyond their obsession with economic growth in the money economy as they continue to promote the production and burning of fossil fuels. How can we learn to recognize the illusory nature of money in comparison to the gifts of nature? How can we give up the dream of material progress and, instead, seek contentment in learning how to work with nature rather than to transform nature with technology? And how can we gear into the coming post-petroleum era, which opens opportunities for more people to be involved in food production and participate in the planting and harvesting of perennial plants and trees?

These questions relate to the main concern in this paper: planning for a future in which the use of fossil fuels will be severely constrained. These fuels make climate change worse, they are already expensive, and impending shortages will make them more expensive. A shift to no-till organic agriculture is necessary rather than continued dependence on petrochemicals which add carbon dioxide to the air rather than organic matter to the soil. Although too much carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is a pollutant, carbon is a valuable resource in the soil. So even if carbon dioxide could be buried deep in the earth or under the oceans, as geo-engineers propose, as much as possible should first be incorporated in the soil to build up organic matter. Organic matter provides the nutrients to make plants grow, develops soil structure that can withstand extreme weather by absorbing more water in heavy rain and hold that moisture in

dry periods, and because it is 58% carbon, it adds carbon to the soil. The humification process, which converts that carbon into living and productive soil, makes sure it remains there. Above all, we will need more such naturally productive soils to provide enough food with far less dependence on petrochemical inputs. We will need, in short, a transition to a reformed version of organic farming. The United Nations focus on soils in 2015 can support this transition.

If this is all as obvious as it seems, why is it not happening? Of course it has already begun, largely through the independent efforts of farmers and ranchers. But it has not yet garnered much support from the Land Grant universities, which have a history of resisting organic methods. They have received financial support from agrochemical industries and look forward to more. As the cost of agrochemical inputs continue to rise, however, and as the possibility of building soil fertility by restoring organic matter is demonstrated on a large scale, it will be imitated widely. Farmers and ranchers are attentive to the success of others, and many read reports of such successes in independent farm publications. And as the movement grows, it will attract governmental support, especially as it reduces the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. Eventually the mitigation of global warming will be the major cultural project. This can be done by ordinary humans with humus, in a humble manner, without the hubris of a large-scale technological project that could make things worse.



MAYNARD KAUFMAN

retired from teaching courses on Religion and Environmental Studies at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo some years ago. He has also been a part-time organic farmer and organized Michigan Organic Food and Farm Alliance in 1991.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bates, Albert, *The Biochar Solution: Carbon farming and Climate Change*. New Society Publishers, 2010.
- Broecker, Wallace and Robert Kunzig, *Fixing Climate*. New York: Hill and Wang, 2008.
- Fleming, James Roger, *Fixing the Sky: The checkered history of weather and climate control*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2010.
- Hamilton, Clive, *Earthmasters*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013.
- Henson, Robert, *The Rough Guide to Climate Change*. www.roughguides.com. 2011.
- Hillman, Mayer, et. al., *The Suicidal Planet*. New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2007.
- Lal, R., J. M. Kimble, R. R. Follett, and C. V. Cole, *The Potential of U. S. Cropland to Sequester Carbon and Mitigate the Greenhouse Effect*. Boca Raton: Lewis Publishers, 1999.
- Lehmann, Johannes, and Stephen Joseph, (editors) *Biochar for Environmental Management*. Earthscan, 2009.
- Ohlson, Kristin, *The Soil Will Save Us*. Rodale Press, 2014.
- Rodale Institute, "Regenerative Organic Agriculture and Climate Change," 2014.
- Ruddiman, William F. *Plows, Plagues and Petroleum*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999.
- Sacks, Adam, et. al., "Restoring Atmospheric Carbon Dioxide Levels to Pre-Industrial Levels: Re-Establishing the Evolutionary Grassland-Grazer Relationship." (To be published by CRC Press in a book entitled *Geotherapy* in 2014, edited by Thomas J. Goreau.)
- Schwartz, Judith D, *Cows Save the Planet*. Chelsea Green Publishing, 2013.
- Sheperd, Mark, *Restoration Agriculture: Real world permaculture for farmers*. Austin, TX: Acres, USA, 2013.
- Smith, J. Russell, *Tree Crops: A Permanent Agriculture*. New York: Devin Adair, 1950.
- White, Courtney, *Grass, Soil, Hope: A Journey Through Carbon Country*. Chelsea Green Publishers, 2014.
- Wiley, Zack and Bill Chameides, *Harnessing Farms and Forests in the Low Carbon Economy: How to create, measure, and verify greenhouse gas offsets*. Duke University Press, 2007.
- Yeomans, Allen, *Priority One: Together we can beat global warming*. Australia: Keyline Publishing Company, 2005.

