

Spring 2006

10th Anniversary Issue

yes!

a journal of positive futures

Planet at the Crossroads

Bill McKibben on who is stepping up to save Planet Earth

Heroes for an Unheroic Time

Where you can find the courage to make peace

(Re)Claiming the Good Life

Consumerism is so-o-o-o '90s

50 Ways to Survive—and Thrive—for the Next 10 Years • Losing our Appetite for Anonymous Food • Indigenous Rights Go Global • A New (and Ancient) Understanding of Who We Are • Why the next 10 years will be nothing like the last

10 most hopeful trends of the last 10 years

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Issue #37



10
years
of **yes!**

This is the 10th year for *YES!* magazine
and all of us here at *YES!* thank you for all you
do to make this work possible.
In spite of the odds—
we are still saying YES!
thanks to you!

Dear Reader,

IF YOU HAD VISITED US when we first started *YES!*, we would have welcomed you into the basement of a rented house. You would have seen desks made of plywood and covered with stacks of paper, telephone and network wires lining walls and doorways, brown shag carpets, and staff and volunteers sorting mail and working away at old Macintosh computers.

We started *YES!* with high hopes (but little money) to report on possibilities for a better world—possibilities we felt were being ignored by other media. The “mainstream” media treated the large emerging crises as a sideshow to stories of political intrigue, street crime, and international finance. People addressing these challenges were either ignored or treated as pleasant but irrelevant do-gooders. The questions that would determine our future—like whether we could learn to live without undermining the Earth’s life-support capacity and without launching all-out war—were treated only as footnotes.

Meanwhile, much of the alternative press seemed mesmerized by the bad news of the moment and uninterested in the solutions to our large dilemmas.

YES! was to be a showcase of the innovations and people addressing our critical challenges. We wanted to show the livelihoods, responses to oppression, ways to live, and sources of meaning that could add up to a more just, sustainable, and compassionate world. And we wanted to say “Yes!” to all those planting the seeds of a new era that might take us beyond the dead end of a self-defeating era.

David Korten, our founding board chair, wrote this in our first issue:

“As a species we humans have arrived at a defining moment. For the first time in our history, we have both the opportunity and the necessity to assume conscious collective responsibility for creating our future.”

Now, 10 years later, we have not only survived, we are thriving. In our first year, we had about 6,000 subscribers. Today, our circulation tops 45,000—people from all 50 U.S. states and 50 other countries read *YES!* each quarter.

More than 5,000 teachers are in our educators’ network; we estimate we are reaching 150,000 students through these teachers. Every month, more than 50,000 visitors come to our website, www.yes-magazine.org.

Ninety percent of new independent magazines



Linda Wolf

never reach their 10th birthday. How were we able to beat the odds?

Some of it was plain orneriness—we just weren’t going to give up our dream as long as we could scrape together money to pay the print bill (even if that sometimes meant missing a paycheck).

Some of it was luck. We were able to recruit an extraordinary group of people to serve on the staff and board, and as volunteers and interns.

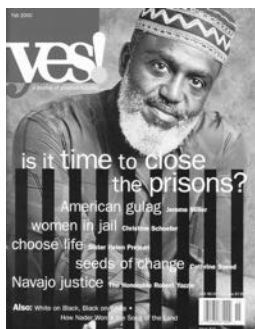
Some of it was that we met a need. People want to learn about possibilities for profound change at this critical historic moment and to see evidence that together we can indeed create a better world.

There’s no question, though, that you, our readers, are the core reason we are still here. Some of you have been with us since the beginning. Many more have joined us since and then spread the word to others. And many of you have given gift subscriptions, made donations large and small, sent notes of encouragement, visited our website or our office (we’re out of the basement now!), emailed our articles, volunteered, or attended *YES!* events.

The global crises that spurred our founding are even more urgent today than they were 10 years ago—as is the urgency of creating new ways that can sustain us. With your support, we will continue reaching more and more people with stories of the work that you and others around the world are doing that give hope for our common future.

With gratitude,

Sarah Ruth van Gelder
Executive Editor



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YES! is published by the Positive Futures Network, an independent, nonprofit organization that supports people's active engagement in creating a more just, sustainable, and compassionate world.





readersforum



Did an article leave you delighted? Infuriated? Inspired to action?

Tell us what you think of the ideas you find in *YES!* and
what you're doing to create a better world

Religion Hurts

Perhaps it is *YES!*'s dedication to positive futures that leads you to produce an issue (Winter 2006) in which almost half of the space is devoted to "Spiritual Uprising" with not a word about the adverse effects of religious (or spiritual) practices.

Religious beliefs are what prompt: hostility towards gays, resistance to stem-cell research, disruptions to educational curricula, impositions of religious practices on those who want none of it, opposition to women's ability to choose, and so on.

The United States, the richest and most powerful country in the world, is far and away the most religiously devout industrialized ("advanced") nation. Despite all that devotion (vociferously practiced by the president—any president), we sow the greatest disturbances across the planet, waste enormous resources on the military, have unconscionable levels of domestic poverty, are responsible for much of the world's environmental degradation, allow a large proportion of our citizens to lack adequate medical care, and so on.

Differences in religious belief have served as the primary sources of conflict almost everywhere. Examples: the Crusades, the Inquisition, the horrific breakup of Yugoslavia, the troubles in Northern Ireland, ongoing strife in parts of Africa, the almost constant conflicts in the Middle East, the recurring battles between India and Pakistan, and on and on. Such con-

flicts are not resolved through appeals to the supernatural; they are solved by resort to reason.

Making appeals to correct the many troubles and injustices that your authors do is commendable, but do not invoke appeals to the supernatural for solutions. If that worked, all we'd need is prayer.

Do we hold human beings in such low regard that we think they can be sufficiently moral only when admonished by illusory supernatural powers?

Lester Goldstein
Seattle, Washington

Out of Our System?

I hope you have gotten the religious and the spiritual out of your system. I long for freedom from religion.

Roger Stevens
Wrentham, Massachusetts

Thanks for the Spiritual Hope

The Winter 2006 issue of *YES!* is one of my favorites and seems to be somehow pulling the words I have felt inside my soul out onto the pages of this issue. I am feeling more hopeful.

Susan Hylen
via e-mail

True Spirituality

Thank you for Sarah van Gelder's column in the Winter 2006 issue. You gathered the essence of what "spiritual uprising" is really about. Not only is there "a spiritual crisis" in America, as Rabbi Michael Lerner has pointed out, but "true spirituality" is on the line. Thank God, it is about time for the

real issues to be dealt with openly, and this issue of *YES!* helped open up that dialogue publicly.

I know this arena very well from my own experience: 47 years as a Catholic, the final 20 as a Catholic monk and priest. Leaving the priesthood and Catholicism, I became an atheist because I no longer believed what I had been taught and taught others. I wandered around in spiritual no-man's-land for five years, lost and confused, and then came to the end of my road, beginning to think there is no meaning to life at all. But then I was led, seemingly by accident—no accident at all—into Eastern spirituality with an enlightened master. I had the freedom there to accept whatever or none of the teachings at all, so with that freedom I dove in and discovered the answers I had been looking for all my life.

I am told that Mahatma Gandhi, after being told that many in his movement didn't believe in spirituality at all, replied, "That is because they haven't experienced 'true spirituality.'" I am sure this is true of many people in America these days. And it is extremely difficult to wade through the deluge of misinformation and find true avenues for that exploration.

Tom Toomey
via e-mail

A Reason to Stay in America

I wish an issue of *YES!* would be in my mailbox every month. Each magazine is read, thoroughly discussed with like-minded friends,



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and recycled to a friend whose income is even less than mine.

Your magazine is what keeps me sane in this crazy society. There are times I feel that I should go back to my roots in the Netherlands, but they're having their problems.

We, as Americans, can work in our own little area and hope that whatever we do will spread out to show others that together we can make it a better world.

Vivian Kincaid
Danville, Kentucky

Painting an Elder

When I opened the Fall 2005 issue of *YES!* I was excited to see coverage of the elderly. I recently had an exhibition at the University of Colorado called "Ruth/Face to Face." This show was a display of drawings and paintings of one elderly woman, Ruth, who modeled for me the last 15 years of her life.