The PERILS *of* WINNER-TAKE-ALL *in* Diverse America

ROB RICHIE

It's time for our nation's leaders to go beyond rhetoric about what ails our democracy to confront the underlying structures that have led to its decay. They and the dominant corporate media like to cast blame on individual Americans for our historic low turnout in the 2014 midterms – barely 36% of eligible voters participated. They resist acknowledging, or downright refuse to recognize, that something more fundamental is wrong.

The core problem—which should be high on their list of things to do something serious about—is winner-take-all elections. A “representative democracy” should be, well, representative. If 100 community residents have an annual town meeting, then each person should have a voice in that meeting. Not everyone will get their way, but they should be heard. In the same vein, if 100,000 voters are to be represented by 100 legislators then 1,000 voters should have the power to help elect a legislator to be their voice. There may be practical reasons to deviate from this basic principle of “proportional representation,” but that should be our starting point.

American representative democracy isn't even close, however. We take those 100,000 people, put them in 100 different geographic districts, and give each district one representative. The resulting “winner-take-all” rules means that the candidate with the most votes represents everyone in the district. So yes, each 1,000 people get a “voice”, but it's not necessarily their voice. Where we live is not more important than what we think.

Geographic quotas may have made sense when we had a tiny electorate of white, male property owners who shared many common interests except where they lived. But today our voters have a diversity of views, interests and characteristics. And in this fiercely partisan climate where the two major parties are figuratively at war, with third parties and independents sidelined as irrelevant, it makes less sense than ever.

We are close to a national conversation about the problem of winner-take-all. In this year's State of the Union speech, President Barack Obama stressed a theme that launched him into national prominence in 2004 at the Democratic Party convention. He declared that “we are still more than a collection of red states and blue states. We are the United States of America.” Days later, he visited two strongly Republican states, Idaho and Kansas, to explain his policy proposals.

The fact that it was Obama's first visit to Idaho of his presidency underscores how his vision of a “united states” clashes with the unforgiving logic of winner-take-all rules and how the White House political team prioritizes swing states. There is no way a Democratic nominee will win Idaho, and in fact, there are at least 35 states that are already locked up for one presidential party in the 2016 election.

Obama has yet to visit the firmly “red” states of South Carolina, South Dakota, and Utah. Comparing South Carolina with North Carolina is instructive. In 2008, Obama won 49.7% of the vote in North Carolina and 44.7% in South Carolina. That may look

Add in ranked choice voting, and we can kiss the “spoiler” argument goodbye and allow people always to vote for whom they really want without argument.

*Sometimes a system becomes so broken it simply cannot be sustained.
Let's work to realize fair representation and ranked choice ballots in our communities and states.*

like a small difference, but he visited North Carolina 18 times in his first term and held the 2012 Democratic convention there. Yet he hasn't been back to South Carolina since his key primary win there in January 2008.

Why? For all of Obama's hundreds of millions of campaign dollars, there simply is no way his campaign could turn 44.7% in 2008 into a win in 2012. Today, nearly all competition between the major parties only takes place within the 47% to 53% spectrum of partisanship. Outside that narrow range, you're almost certainly wasting money, whether running for president in states or running for U.S. Congress in single-winner districts.

Winner-take-all is so decisive in congressional elections that FairVote in 2013 was able to project the outcomes for the 2014 congressional elections for 370 out of 435 races – missing only one. Looking to 2016, FairVote projected winners in more than six out seven of U.S House seats only two days after the 2014 elections.

That predictability is not due to partisan gerrymandering. It's due to winner-take-all, single-winner districts. Many editorial writers seem enchanted with California's independent redistricting process, but winner-take-all is the real winner. Of California's 53 congressional districts, every single one is represented by a Democrat or Republican despite their shrinking share of registered votes. All but one of those congressional representatives is of the same party of the presidential nominee who did better than his national average in that district.

This red and blue America also defines state legislative elections. More than four in ten state legislative districts had only one candidate in 2014. Of the rest, nearly all were a foregone conclusion. At the individual district we don't have a two-party system, let alone a multi-party one. We have winner-take-all domination.

Fortunately, there are alternatives to winner-take-all that we can win with simple changes in law, without touching the Constitution. The National Popular Vote plan for president would make every vote in every state in every election count equally. That's great for creating new incentives for equitable campaigning, but it's not about representation. Fair representation

voting for Congress would represent the left, right and center of every region of the country while ensuring that every voter can take part in a meaningfully contested election. Add in ranked choice voting, and we can kiss the "spoiler" argument goodbye and allow people always to vote for whom they really want without argument

These reforms are no longer a pipedream. Even the president has been a supporter; as a state senator, Obama introduced a bill to bring fair representation voting to Illinois and another bill to establish ranked choice voting ("instant runoff") for primaries. Reaching across the aisle for support to change winner-take-all elections is the best say he can live up to his rhetoric of wanting to end the political dead zones in red and blue states.

Among congressional champions of fair representation are South Carolina's James Clyburn, the third-ranking Democrat. Expect legislation this year to establish it for congressional elections, and a growing effort to make it the ticket to more truly representative democracy when a reform-minded majority wins elections. Expect new state wins for the National Popular Vote plan and look to an exciting chance to pass ranked choice voting in a statewide ballot measure in Maine in 2016.

For skeptics, I have an answer: what activist in 1985 would have thought that a decade later that Nelson Mandela would be president of South African and Lech Walesa would be president of Poland? Sometimes a system becomes so broken it simply cannot be sustained. Let's work to realize fair representation and ranked choice ballots in our communities and states and keep our eyes on the prize of a Congress where our voices will be heard.



ROB RICHIE

has directed FairVote since 1992. His office is in Takoma Park, Maryland. He is co-author of *Whose Votes Count*. He is a guest on many national media including NPR, C-SPAN, NBC News, CNN, and FOX. Rob has been a speaker at the American Political Science Association conventions, National Latino Congress, and the National Conference of State Legislatures. He and his wife Cynthia Terrell live with their three children in Takoma Park.

BOOK REVIEW:

Daddy: What's the Middle Class? by Pat La Marche

Pat LaMarche is a world-class champion of people, and she works tirelessly at it, whether working as a radio DJ, helping the homeless, or running for public office. In the latter role, she has run twice for Governor of Maine (1998 and 2006), getting enough votes to secure and preserve ballot status for the Maine Green Independent Party (7% and 10% respectively). In addition she was the US Green Party candidate for Vice President in 2004.

In her first book, *Left Out in America*, Pat exposed us to the horrors of homelessness in America for both the unemployed and the working poor. In *Daddy, What's the Middle Class?* she shows how homelessness got out of control in this country as the wealth of the nation increasingly shifted to the 1%.

Daddy, What's the Middle Class? is not an academic work of charts and statistics; it's a primer on the history of the working middle class. It describes their joys and sorrows, as well as their successes when coming together to better their lives through unions. *Daddy, What's the Middle Class?* addresses the greed and abuse of power by wealthy individuals and corporations with the consent and aid of local, state and federal governments. Pat shows how the dream of America was sabotaged at the expense of workers and their families. The book is about them, the workers. As Pat says "We set out to chronicle the lives of those who made America great: Not those who stole greatness from the millions who created it."

Interviews of labor leaders and rank-and-file union members make a compelling case for why labor unions were and are important to workers and their families. They also shared stories of how corporations, state governments and the federal government are today still trying to destroy unions and hampering workers ability to organize.

The book addresses the struggles workers went through to form unions and get them recognized. It spells out how low some corporations were/are willing to go for money, power and control, including bribery, bullying and even murder. It shows how slavery has not been eliminated in the US; only its form has changed..

Pat also presents information on a brief time in our history when unions and some employers worked well together to the benefit of both sides, but that time has been over for decades and has been replaced by the greed of the wealthy which impacts the workers' ability to support their families and affects the overall health of their communities.

Daddy, What's the Middle Class? is an excellent introduction to the history of the middle class, and when you finish the book, the appendix makes a great jumping off point to continue exploring America's labor history.

Daddy What's the Middle Class? Should be mandatory reading for every high school student in America.