Rarely do we see artists make use of an elderly woman as a model for artistic expression. Yet viewing Ruth's image moved viewers to see elderly women as beautiful and special individuals they wanted in their lives. Ruth and I hoped that through people viewing this body of work, we would change attitudes. Perhaps society would start honoring its seniors and learn from their vast wisdom.

Kathleen Spencer Johns
Boulder, Colorado

Spiritual Eldering

I was so happy to see *YES!* magazine's tremendously beneficial series of articles on aging.

Just as in other stages of our development, we want to move into our older years consciously, not unconsciously. If we can begin to face our fears of aging, we may find some unexpected treasures and opportunities for growth. Most people walk large circles around the topic of

aging; it's right up there with death.

For those who are interested, here are some great first steps I recommend on the path toward becoming elders: reading the book *From Age-ing to Sage-ing* by conscious aging pioneer Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Schalomi [featured in *YES!*]; participating in workshops and classes, including those that have been developed by the Spiritual Eldering Institute.

Yes! Let's do the challenging and rewarding work of aging and reap the joys, understanding, and wisdom that the second half of life can bring.

Sandy Sabersky
Elderwise
Seattle, Washington

Alexander Technique is Best for Aging Well

Three movement practices were mentioned by Carolyn McConnell in "Aging Better by Moving Smarter" (*YES!* Fall 2005). I would like to add another practice to the list: Alexander Technique.

I have studied the Feldenkrais Method, yoga, and *qi gong*. Though I heartily recommend all of these practices, none of these methods taught me what the Alexander Technique has, to thoughtfully inhibit poor habits of movement and direct myself in skilled movements. Within weeks of starting regular Alexander lessons I was able to stop my regular visits for chiropractic adjustments.

The Alexander Technique has been taught in England since 1906. It is covered by medical insurance both in England and Israel. There are over 400 Alexander teachers in the United States.

Peter Anderheggen
New Hartford, Connecticut

Correction: The credit for the artwork in *YES!* #36, on page 37 is incorrect; it is the work of artist Greg MacDonald.

continued on page 6



An Elder Initiation

When I turned 50, I was initiated as an elder in a ceremony that was simple and profound. I stepped across a threshold to elderhood, and have never felt old or that I'm diminishing.

I feel this is a time when elders need to be leading the revolution forward to a sane and sensible way of living. The world is not evolving in a natural process; it is being pushed by consumerism and marketing to meaningless cosmologies that don't and can't work. We need us elders to lead once again.

The natural world, youth, and the forces of peace need the wisdom elders have to offer. This has been the work of elders throughout history. Let's find ways to bring our special gifts to the world, and help create a world we want to live in, with love, compassion, play, and community.

To this end, I am planning a workshop that will be playful and experiential. Using the cob [earth] building process, we will create an

Earthprayer for World Peace. In so doing, we will investigate our elder calling and create a personal vision for living a vital, purposeful, engaged life during our elder years. We will use group process, ritual, and grief-releasing techniques to end the numbing we often feel and open our hearts to imagination and possibility.

If you come, wear old clothes, as we will make this Earthprayer for World Peace out of the mud! Bring objects that mean peace to you: prayers, poems, and objects we will embed in the earth sculpture. We will be initiated as elders in a ritual we will embody.

My own initiation was the most meaningful ritual of my life. Contact me at earthprayers@hotmail.com.

Robert Francis Johnson
via e-mail

Can Crones Save the World?

Thanks for the issue on elders. Reframing things as per your mention of David Korten makes a huge difference.

I came to the same point alone recently while reading Marion Woodman's book, *Dancing in the Flames*, in which she has a wonderful chapter, "And A Crone Shall Lead Them."

Elder wise women were killed by the millions from the 12th to the 19th century—their power was too much for the patriarchy—but we are thus missing their positive role model. We elder women have a special role to play now in saying "no" to the power structure that is destroying the earth.

As Marion and Robert Bly point out, there is crone energy in men too. Feminine energy is drastically needed now to take a firm stand about what's going on and to take men and the rest to a new level of consciousness.

Age alone doesn't do it; the leadership role must be psychologically earned, but I believe if more women stepped forward they (and we) would be enriched and emboldened.

Alice Holstein Mack
via e-mail

Finding Support

Some of us local Aptos, California, women have been meeting monthly since before the Iraq war for support, understanding of issues, and action.

Betty Michelozzi
via e-mail

Where Are the Cultural Creatives?

Your issue on Cultural Creatives (Winter 2001) blew me away. Where are the Cultural Creatives now? Their website seems to have been abandoned around 2002.

What I long to see is a locally hosted gathering (but part of a national grassroots movement) that could rally around the cultural creative worldview—a meeting place that could put spirit and values and our worldview first.

What I feel was so essential about Paul Ray and Sherry Anderson's work, and your issue on it, was that it cut across the lines that divide even us, the free thinkers, the ones with hearts open enough to dream of a better world and lives we are willing to commit to working towards it. What of the pro-life mother who supports green politics or the gay Republican or any number of other combinations of perspectives?

We are already out here, but like islands in various streams. The worldview (the cultural creative values and perspective) itself is what could bring us together.

Juliet Trail
Charlottesville, Virginia

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www.yesmagazine.org



Asian Activists Join Forces Against WTO

International trading hub Hong Kong saw massive protests against the World Trade Organization's meeting there in December. While the protests did not succeed in causing the collapse of the meetings, as they did in 1999 and in 2003, they did link grassroots activists from around Asia to share strategies.

Billed as a "development round" to discuss agreements to help developing countries harmed by unbalanced global trade, the meetings resulted in few concessions from developed countries. Europe and the U.S. agreed to set a 2013 target date for eliminating agricultural export subsidies, a small fraction of total subsidies, which Third-World countries claim increase poverty and hunger in poor countries.

Seasoned activists from Korea, long used to facing riot police, joined Hong Kong protesters in disobeying police orders against marching toward the convention center. Using a trademark protest technique, the Koreans marched by bowing, kneeling on the pavement, rising to their feet and taking three steps, then bowing again. Although protesters were barred from coming within sight of the convention center, the four-hour procession drew the city's attention.

Police fired tear gas and rubber bullets at marchers when they neared the convention center and arrested 1,300 people who were staging a sit-in. Most were later released without charge, but 14 protesters received formal trials for unlawful assembly. Six days later, supported by a wave of international



Built Marquez

solidarity actions, all but three were released with all charges dropped. Three Korean activists are still being charged for unregistered and unlawful assembly, with their hearing set for March.

Activists also created a parallel forum to discuss alternatives to WTO policies. More than 130 groups participated in sessions that included an international youth dialogue, a women's forum, union and farmers' meetings, and workshops focused on fair trade, food, and public services for all.

—Lilja Otto and Stephanie Fung

For more on the Hong Kong protests against the WTO, see www.focusweb.org or www.oaklandinstitute.org.

Houston Janitors Win Union Struggle

Nearly 5,000 janitors in Houston have joined union ranks in one of the most successful organizing drives ever in the southern United States.

In November, just a few months after the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) began an organizing drive, 4,700 mostly Latino janitors secured the right to bargain collectively. The janitors, who make up 62 percent of the city's janitorial work force and clean four of the largest buildings in Houston, earn one of the country's lowest pay rates—an average of \$5.30 an hour or \$100 per week—and do not receive health-

South Korean protesters performed a ritual in protest of the WTO on December 15, as they marched towards the Hong Kong Convention Center, where the sixth WTO Ministerial conference met





Cesar Rangel

Activist and organizer Irene Fernandez received a Right Livelihood Award for her work to halt abuse and violence against poor women and migrant workers

care benefits. Texas, like much of the South, has a low rate of unionization.

The janitors work for the same companies that employ unionized workers in Chicago, Los Angeles, and New York, where they are paid a higher wage; janitors in New York City earn an average \$20 an hour, while janitors in Chicago are paid \$13.30 an hour. SEIU janitors staged sympathy walkouts in 28 other cities and honored the picket lines of Houston janitors during a 10-day strike. The union also garnered support from local religious and community leaders, pension funds, and politicians, including the city's mayor.

Negotiations for a contract are expected to begin soon in Houston, while SEIU is also trying to use the momentum from the victory to unionize janitors in Atlanta, Phoenix, and in shopping malls nationwide.

SEIU currently represents 1.8 million workers across the country. The union recently broke away from the AFL-CIO to form Change to Win, a federation of seven unions that together represent 5.4 million workers.

—Megan Tady

Megan Tady is a former YES! intern.

Immigrant-Rights Advocate Honored

This year's Right Livelihood Award honors activist and organizer Irene Fernandez from Malaysia for her lifetime's work to halt abuse and violence against poor women and migrant workers. Fernandez organized Malaysia's first textile workers union in the 1970s, lobbied for women's rights, and documented injustice and abuse among farm workers.

As leader of the organization Tenganita, Fernandez campaigns for the rights of foreign workers and women with HIV. Her work has given visibility and voice to the most disadvantaged groups in her country. As a result of publishing research on the mistreatment of migrant workers, she was arrested in 1996. The trial dragged on for seven years until, in 2003, she was sentenced to one year in prison, but is currently free with an appeal pending.

The Right Livelihood Award, known as the alternative Nobel, honors "those offering practical and exemplary answers to the most urgent challenges facing us today." Irene Fernandez shares the prize with Roy Sesana and his organization First People of the Kalahari in Botswana, honored for defending Bushmen land rights, and with trade activists Maude Barlow and Tony Clarke from Canada. Mexican artist Francisco Toledo also received an award for transforming his native Oaxaca into a center for arts and civic activism.

—Lilja Otto

For more information on the award and its recipients, visit www.rightlivelihood.org.

Maryland Passes Wal-Mart Law

Maryland's legislature has passed a bill effectively forcing Wal-Mart to spend more on employee healthcare. The law, which is the first of its kind in the U.S., requires large employers to spend at least 8 percent of their payroll on employee healthcare coverage or pay the difference directly

into the state's healthcare plan for the poor. Wal-Mart is the only company in the state that currently fails the law's requirements.

More than 30 other states are considering similar measures. Labor unions, which pushed for the Maryland law, plan to target Colorado, Connecticut, and Washington state for similar laws, according to *The Washington Post*.

—Carolyn McConnell

Bechtel Drops Bolivia Water Lawsuit

Under pressure from a global grassroots campaign, Bechtel Corporation has dropped a \$50 million lawsuit against Bolivia stemming from the country's cancellation of a water contract. Bechtel is selling its 80 percent stake in Aguas del Tunari, the company that provides residential water service to Bolivians, back to the country for the equivalent of about 25 cents.

Bechtel, headquartered in San Francisco, brought the lawsuit against Bolivia after massive protests in Cochabamba in 1999 following large rate increases and the privatization of water. The Bolivian government canceled the contract with Bechtel in the wake of the protests, and the suit demanded compensation for losses Bechtel claimed it incurred.

The lawsuit was brought to the International Center for Settlement of Investment Disputes, a court of the World Bank whose proceedings are usually closed to the public. The tribunal operates outside of national laws; countries are not allowed to appeal decisions made by the tribunal, and economic sanctions can be brought against any country that fails to comply with the tribunal's ruling.

More than 300 organizations from 43 countries joined in a petition to the World Bank demanding the proceedings be opened to the public. Activists protested at Bechtel's San Francisco headquarters and its Amsterdam offices.

Bolivia's recently elected presi-



dent, Evo Morales, the country's first indigenous president, has promised to nationalize the country's resources.

—Lisa Garrigues

See www.yesmagazine.org for more on

Bolivia's landmark election of Evo Morales.

Lisa Garrigues is a YES! contributing editor.

Solar Energy Booms

For the fifth year in a row, world solar panel sales grew by more than 40 percent in 2005. Other renewable energy sources, such as wind power and biofuels, also saw growth rates of 20 to 30 percent due to increasing petroleum prices and government financial incentives.

Large government financial incentives for solar were recently adopted in Washington state, California, Japan, Spain, Italy, and Portugal. In California, the goal is to put solar power in half of new homes within 13 years. The recently passed U.S. energy measure offers a tax credit of up to \$2,000 for homeowners who install solar equipment.

In Washington state, a new law will allow homes and businesses to sell energy they generate renewably back to utilities at above-market rates, earning an even higher rate if the equipment is manufactured in the state. A similar program in Germany has made it the world's largest consumer of solar panels.

Production of solar panels has not kept up with demand, driving up costs to the consumer by as much as 15 percent, and resulting in long waits.

New industrial-scale solar technologies are coming of age, though. California regulators last fall approved Southern California Edison and Stirling Energy's deal to construct the world's largest-ever solar power station using solar dish technology, which creates electricity from solar heat rather than photovoltaic panels. The 500-megawatt, 4,500-acre power project will produce more electricity than all other U.S. sun-power projects combined, and could be expanded to 850 megawatts.

—Rik Langendoen

Uranium Price Jumps

Rising demand and tight supplies have caused the price of uranium to more than double in the past two years, from \$14 per pound in 2003 to more than \$35 per pound at the end of last year, according to the nuclear industry research firm UX Consulting.

Nuclear power plants, fueled by uranium, supply 16 percent of the world's electricity. As oil prices have risen and concerns about global warming have grown, a number of countries have announced plans to build more nuclear plants. China plans to build 27 new nuclear plants by 2020, India plans 17 new plants by 2012, and Finland announced last year that it would build what will be the first new nuclear plant constructed in Europe since 1991.

Uranium ore mining now meets 55 percent of nuclear power plant demand, with the balance made up by reprocessed reactor fuel and uranium from dismantled Russian bombs, according to the World Nuclear Association. According to researchers Jan Willem Storm van Leeuwen and Phillip Smith, if the world got all of its electricity from nuclear power, the world supply of high-grade uranium ore would last four years. If lower quality ore is used, mining and milling the ore consumes more fossil fuel than if the fossil fuel were burned directly to produce electricity.

—Carolyn McConnell

For more information, see "Nuclear Is No Solution," YES!, Fall 2004, and www.stormsmith.nl.

Kuwait Oil Falls Short

As controversy continues about whether global oil production is reaching its peak, two pieces of news suggest that one country experts thought would help meet growing world demand is already at maximum production. According to Kuwait Oil Company chairman Farouk al-Zanki, expected increases in production from Kuwait's Burgan oil field are impossible, Bloomberg News reported at the end

of last year. In January, the oil industry newsletter *Petroleum Intelligence Weekly* reported that it had seen Kuwaiti documents showing Kuwait's oil reserves were only half those officially stated.

Engineers projected that Burgan—second in size only to Saudi Arabia's Ghawar field—could produce 2 million barrels of oil per day for the next 30 to 40 years. Efforts to reach that level were unsuccessful, and al-Zanki says that 1.7 million barrels per day is the most the field will yield.

Kuwait's November 2005 production was 2.5 million barrels per day, down from a peak of 3 million in 1972. The country expects to spend \$3 billion per year for the next three years on efforts to boost production. That figure is three times the current spending rate.

—Doug Pibel

Voting Rights Restored

Felons who have served their sentences regained their voting rights in several states this past year. In Iowa, which had one of the nation's most restrictive laws on voting rights for ex-felons, Governor Tom Vilsack issued an executive order granting clemency to felons who had served their time and were not on probation or parole. The order could expand the number of Iowans



Leroy Jones joined other demonstrators outside the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Miami, in April 2003, while the court heard arguments about whether the state was doing enough to help ex-felons restore their voting rights. Jones finished his sentence 10 years ago



eligible to vote by as many as 50,000.

In Nebraska, the legislature passed a law automatically restoring voting rights to those with felony convictions two years after they have completed sentences and probation or parole. The law will restore the voting rights of approximately 60,000 Nebraskans.

Rhode Islanders will vote this year on a state constitutional amendment that would restore voting rights to those on probation or parole.

Laws restricting the voting rights of ex-felons deny the right to vote to about 4.7 million Americans, including 13 percent of African-American men.

—Carolyn McConnell

Trouble Rocks Voting-Machine Firm

Difficulties are mounting for one of the top U.S. electronic voting machine suppliers. In December, Diebold shareholders filed several class-action suits alleging Diebold failed to disclose

Carolina voting machine market, saying it could not comply with the state's new requirement that voting machine manufacturers allow review of voting machine source code. Officials in Florida's Leon and Volusia Counties, and in St. Louis County, Missouri, announced that they would no longer use Diebold equipment. California's secretary of state put certification of Diebold's machines on indefinite hold, pending further testing.