TOM FUSCO



TOM FUSCO

has a MA in Psychology & Counseling and MS in Management/Organization Development. He has worked in the substance abuse, mental

health and organization development field since 1970 providing a variety of services to individuals, families, and businesses. He worked on Jonathan Carter's and Pat LaMarche's campaigns for Governor of Maine as well as Ralph Nader's and David Cobb's Presidential campaigns. He was founding member of and co-chair of Brunswick Area Citizens for a Safe Environment, Maine's Representative to the Green Party of the United States (2001 - 2002), appointed by Governor Angus King as member of Maine Environmental Priority Project, Co-Chair of Maine Green Party (1996 to 1998), elected to Maine Green Independent Party Steering Committee (1994 - 1996 and 1998 - 2000), member of Restoration Advisory Board for Brunswick Naval Air Station (1992-2006) and founding member of The National Restoration Advisory Board Caucus. He lives in Brunswick, Maine with his wife Terry.

Letters to the Editor

(The Nader-Gore Election 2000)

TO THE EDITOR:

Justine McCabe's assertion that "Nader Did Not 'Spoil' the 2000 Election" (*Green Horizon Magazine* Fall/Winter 2014) should not go unchallenged. On this score, I would bring your attention to a quote from the Nobel economics laureate Eric Maskin in the book *The Arrow Impossibility Theorem*. It is as follows:

Nearly one hundred thousand Floridians voted for Nader, and it is likely that, had he not been on the ballot, a large majority of these voters would have voted for Gore (of course, some of them might not have voted at all). That means that Gore would probably not only have won, but won quite handily, if Nader had not run.

In political argot, Nader was a spoiler. Although he got less than 2 percent of the vote in Florida--he was clearly "irrelevant" in the sense of having no chance to win himself--he ended up determining the outcome of the election. That seems highly undemocratic. (pp.47-48)

Given what I know from a survey done by the New York Times and other newspapers after the Florida election, I think it doubtful that Gore would have won a statewide recount which was probably why his team sought a partial recount.

John Howard Wilhelm, Ph.D.
University of Michigan (Economics)
Ann Arbor

TO THE EDITOR:

Professor Wilhelm writes: "In political argot, Nader was a spoiler. Although he got less than 2 percent of the vote in Florida--he was clearly "irrelevant" in the sense of having no chance to win himself--he ended up determining the outcome of the election. That seems highly undemocratic."

In reply, let me note that "political argot" or not, what is highly undemocratic in the 2000 and in every presidential election is this:

First, limiting the field of candidates for president is highly undemocratic. Nader--and anyone over 40 and a native US citizen--has every right to run for president. It's up to the "two-party" candidates to convince voters that they are better for the job, not limiting the playing field to win.

Second, continuing to operate as if the Constitution limits us

to two parties is highly undemocratic. Past isn't prologue (as we know with slavery and women's suffrage, for example.)

Third, the winner-take-all system is highly undemocratic especially in a population like the US which is too politically and culturally diverse to be funneled into two candidates, with no representation at all if their choice of two loses. We need proportional representation, as well as other basic improvements in the US electoral system.

Justine McCabe
New Milford CT

TO THE EDITOR:

A study by the Progressive Review of national and Florida polls during the 2000 election indicates that Ralph Nader's influence on the final results was minimal to non-existent.

By checking changes in poll results, the Review tested the widely held Democratic assumption that Nader caused Gore's loss. Presumably, if Nader was actually responsible for Gore's troubles, his tallies would change inversely to those of Gore: if Gore did better, Nader would do worse and vice versa.

In fact, the only time any correlation could be found was when the changes were so small - 1 or 2 percentage points - that they were statistically insignificant. On the other hand when, in September of 2000, Gore's average poll result went up 7.5 points over August, Nader's only declined by 1 point. Similarly, in November, Gore's average poll tally declined 5.7 points but Nader's only went up 0.8 points.

In the close Florida race, there were similar results: statistically insignificant correlation when the Gore tally changed by only one or two points, but dramatic non-correlation when the change was bigger. For example, in nine successive surveys in which Nader pulled only 2 or 3 points, Gore's total varied by 7 points. As late as two weeks before the election, Gore was ahead by as much as 7-10 points.