—Doug Pibel

Town Wins One Against Corporate Farming

Two recent court rulings demonstrate that the decades-long, grassroots fight against corporate farming is far from over.

A Pennsylvania judge affirmed the validity of Belfast Township's Farm Ownership Ordinance, which prohibits non-family corporations and syndicates from owning or benefiting from farm land and from engaging in farming in the township. The September ruling may be appealed in court or reviewed by the state attorney general.

Belfast is one of 12 Pennsylvania townships that have adopted anti-corporate farming ordinances in response to the rise of corporate hog farms.

In December, a U.S. District judge declared Nebraska's 23-year ban on corporate farming unconstitutional. Judge Laurie Smith Camp ruled that the ban violated the commerce clause of the U.S. constitution—because it restricts out-of-state corporations from investing in Nebraska farms—and the Americans with Disabilities Act—because it requires the owner of a family farm to perform day-to-day labor on the farm. A spokeswoman for the Nebraska Attorney General announced the state would appeal.

—Krista Camenzind

Antibiotic Banned

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has banned the use of an animal antibiotic, in a first-ever effort to protect against drug-resistant infec-

tions in humans. The FDA blocked the use of Bayer's poultry drug Baytril, a fluoroquinolone drug similar to Cipro, an antibiotic used to treat people with serious cases of bacterial infection.

The order affects only use of the drug on poultry and does not limit its use on other animals.

Baytril, first approved for sale in 1996, was used widely both to promote growth and to treat whole flocks of chickens and turkeys when one animal was sick. The Union of Concerned Scientists estimates that American livestock receive about 24.6 million pounds of antibiotics, about 75 percent of the nation's consumption.

The FDA has told the makers of at least three types of penicillin used on farm animals that they may face similar restrictions, according to Reuters.

—Carolyn McConnell

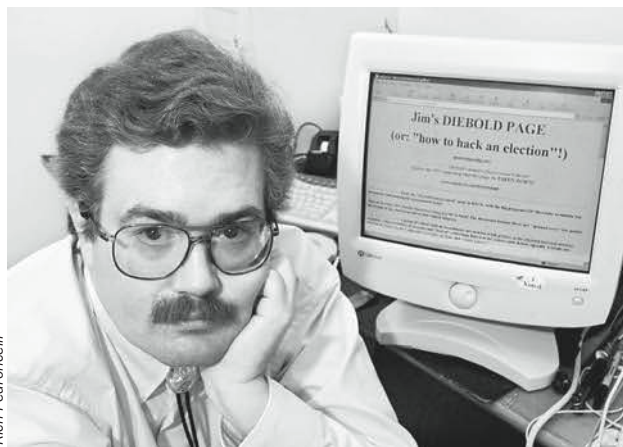
India Gives Incentives to Parents of Girls

In an effort to reduce selective abortion of female fetuses and stem India's growing gender imbalance (the country now has about 930 females for every 1,000 males), the Indian government has announced a plan to provide reduced-cost education to families with only a single, female child.

The plan would make secondary school free for such children and offer them scholarships of 2,000 Rupees, or about \$45 per month, towards post-graduate study. Families with two female children and no boys will receive a 50 percent reduction in school fees.

A study published in the British medical journal *The Lancet* in January estimated that 10 million female fetuses have been selectively aborted in India in the last 20 years. The tendency to abort female fetuses increased with each successive girl a family already had; the "girl deficit" was even higher among educated women. Sex selective abortions have been banned in India for more than a decade.

—Andrew Lovejoy



Rich Pedroncelli

Computer programmer Jim March shows internal company documents on Diebold's electronic voting machines that he says show the security risks of electronic voting

problems with its voting machines.

That same month, Walden W. O'Dell, chairman and chief executive of Diebold, resigned "for personal reasons," according to a statement. O'Dell gained notoriety during the 2004 presidential campaign for sending a campaign letter pledging to deliver Ohio's electoral votes to George Bush.

Also in December, Diebold announced its withdrawal from the North



Linda Gould

The Maishima incinerator in Osaka, Japan, is designed to minimize pollution and to attract the thousands of visitors who learn about recycling and waste reduction at the landmark plant

Japan Pioneers Clean Waste Disposal

The Maishima waste incineration plant in Osaka, Japan, is pioneering new uses for technology to dispose of waste with minimal air and land pollution and low energy consumption.

Together, the plant's filters, catalysts, and high-temperature incineration limit the plant's emissions to 10 percent of the national allowable rate for pollutants associated with acid rain, respiratory ailments, and smog and less than 1 percent of allowable dioxins.

Maishima generates electricity from the incineration process and saves about 400 tons of water per day by reusing wastewater and collecting rainwater. Plant vehicles run on natural gas, and the ash, which is typically sent to landfills, is treated for heavy metals, then used in road construction and land reclamation.

Most unusual for a waste incineration plant is Maishima's role as an Osaka landmark. Designed by Austrian artist and environmentalist Friedensreich Hundertwasser, the plant's bright colors and unusual shapes annually attract thousands of visitors, who learn ways to recycle and reduce the amount of waste they generate.

—Linda Gould

Linda Gould is a writer and photographer living in Osaka, Japan.

Christians March on Guantánamo

A group of 25 U.S. Christians calling themselves Witness Against Torture marched 60 miles to Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, this December to draw attention to the secretive U.S. prison.

Since 2002, the U.S. government has detained more than 700 prisoners at Guantánamo, dubbed by Amnesty International "the gulag of our time."

Despite petitions and phone calls to the U.S. government, the group was not allowed to enter the prison. For three days, the group held vigil at the gates and fasted in solidarity with detainees hunger striking in protest of their living conditions and indefinite detention without trial.

Since shortly after the prison opened, groups of prisoners have engaged in waves of hunger strikes. In July, about 200 of the approximately 500 prisoners began refusing food, according to lawyers for some of the prisoners. That strike ended at the end of the month, but prisoners again went on hunger strike on August 8, amid rumors of abuse by a guard. In December, the Defense Department announced that 46 detainees had joined the hunger strike on Christmas Day, bringing the total number of current participants to 84. Some are being force-fed via nasal tubes.

In November, the UN special rapporteur on torture rejected a guided tour of the camp because he would not be allowed to interview detainees privately.

—Elle McPherson

For photos and statements from the marchers, visit www.witnesstorture.org.



Scott Langley

Twenty five U.S. Christians calling themselves Witness Against Torture marched to Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, in December to draw attention to the treatment of prisoners at the U.S. prison



the page that counts

Percentage by which the average American household's stock portfolio underperforms the market: 1.44¹
Percentage by which portfolios of corporate insiders outperform the market, on average: about 5
Percentage by which stock portfolios of U.S. Senators outperform the market: 12²
Number of theaters in which the third movie in the Left Behind series was shown on opening night: 0
Number of churches in which it was shown: 3,200
Number of churches in 1981 that attracted more than 2,000 people per week: less than 50
Number today: more than 1,200³
Percentage by which people with "above average" looks earn more money than average: 5
Percentage by which people with "below average" looks earn less money than average: 9⁴
Height of the average American male: 5'9"
Height of the average Fortune 500 corporate CEO: 6'
Percentage of Fortune 500 CEOs 6'2" or taller: 30
Percentage of all American men 6'2" or taller: 3.9⁵
Percentage increase in worker productivity in the non-farm business sector in the third quarter of 2005: 4.7
Percentage decrease in real hourly compensation for the same workers: 1.4⁶
Projected total cost of the Iraq war, according to a January 2006 study: about \$2 trillion
Pre-war cost estimate, which was rejected at the time by a White House economic advisor as being "very, very high": \$200 billion⁷
Number of states in which there is only one facility that provides abortions: 3
Number of doctors residing in South Dakota who perform abortions: 0
Number of days per week when women can receive abortions at South Dakota's lone abortion facility: 1⁸
Amount for which competitors in the Visit Scotland Adventure Triathlon were insured against an attack by the Loch Ness Monster: £1 million⁹
Number of hybrid taxis introduced to New York City's taxi fleet in November 2005: 6
Total number of taxis in the New York fleet: about 13,000
Number of years in which New York officials hope to have converted the city's entire fleet: 5¹⁰
Number of federal economic and tax benefits and protections afforded to legally married couples that are not available to same-sex or other "unorthodox" couples: 1,138¹¹
Percentage of U.S. adolescents ages 10–14 who have tried smoking: 10
Percentage of that group who did so because they saw smoking in movies: 38¹²
Number of U.S. subscribers to broadband Internet in 1995: 0
Number in 2003: 25.1 million
Number worldwide in 1995: 0
Number in 2003: 91.1 million¹³
Percentage of Americans in 1996 who accessed the Internet for news and political information: 20¹⁴
Percentage of Americans in 2004 who did so: 51¹⁵
Amount of a grant awarded by the Department of Homeland Security to the state of Kentucky to keep terrorists from using bingo and other forms of "charitable gaming" to raise money: \$36,300¹⁶

Sources (See complete citations at www.yesmagazine.org.)