Nationally, the Review's five poll moving average showed Gore steadily hacking away at Bush's 15 point lead until he was ahead by as much six points in September. But this lead rapidly disappeared until Bush was back in a narrow lead by early October. While Gore eventually won the popular vote, the election was so close that most polls projections were still within the standard margin of error.

During almost all of 2000, Bush led Gore with the major exception of a month-long period following the Democratic convention. During this high point for Gore, Nader was pulling a running average of 2-4% in the polls. While it is true that during October, Nader began pulling a running average of 6% at a time when Gore was fading, Gore continued to lose ground even as Nader's support dropped to its final 3%. In other words, despite the help of defectors from Nader, Gore did worse.

Further, as Michael Eisencher reported in *Z Magazine*, 20% of all Democratic voters, 12% of all self-identified liberal voters, 39% of all women voters, 44% of all seniors, one-third of all voters earning under \$20,000 per year and 42% of those earning \$20-30,000 annually, and 31% of all voting union members cast their ballots for Bush.

(Interestingly, the same critics who blame Nader for Gore's loss fail to give him credit for narrow Democratic victories in the Senate, such as the one in Washington state.)

Since the mythology of the 2000 election shows no signs of fading, a few other points are worth noting:

- According to exit polling, those who voted for Nader were disproportionately under 30, independent, first time voters, formerly Perot voters, and of no organized religion. In other words, many of his voters did not naturally belong to the Democratic party. In fact, half as many Republicans as Democrats voted for Nader. Six percent of independents and 7% of Perot voters supported Nader while only 2% of Democrats did.
- The public had a cynical view of both major candidates with 41% believing that both would say anything to win votes. Barely half considered either major candidate honest and trustworthy. And an astounding 51% had reservations about their own vote.
- Gore even lost his home state of Tennessee. This is like flunking a political breathalyzer test.
- Perhaps the most important, but seldom mentioned, factor in the outcome was the impact of the Clinton scandals. 68% of voters thought Clinton would go down in history more for his scandals than for his leadership. 44% said that the scandals were somewhat to very important and 57% thought the country to be on the wrong moral track.

In short, the individual who did the most harm to Gore (aside from himself) was Bill Clinton. If Gore had distanced himself from the Clinton moral miasma he would probably have won the presidency.

Sam Smith
Freeport, Maine

We Mourn and Celebrate

Betty Zisk and Terry (Edmund P.) Fowler have passed away since our last issue. Terry has been a member of our Green Horizon Foundation Board since our beginning. Both he and Betty, also from the start, have contributed articles and editorial assistance and valuable contacts. We mourn their passing and celebrate their steady and creative contributions to Green Horizon—contributions they made as well, and respectively, to the Green Parties of the United States and Canada. We will have articles in next Fall's issue to mark their passing and celebrate the heritage of wisdom, talent, steady commitment, and love they have bequeathed to us during our 12 years of publication. [Editors]

Ten Key Values *of the* Green Movement

1. Ecological Wisdom
2. Personal Responsibility and Social Justice
3. Grass Roots Democracy
4. Non-Violence
5. Decentralization
6. Community Economics
7. Respect for Diversity
8. Gender Equality
9. Global Responsibility
10. Thinking to the Seventh Generation (sustainability).

Barnyard DEMOCRACY

HERSCHEL STERNLIEB

Once upon a time, a fox, a lap dog and a blind eagle inherited a chicken coop with four chickens.

"How shall we divide our responsibilities?" asked the eagle.

"That's simple," replied the fox. We can model our responsibilities on the great democracies with three equal branches of authority and duties. The lap dog can assume the role of the legislature and tell the executive what to do, and in all humility, it would seem that I am more suited to the presidency than Mr. Blind Eagle who can assume the role of an impartial judiciary."

And so, the eagle pulled out a bible and had the fox place his right forepaw on it.

"Do you swear to guard the chickens, so help you God?"

"I do."

"And do you swear to give me an honest inventory every Friday morning?" asked the lap dog.

"I do."

And true to his oath of office, the fox sought out the lap dog the next Friday morning.

"How many chickens do we have?" asked the drowsy canine.

"Four."

"Good. You are doing a great job and should be commended. Now, if you will excuse me, I shall return to my slumbers."

But the next week, the fox answered, "Three chickens."

"Three? What happened?"

"One of the chickens tried to escape, so I had to dispatch it."

"My oh my, why would one want to escape? Are you feeding them enough?"

"More than enough."