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4. *Journal of Labor Economics*, January 1998 5. Gladwell, Malcolm *Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking*, New York: Little, Brown & Company, 2005
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10. Reuters, November 10, 2005 11. General Accounting Office report, August 17, 2004 12. Reuters, November 7, 2005 13. International Telecommunications Union (ITU), 2004 14. *The Public Perspective*, June/July 1996 15. Gallup Organization poll, December 5–8, 2004 16. *Lexington Herald-Leader*, October 24, 2005



10 most hopeful trends

Which landmarks from the past
10 years point to possibility
and which to peril?

What is the evidence that people
are choosing hope?

We offer 10 trends—
stories of people
using ingenuity, persistence,
courage and love to
say, **YES!**

Illustrations on pages 13, 18, 26, 36, 43, and 48 by Oreste Zevola

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10 years of YES!

• Redefining the American Dream



• Jubilee Network gets concessions on Third World debt from G8

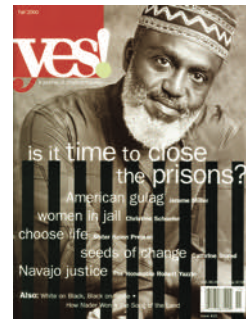


• Truth and Reconciliation Commission testimony begins post-apartheid healing



• Arctic wildlife threatened by persistent organic pollutants

• Activists press for alternatives to prison



• Protestors bring WTO talks to a halt



• Transportation alternatives gain traction

• Granny D ignites awareness of political funding corruption



1996

International Court of Justice rules use of nuclear weapons illegal • Welfare Reform bill passed • Dr. A.T. Ariyaratne, founder of Sarvodaya, awarded Gandhi Peace Prize • Telecommunications bill deregulates media ownership • Bill Clinton reelected in U.S.; Boris Yeltsin in Russia • **Center for a New American Dream** launched

1997

Kyoto Treaty signed • Asian economic meltdown • **Jubilee 2000** founded to **advocate debt relief for poor nations** • Hong Kong returned to Chinese rule • Term “weblog” coined • Living Wage Movement started • NATO and Russia sign pact officially ending cold war • The Body Shop introduces Ruby, a doll shaped like real women

1998

Good Friday Peace Accords in Ireland • France introduces 35-hour workweek • **South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission report** • MoveOn.org formed to oppose Clinton impeachment • Multilateral Agreement on Investment defeated • **Inuit Circumpolar Conference demands ban of persistent organic pollutants**

1999

World population passes 6 billion • **Honda Insight is first hybrid car in U.S. market** • Canada bans bovine growth hormone • Clinton impeached • **Seattle meeting of WTO derailed by massive protests** • Y2K bug creates millennial anxiety • BlackBerry handheld wireless device released • UN ban of land mines takes effect

2000

Earth Charter is completed • **Granny D completes walk across America** • Vermont legalizes same-sex unions • Human genome is mapped • Vladimir Putin elected in Russia • U.S. Supreme Court stops vote count, George W. Bush declared election winner • **U.S. reaches benchmark of 2 million prisoners**

- World Social Forum seeks globalization on human terms



- Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva becomes president of Brazil on platform of land reform and eliminating hunger



- Hungry people reach for food in aftermath of tsunami



- Exploring alternative responses to the terrorist attack of September 11, 2001



- Millions worldwide protest invasion of Iraq



- Take Back Your Time Day becomes part of redefining the good life

- Youth turns out in force to support Kyoto Protocol



- Candlelight vigil at third UN World Conference Against Racism

- Citizen outrage curtails media deregulation



- Cindy Sheehan's vigil re-energizes antiwar movement



2001

First World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, Brazil • Outbreak of hoof and mouth disease in U.K. cattle • Enron files bankruptcy in biggest corporate collapse in history • UN World Conference Against Racism in Durban, South Africa • Terrorist attacks on New York and Washington, DC

2002

Argentina defaults on national debt • USDA National Organic Standards take effect after grassroots demand for tough standards • First widespread use of electronic voting machines in U.S. • Republicans take control of Senate • Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva elected president of Brazil • North Korea announces possession of nuclear weapons

2003

Millions march worldwide in largest anti-war demonstration in history • U.S. invades Iraq • Take Back Your Time Day launched • SARS raises fear of pandemic • Californians recall governor, elect action-movie star • Grassroots activism stalls FCC deregulation of media ownership

2004

Million-strong March for Women's Lives • Mass demonstrations after election in the Ukraine result in re-vote • George Bush elected to second term in U.S. amid widespread claims of election misconduct • Massive tsunami devastates coastal Southeast Asia • Uruguay constitution amended to outlaw water privatization

2005

Kyoto Protocol enters into force, is strengthened at Montreal Summit • U.S. personal savings rate reaches zero • Cindy Sheehan holds vigil outside Bush vacation ranch • Hurricane Katrina and government inaction devastate New Orleans • Earthquake in Pakistan kills 70,000 • Kuwaiti women gain right to vote

10 hopeful trends

Why the next 10 years will be nothing like the last 10 years

Sarah van Gelder

Here's a quick puzzle. The mayor of which city has vowed to make his city the greenest in the U.S.? Are you thinking of Seattle? Portland? Maybe Boulder or another city known for its environmental ethics?

Try freeway-clogged Los Angeles. Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa has vowed to plant 1 million trees during his tenure. As voters were electing L.A.'s first Latino mayor, they also approved, by a three-to-one margin, a \$500-million bond measure to create habitat and wetlands, and capture storm water to use for irrigation and for recharging aquifers.

Ideas from the environmental fringe have become central to Los Angeles' future.

Perhaps this should not be a surprise. Los Angeles has been hitting environmental limits as air, water, and soil pollution compromise people's health and water and energy resources are overused.

But as the environmental health of the city declined, people from the diverse communities of Los Angeles began taking action. They planted trees to cool sidewalks and buildings—and help cool the planet—organized to keep toxic waste out of their neighborhoods, helped save waterways drained by L.A.'s infamous thirst, and brought organic gardening and fresh produce into under-served communities.

These sorts of stories were once found only at the fringes of society. But ecologists tell us that the fringes are the most productive parts of ecosystems, and innovations from the fringes of society are today seeding a future that can sustain us all.

As today's crises deepen, these innovations be-

2006

Perhaps we are letting go of the old ways, as a snake sheds its skin, to find the spaciousness to grow into new ways

come increasingly important. Our current direction is not sustainable. The environmental crisis, the growing gulf between rich and poor, the risks of all-out war—all of these crises have been building momentum. In particular:

- Rising temperatures, melting ice caps, receding glaciers, and increasingly intense storm and drought cycles indicate that the climate is indeed changing, with results that may undermine life as we've known it.
- The spread of antibiotic-resistant infections, avian flu, tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, and malaria results when poverty and displacement combine with inadequate or misdirected public health investment.
- Spiking prices of oil and regional shortages suggest that fossil fuel extraction may not be able to keep up with rising energy use (especially with greater demand from China and India), and oil extraction may be at a peak.
- The globalized corporate economy is increasingly treating First World workers—white, blue, and pink-collar alike—as workers in Third World countries have been treated by corporate employers for years. The resulting depression in wages and benefits is accelerating the divide between the wealthiest and people who rely on a paycheck for their livelihoods.
- The world has become a more dangerous place as a result of the U.S. invasion of Iraq and Washington's unilateral foreign policy. Nuclear proliferation is also increasingly a danger.

Some are mesmerized as these blows follow, one after the other, and as the democratic channels erode that should provide us the means to deliberate and choose a course of action together.

But there's something else going on as well. Below the radar, ignored by the corporate media, people are creating the foundations for a different society. Many are working from the fringes—those fertile growing-edges of the culture. Some of them

have been excluded from the system and therefore are freer of its seductions, others are on the inside but have chosen a different path. In every sector, they are developing ways to meet human needs for livelihood, security, meaning, and community—ways that can be sustained by the abundance the Earth offers and that also protect that abundance for all our children and grandchildren. These new approaches offer a path toward a sustainable future, but it is one that we can choose to take or not.

As the crises that have been building for decades accelerate, we can expect further confusion and groping for direction. Change of this magnitude can be terrifying, and can provoke a backlash as people long for the comfort of a familiar past.

If there is a clear path forward, though, our prospects are much improved. Clarity about the systemic causes of our crises and the systemic foundations of new approaches can help us avoid blame and pull together across the lines of black and white, blue and red, religion, culture, and gender to create real solutions.

We can choose to treat our moment in history not only as a time of crisis but also as an opportunity—a time when together we can be founders of a new era. In the coming time, our choice will become increasingly stark, and that is why the next 10 years will be nothing like the last 10.

Some, sensing the scope of the change, read it as a sign of the biblical End Times; the *Left Behind* series of novels telling of the end of human civilization have sold millions of copies based on that reading.

But perhaps this is, rather than a time of death, a time of rebirth. Perhaps we are letting go of the ways that constrain our future, as a snake sheds its skin, to find the spaciousness to grow into new ways. Perhaps what feels like disintegration is the in-between time of one era ending and, as Vaclav Havel says, another struggling to be born.

In a time of rapid change, when the bonds begin to fray that had tied us to established practices and institutions, there are more choices and also more dangers. The 10 trends highlighted in this issue from our 10 years of publishing *YES!* show possibilities of moving towards a life-sustaining future.

Pages 14 to 15 images
from YES! archives

10 hopeful trends—active nonviolence

Active Nonviolence: 1 Heroes for an Unheroic Time

A nonviolent army stands fast,
watching over human rights
in the midst of conflict, a model of
courageous peace

Carol Estes

A NOT-SO-FUNNY THING HAPPENED on the way to the 21st century. We got scared. We Americans used to believe we were a brave, big-hearted people committed to freedom and justice for all.

When did we lose our nerve?

When did we start believing that the world is one big war zone peopled by terrorists, gang bangers and drive-by shooters, serial killers, sociopaths, sexual predators, and people who hate freedom? At what point did we settle for living as though we were under siege, locked in gated communities, holed up in front of the television? When did America stop saying to the world, “Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to be free” and start drawing up blueprints for a 2000-mile-long wall between us and Mexico?

“These are unheroic times,” writes John Graham of the Giraffe Project in his book *Stick Your Neck Out*. “After more than two centuries of being free, this nation is far from brave.”

And that is a big problem, not just for Americans, but for the world. Because scared people are dangerous people. So Graham’s goal, and that of his organization, is to help our nation get its nerve back. He trains people to stick their necks out for what they believe in.

Fortunately, he’s not alone.

He’s working alongside the thousands of ordinary people across the nation and around the world who have stopped waiting for their political leaders to lead and taken the initiative themselves.





active nonviolence—10 hopeful trends

These people are finding new ways to work with enemies and listen with compassion to the people they fear, to create peace in conflict zones. They are inventing methods to interrupt the cycle of fear and punishment that has left 2 million people imprisoned in the United States. And they are teaching others how to do the same.

In small, individual acts of bravery these regular folks have left the safety of the flickering, corporate-sponsored window on the world to see for themselves what it's like to be "Them."

A Brave New World?

Bravery is about overcoming fear. And you will be scared when you venture out unarmed into the "Mean Streets"—into tent cities, homeless shelters, prisons; to places where people are fighting or starving; to places where you know you don't belong. In fact, you will be scared out of all proportion to the dangers you face, because you have been pre-scared, courtesy of both the media and Mother Nature.

If you grew up in a home where you watched several hours of TV each day, you have probably been infected with what social scientists call "Mean World Syndrome"—the more television you watch, the more likely you are to believe that the world is a mean and dangerous place and that you will become a victim of violence. If you watch a lot more TV than your neighbor, you are more likely to have bought a gun and a guard dog to protect yourself

and installed new locks on your door, and you are more afraid to walk in your own neighborhood.

We are particularly receptive to these messages about a dangerous world because Mother Nature has provided us with an information-processing system that magnifies our fears. Social psychologists call it social categorization. It is a survival mechanism—a sort of mental filing system designed to help us quickly sort through the flood of information about other people that pours into our consciousness and file it into usable categories.

The trouble is, we seem to have been issued a mental filing cabinet with only two drawers—a tidy, attractive drawer with just a few files in it labeled "Us," and an overstuffed, nasty-looking drawer labeled "Them." So we categorize people as "those who are like us" and "those who are not," particularly when our vital interests are involved.

The social categorization process runs on fear. Like a home security system it bleats, "Don't open that door! Those people can't be trusted! They hate us. They want to hurt us. Stay here, where it's safe!"

Those who decide to ignore the alarm and open the door to the world are not only flying in the face of their culture's teachings about danger, they're bucking evolution's dire warnings about "Bad Them." So theirs is an act of bravery and imagination that can change the world. And there have been many thousand such acts during the last decade.

When Gandhi wrote that nonviolent resistance

BELOW LEFT:

International activists protest at the construction site of Israel's apartheid barrier near the West Bank city of al-Khali

Photo by
Nayef Hashlamoun

BELOW: Rachel Corrie was trying to prevent the destruction of Palestinian homes by the Israeli military when she was crushed by a bulldozer.

Photo courtesy of
the Corrie family



10 hopeful trends—active nonviolence

must be “no less brave, no less glorious than violent resistance,” he reminded us of an unpleasant fact: peace work is not for cowards.

During the last decade, many people have risen to the challenge. Working through peacekeeping organizations such as International Fellowship of Reconciliation, Nonviolence International, Women Making Peace, and the Michigan Peace Teams, thousands of ordinary folks accompany activists in conflict zones, monitor elections, and stand by the oppressed. Their bravery is usually unheralded; there are no magnetic yellow ribbons for people like 23-year-old Rachel Corrie, killed in the southern Gaza city of Rafa when she tried to prevent the demolition of a friend’s home by the Israeli army, or for the four Christian peacemakers kidnapped in Iraq.

Thousands of people have been trained in conflict resolution and entered zones of conflict. In Angola alone, Search for Common Ground trained 10,000 internally displaced persons in conflict resolution, and the learning ripples out as those people establish new organizations and use the techniques

they’ve learned. The Compassionate Listening Project has taken more than 400 volunteers into the midst of bitter conflict—Israelis and Palestinians, Germans and Jews—and taught them how to listen to each others’ stories with compassion and to imagine walking in each other’s shoes.

Another group of regular folks has become incensed at the fact that, in the “Land of the Free,” we imprison a far higher percentage of our population than any other country in the world. They’ve worked to find alternatives. One of the most exciting and successful of these is restorative justice. Instead of guilt and punishment, it focuses on the healing of all parties to the conflict. Victims, offenders, and the many others who are affected by a conflict meet and talk with each other. Together they arrive at a solution that addresses everyone’s need to be heard and to be restored. According to Prison Fellowship International, the outcomes of these meetings often include victim-offender mediation, victim assistance, ex-offender assistance, restitution, and community service.

continued on page 22

Greater Than the Tread of Mighty Armies: Nonviolent Peacekeeping

Mel Duncan

AS I WRITE THIS ARTICLE, I am preoccupied with the four members of Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) who remain captive in Iraq. While there are so many prisoners who need our attention, my focus remains riveted on the CPT members because of the courage, hope and vision they represent.

These four men are part of a growing number of international peacekeepers serving in the most violent places on the planet. Peace Brigades International has 35 observers and “accompaniers” in Colombia protecting human rights organizations and threatened leaders. They also have projects in Indonesia, Guatemala and Mexico. Other areas served by CPT include Palestine and the U.S.-Mexico border. International Solidarity Movement provides peace-

keeping in Palestine.