"Well, it's not for me to second guess you. After all, you are the president and are in possession of all the information and I know you will do only that which is correct and proper. Gee, it's getting late and it's time for my mid-morning nap. See you next week."

The next Friday, when the fox reported that he had only two chickens in his inventory, the lap dog actually stood up to question him.

"What now?"

"There was a violent row among the chickens and when I broke it up, one of them lay expiring in the dust."

"Pity, perhaps if they're so pugnacious, we should be feeding them tranquilizers. But there I go again, second guessing you, Mr. President. I know you're doing the best job possible and you do have all the facts. See you next week, but make it a little later in the morning. I'm just not getting enough sleep."

The next Friday, when the fox reported an inventory of only one chicken, the lap dog grew concerned and sped off to see the blind eagle.

"I don't know what to make of it," he confessed. "All our chickens are passing away. We have only one left. Perhaps it would be best if we replaced the fox."

"No way," answered the eagle. "His actions have all been legal and there is no indication of malfeasance etcetera, etcetera and besides, if it weren't for the fox handing me a drum stick now and then, I would have starved to death three days ago."

A despondent lap dog returned to his spot in the sun and went back to sleep. The next week, the fox reported that there were no chickens left, the last one having committed suicide out of loneliness.



HERSCHEL STERNLIEB

writes: After a depression era childhood spent on a Connecticut farm and a pleasant journey through the Boston Public Schools, followed by an uneventful sojourn in the United States Army, I got a degree in Textile Engineering and spent 40 semi-profitable years managing textile mills, and all the while gaining deep respect for people who do productive work for a living. For the past 30 years, I have tried to emulate Aesop and Ambrose Bierce and trust my efforts will serve to educate and amuse. [The Editor, exercising his editorial prerogative, adds this: Herschel Sternlieb is the Chair of the Brunswick Park and Garden Project which plans a state-of-the-art Garden on part of the 3000 acres of land in Brunswick being vacated by the U.S. Navy. He received, in May of this year, an award from the Maine Green Independent Party "In Recognition of a Lifetime of Contribution and Service." Herschel lives in Brunswick, Maine with his wife Selma.]



GREEN HORIZON

Green Horizon Sustainers 2014-2015

Tony Affigne, Rhode Island
 Theresa Amato and Todd Main, Illinois
 Stephen A. Baker, Pennsylvania
 David and Gillian Bath, Florida
 John Battista and Justine McCabe, Connecticut
 Ted Becker, Alabama
 Dee Berry, Kansas
 Antonio Blasé, Maine
 Peter S. Broeksmit, Illinois
 Charles and Diane Brown, Kansas
 Lisanne Gray Budwick, New Jersey
 Richard D. Burrill, Pennsylvania
 Caron Cadle and Ralf Remshardt, Florida
 J. Roy Cannon, New Jersey
 Jonathan and Dorothy Carter, Maine
 Dana Cary, Maine
 Russ Christenson, Maine
 Roy B. Christman, Pennsylvania
 David Cobb, California
 Chris Cole, Maine
 Wallace L. Condon, California
 Don Crawford, Illinois
 Richard and Debra Csenge, Utah
 Morgen D'Arc, Maine
 Bob Dale and Jean Parker, Maine
 Christine De Troy, Maine
 Jacqui Deveneau, Maine
 Romi Elnagar, Louisiana
 Paul Etxeberri, Nevada
 Richard Evanoff, Japan
 Valerie Face, California
 Olenka Folda, Maine
 Edmund D. Fowler, Ontario, Canada
 Walter and Francine Fox, Pennsylvania
 David and Melissa Frans, Maine
 Bruce Gagnon and Mary Beth Sullivan, Maine
 Jean Galloway Fine, Maine
 Betsy Garrold, Maine
 Greg Gerritt and Kathleen E. Rourke, Rhode Island
 Rhoda Gilman, Minnesota
 Art Goodtimes, Colorado
 Budd Dickinson and Jody Grage, Washington
 David Greenwood, New Jersey
 Christopher Greuner, Massachusetts
 Tian Harper, California
 Holly Hart, Iowa
 Gil Harris, Maine
 Laura Hauck, New Jersey
 Dorothy A. Hassfeld, Maine
 Charles and Elizabeth McGee Hassrich, Illinois