Local peacekeeping groups are also emerging. Sarvodaya, a Gandhian group in Sri Lanka, is developing a *Shanti Sena* (Sanskrit for Peace Army) to intervene rapidly in conflicts. Nonviolent Peaceforce—a consortium of 93 member organizations from around the world—sponsors training and formation of *Shanti Sena* to respond to violence in India. Supported by the Muslim community, this group plans a massive public pledge of nonviolence on September 11, 2006, the 100th anniversary of Mohandas Gandhi’s proclamation of *satyagraha* (nonviolent action based on “soul force”).

Nonviolent Peaceforce—a group to which I belong—is building a large-scale professional force of well-trained unarmed peacekeepers. Officially begun three years

ago, NP’s pilot project operates in Sri Lanka, where peacekeepers from 14 countries provide a variety of field-tested strategies. In one instance, a group of mothers approached a Nonviolent Peaceforce team in Sri Lanka after their children had been abducted to be child soldiers. After locating the military camp where the children were being trained, NP accompanied the mothers, who demanded the return of their children. Negotiations continued for several days, until 26 children were released.

As we started organizing NP, we visited with people around the world. Amid the fiercest violence, we met courageous and creative peacemakers, more often than not women. They told us time and time again that isolation was lethal. If their death carried no consequence,



active nonviolence—10 hopeful trends

Freedom Project / Inmates Find Peace

Freedom Project was co-founded by Lucy Leu (right, 2nd row) and Rusty Thompson (left of Leu) in 1998 to help current and former prisoners find the freedom of inner peace and reconcile with their communities. Leu, Thompson and the Freedom Project team go into three Washington state prisons to offer workshops in Marshall Rosenberg's Nonviolent Communication techniques—reframing expression to speak and to listen with compassion—combined with such “mindfulness” practices as meditation.

An important component of the Freedom Project is helping prisoners make the transition into communities once they are released. Freedom Project workers organize and run support groups for “returnees.” “Safe Returns,” a Freedom Project program in the planning stages will offer returnees daily one-on-one meetings with designated community members.

The success of the Freedom Project, Leu believes, may be attributed to two sorts of partnership; the first is the melding of meditation with Nonviolent Communication, a pairing that helps prisoners become spiritually centered. The second is the collaboration between former prisoners and NEBIs (No Experience Being Incarcerated). When former inmates carry the message, their words and example have the power of authenticity. —Dee Axelrod



photo courtesy of Lucy Leu

they were much more likely to be “disappeared.” They explained that international accompaniers extend their lives and amplify their work. During this research period, we identified proven, workable methods of nonviolent peacekeeping (see www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org).

As we organized we observed that when we described the concept of a large-scale nonviolent peaceforce we were often met with recognition. People would say, “I’ve dreamt about that my entire life,” or “I wrote a paper on that at university,” or “We did that in my village.” Nonviolent peacekeeping has been a recurrent vision that flowed, during the past century, through Gandhi, Maude Roydon, Badshah Khan and so many others. It has occurred and recurred to enough of us that a significant number of people now focus

their lives and resources on making this persistent vision a reality. What has escaped the cameras of CNN has not escaped the consciousness of thousands of us as we co-create effective nonviolent peacekeeping.

Growing in sophistication over the past 10 years, nonviolent peacekeeping has saved thousands of lives. As the effectiveness of this approach to transform violent conflicts is demonstrated, the infrastructure to support this work expands. Rigorous peacekeeping training has been developed internationally. An international registry of civilian peacekeepers has been initiated. Recruitment procedures are sharpening. Funding sources are increasing—primarily individuals, but also a growing number of foundations, faith-based institutions and even some governments.

UNICEF recently provided NP with a grant for our work with child soldiers in Sri Lanka. At a conference at the UN last summer, civilian unarmed peacekeeping was prominent on the agenda. Most importantly, the people are there. Last spring, when NP recruited for a peacekeeping team for Sri Lanka, we had 15 applicants for every position.

As we work and pray for the release of Tom Fox, James Loney, Harmeet Singh Sooden and Norman Kember, it is important to note that they represent a growing movement of unarmed peacekeeping more effective and less costly than military alternatives. This nonviolent peacekeeping provides an alternative to which we may say YES when we say NO to war.

Mel Duncan is executive director of Nonviolent Peaceforce.



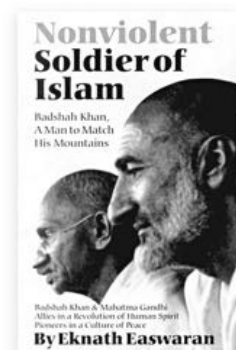
10 hopeful trends—active nonviolence

Dorothy Stang / A Heart for the Poor

Dorothy Stang died championing the rights of poor Brazilians, while also trying to preserve the Amazon rainforest. Stang, a sister in the Notre Dame de Namur order, established 21 settlements of farmers committed to conservation farming methods on rainforest land coveted by Brazilian ranchers and loggers. Stang was shot by men hired by two ranchers on February 12, 2005,

as she knelt before her assassins in the forest path, reading Bible passages aloud to them.

Rayfran das Neves Sales and Clodoaldo Carlos Batista were sentenced to 27 and 17 years, respectively, in Para state, Brazil, for the murder-for-hire. Two ranchers and a go-between also face trial. —Dee Axelrod



Nonviolent Soldier of Islam: Badshah Khan, a Man to Match his Mountains

Eknath Easwaran

Nilgiri Press, 1999, 276 pages, \$15.00

"Gandhi explained, '... as heat conserved is transmuted into energy, even so our anger controlled can be transmuted into a power which can move the world.' ... With his truculent, explosive Pathans, Khan had an abundance of raw material to work with."

Mohandas Gandhi's nonviolent campaign to end British rule of India depended on an army of peaceful Muslim warriors led by Abdul Ghaffar (Badshah) Khan. As Easwaran's book describes, Khan created a nonviolent army out of 100,000 men from the revenge- and honor-driven Pashtuns of Afghanistan, the same tribe that later dominated the Taliban.

At one demonstration, Khan's unarmed army stood fast as British soldiers began shooting at them. Khan demonstrated Gandhi's insistence that nonviolence is not the weapon of the weak, but the strongest form of human power, which only the bravest can wield. *Reviewed by Carolyn McConnell*

continued from page 20

On the international level, the last decade saw the culmination of 50 years of work by 100 nongovernmental organizations and nations to establish the International Criminal Court. The court is flawed, a product of compromise. But its opening in 2003 declared, for the first time in history, that human rights trump national sovereignty.

Considering the power and dominance of the United States, perhaps the most encouraging development is the grassroots efforts under way to create a cabinet-level Department of Peace. Its function would be researching, articulating, and facilitating nonviolent solutions to domestic and international conflict. The idea's supporters—and there are many, including 60 co-sponsors of a bill in the U.S. House of Representatives and activist organizations in 48 states and 285 congressional districts—want the United States to be more effective in addressing sources of violence.

A Dream Renewed

Through imagination, bravery, and hard work, these ordinary folks are renewing the dream of peace in a world where war is the norm. It's difficult work—complicated, messy, and sometimes dangerous. But the hard part—and the best part—is that it can't be done from a distance. You can't do it from behind a computer or by reading about the problem. You have to go to "Their" world. Meet. Sit together. Listen. Talk.

You'll probably find that even with all its trouble and sorrow, the world is a friendlier place than you thought. That "They" are not so bad—and we're not so good. Soon you'll want to start moving big armloads of files from the "Them" drawer into the "Us" drawer. And that, Dear Reader, is the foundation of whatever good we will be able to build together.

Carol Estes is a YES! contributing editor.



food revolution—10 hopeful trends

Why are farmers' markets, community supported agriculture, direct farm-to-household marketing, organics, and humanely raised meats all on the increase?

2

Food Revolution: Americans Lose Their Appetite for Anonymous Food

Brian Halweil

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Y WIFE AND I LIVE IN an old whaling town on the eastern end of Long Island, New York, where we tend a home garden and orchard. For much of the year, we don't have to buy produce. In the winter, we eat what we've canned, pickled, dried, and otherwise put up. We get eggs from a neighbor, trading him vegetables. We rake our own oysters and clams. We have a few local bakers who turn out warm, crusty loaves each day, and a cheese shop that offers dozens of American farmstead cheeses—including a few made from the milk of cows grazing a few miles away.

Of course, there's still room on our table for exotic flavors, including coffee, chocolate, and other imported pleasures. But eating this way means that we don't get strawberries in the winter or wild salmon from Alaska or many other things that aren't in season or aren't from here. Which we don't mind much, since we always know exactly what we're putting in our mouths.