Brandon L. Hewitt, Georgia
 Doug Holden, Wisconsin
 Fred and Hadley Horch, Maine
 Joseph R. Horgan, Maryland
 Clare Howell, Maine
 Abhi and Sid Hudson, Florida
 Brenda Humphrey, North Carolina
 Gus and Joanne Jaccaci, Maine
 Christopher Jones, New York
 Maynard Kaufman and Barbara Geisler, Michigan
 Charles Keil, Connecticut
 Brian Kent, Maine
 Robert A. Kinsey, Colorado
 Ben Kjelshus, Missouri
 Barbard Knox, Maryland
 David and Peg Krosschell, Ohio
 Jim Krosschell and Cyndy Dockrell, Massachusetts
 Kathryn Krosschell, Ohio
 Paul Krumm, Kansas
 Ellen La Conte, North Carolina
 Eileen Landay, Rhode Island
 Henry Lawrence, Florida
 Paul Loney, Oregon
 Audrey Marra, Maine
 Jonathan Martin, Massachusetts
 Linda B. Martin, Washington
 Jim McCarthy, Maine
 Margie McWilliams, New Jersey
 Kent Mesplay, California
 Al Miller, Maine
 Judith Mohling, Colorado
 Terry Morgan, Maine
 Daniel Moses and Charlene Spretnak, California
 Dean Myerson, Oregon
 Jason Nabewoniec, New York
 Magdalena R. Naylor, Vermont
 Michael Ochs, Pennsylvania
 Jon Olsen, Maine
 Esther Lacognata and Barclay Palmer, Maine
 Rosalie Tyler Paul, Maine
 Charles Payne, Maine
 Andrew Perchlik, Vermont
 Karen Peterson, New Mexico
 Suzan G. Preiksats, New Jersey
 Joshua Roy Pritchett, Florida
 Virginia Rasmussen, New York
 Richard Reisdorf, Minnesota
 Carla and John Rensenbrink, Maine
 Greta Rensenbrink and Kat Williams, West Virginia
 Kathryn Rensenbrink and Jon McMillan, Maine

Liz Rensenbrink, Maine
 Robert Richie and Cynthia Richie Terrell, Maryland
 Barbara Rodgers-Hendricks, Florida
 Jeanne M. Rosenmeir, California
 Kimberly Ruffin, Illinois
 David Schwartzman, Washington D.C.
 Evelyn Seberry, Michigan
 Robert Sellin & Natalie West, Maine
 Brian Charles Setzler, Oregon
 Charles Sexton, Florida
 Tammy Lacher Scully, Maine
 Elizabeth Shanklin, New York
 Judith Simmons, Maryland
 Joseph Sirois, Maine
 Mark and Wendy Skinner, Pennsylvania
 William Slavick, Maine
 Sam and Kathy Smith, Maine
 Thom Speidel, Washington
 James G. Speth, Vermont
 Herschel Sternlieb, Maine
 Daphne T. Stevens, Massachusetts
 Dale Straugh, Illinois
 Jeff and Shirley Taylor, Iowa
 Lisa J. Taylor, California
 David Thompson and Leslie Pearlman, New Mexico
 David and Marilyn Tilton, Maine
 Victoria A. Tredinnick and Brian Linson, New Jersey
 Kathleen Vadnais, Minnesota
 John C. Van Pelt, Maine
 Rhoda Vanderhart, Alabama
 Dorothy Vogel, Oregon
 Mike Wakefield, Maine
 David Walker, Ohio
 Victor Wallis, Massachusetts
 Andrea Walsh and Andy Davis, New Hampshire
 Ellen Wells, Florida
 Brielle Welzer, Maryland
 Steve Welzer, New Jersey
 David Whiteman, South Carolina
 David and Regine Whittlesey, Maine
 William T. Whitney, Maine
 Julia Willebrand, New York
 Natasha Wist, California
 Paul Woodruff, Texas
 Peter and Margaret Zack, Maine
 Steve M. and Marcia Zettle, Pennsylvania
 Betty Zisk, Massachusetts
 The Green Network, Missouri

NUMBER 31

SPRING/SUMMER • 2015



GREEN HORIZON FOUNDATION
P.O. Box 476
TOPSHAM, ME 04086

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 65
Brunswick, ME



Printed on 100% post-consumer waste paper made with a chlorine-free process, using linseed oil-based inks.