The more I've come to rely on local food, the more I see why so many Americans are hungry for alternatives to the corporate supermarket.

Walk through the sliding glass doors and you find brightly colored cereal boxes, mounds of vegetables, an entire frigid wall of dairy products and frozen dinners.

But what you don't see is information about



Farmers from Intervale in Burlington, Vermont. Intervale farmers are committed to farm organically and to supply locally grown food to Burlington schools.

Photo courtesy of the Intervale Foundation.



10 hopeful trends—food revolution

how or where the food was raised. Our food travels farther than ever before—at least 1,500 miles for the average item in the United States. The farther removed we are from where our food is raised, the less we know about it. None of the cryptic nutritional labels will mention that some of the seafood contains mercury and other heavy metals, that the strawberries may have been misted with chemicals banned in much of the rest of the world, that the milk you are buying for your kids may contain traces of hormones fed to the cows to make them produce more milk. No label describes the working conditions for farmers or farm workers.

The Local Cornucopia

More and more Americans are fed up with this sort of anonymous food. In the last decade, a veritable

cornucopia of choices has become available that now allows us to take greater control of the food supply.

In the last 10 years, interest in eating local has exploded, whether you count the growth in farmers' markets (roughly 3,800 nationwide, more than twice the number a decade ago); membership in Slow Food U.S.A. (13,000 members and 145 chapters just since 2000), the American arm of an international movement to defend our collective "right to taste" as well as the artisanal food producers who bring us distinctive flavors; or the number of schools stocking their cafeterias with fresh food raised by nearby farmers (400 school districts in 22 states, in addition to dozens of colleges and universities).

YES! has documented the inspiring grassroots movement referred to by parents, farmers, and teachers as "farm-to-school" that is sweeping the nation, as well as many other examples of communities declaring independence from the standard food chain. There's the story of Anna Marie Carter, "The Seed Lady" of Watts, a master gardener who uses organic farming to improve the lives of people suffering from illness or poverty, or the People's Grocery in West Oakland, founded to get city kids involved in growing and selling fresh fruits and veggies in a neighborhood sorely in need of such sustenance, or the many jails around the nation where inmates use gardening as therapy.

Within the food landscape, the fastest-growing category remains organic food, sales of which have been increasing at nearly 20 percent each year for the last decade, eight times faster than the relatively stagnant grocery sector as a whole. Organic food sales topped \$10 billion in 2003 and are expected to hit \$32.3 billion by 2009, as top supermarkets and food conglomerates roll out their own private-label organic foods. (Although such popularity means more acres farmed without polluting pesticides and chemical fertilizers, it has raised concerns about attempts to water down organic standards in the name of profit.)

Even some large and influential agribusiness companies are beginning to declare some allegiance to place. "We've been pleasantly surprised by how easy it has been for our chefs to create these menus," said Maisie Ganzler, director of communications and strategic initiatives for Palo Alto-based Bon Appetit Management Company, a food service industry pioneer in serving food from sustainable, local sources. The company's Eat Local challenge in September of 2005 galvanized 190 cafés, restaurants, and university eateries owned by the company to serve at least



Hungry Planet: What the World Eats

Peter Menzel and Faith D'Aluisio

Ten Speed Press, 2005, 288 pages \$40.00

A pick-your-flavor tour of the planet's cuisines is one of the many delights of Peter Menzel and Faith D'Aluisio's latest book, *Hungry Planet*, a survey of global food choices. Photographer and journalist traveled to 24 countries to pose families with a week's worth of food. Results reveal a global food chain of processed food binding people almost everywhere.

Menzel's photos encourage disquieting realizations (the universality of Coca-Cola, for example) and some surprising insights (Europeans eat as much packaged foods as Americans, and everyone on earth enjoys a good banana). Deft reporting by D'Aluisio explores complex issues such as the global obesity epidemic.

Like any good travelogue, *Hungry Planet* is most important not for what it illustrates about other people but for what it tells us about ourselves. Perhaps this book will get Americans to look more closely at what's on our own plates. *Reviewed by Jason Mark*



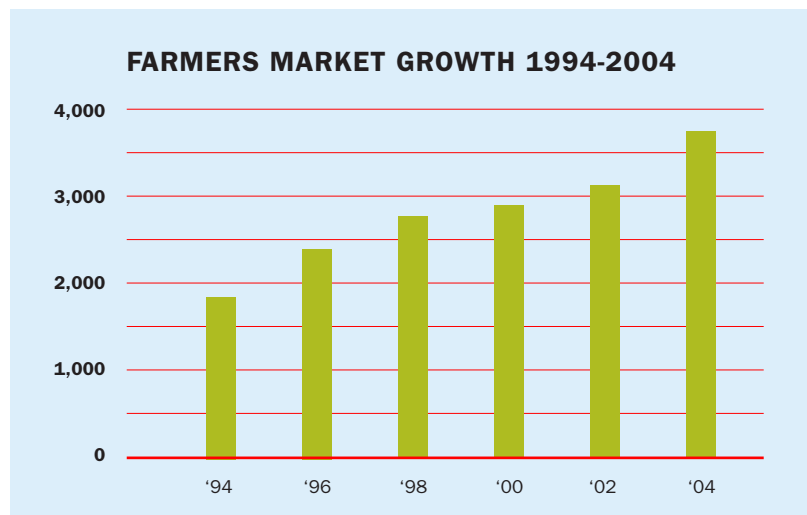
one meal made only from ingredients grown within a 150-mile radius. “We were motivated by flavor,” said Ganzler, who noted that the company will expand their local offerings based on the challenge’s success: “Once you taste the difference in the food it’s very hard to go back.”

Yes, eating local does taste better. It also saves huge amounts of oil, keeps money in your local economy, and combats sprawl by keeping land outside cities and towns in farmers’ hands. It even pleases the Department of Homeland Security, because shipping less food makes our nation less vulnerable to disruption of the transportation system, to spikes in oil prices, or large-scale food contamination.

It also means peace of mind, because the closer you are to where your food is raised the more power you have over how it is raised.

Eating local is the easiest way to eliminate suspect food from your diet. It’s also the easiest way to cut processed foods with added fat and sugar out of your diet, since you’ll be buying more fresh fruits and vegetables.

In a small but significant way, Americans who choose to buy their food from nearby farmers, fishers, and food makers are making a sort of declaration of independence. The ranks of the rebels include parents, fed up with what their children are served at school, who get fresh produce into the cafeteria;



farmers holding on to their livelihood by selling to nearby restaurants; and city politicians who make space for farmers’ markets, community gardens, and urban farms. They include people who are buying as much organic produce, range-fed meat, sustainable seafood, and fair trade coffee as is available.

It’s not always easy to eat this way. It means being less impressed by flashy packaging or volume discounts and more inclined to be curious and vigilant. But it always leaves a better taste in your mouth.

Chart above shows Operating Markets in the U.S. Source: National Farmers Market Directory, USDA

Brian Halweil is a senior researcher with the Worldwatch Institute (www.worldwatch.org). His new book is *Home Grown: The Case for Local Food in a Global Market*.

A City That is Ending Hunger Elle McPherson

WHAT IF, ALONGSIDE freedom of religion and speech, food security was in the Bill of Rights? In Belo Horizonte, a city of over 2 million in southeastern Brazil, access to adequate quantity and quality of food has become a right of citizenship.

This initiative stems from a simple, yet still revolutionary, idea—that hunger is not caused by scarcity. Rather, hunger is caused by a lack of access to food, usually associated with poverty.

Before the program began in 1993, one-fifth of the city’s youngest children suffered from malnourishment. Today, while infant mortality rates as a whole have fallen by only 7 percent in Brazil, those rates have decreased by 41 percent in Belo

Horizonte.

“Food is not a material commodity,” argues Adriana Aranha, director of Belo Horizonte’s Hunger Program, in the documentary *Silent Killer*, which aired on public television stations in the fall of 2005. “It is as essential as the air we need to breathe. If people don’t eat they don’t live.”

Belo Horizonte’s programs, which cost the city less than 1 percent of its budget, take a multi-pronged approach. By cutting out the middlemen and linking producers directly with consumers, small farmers earn higher prices while urban customers get good quality at a lower price. The city offers farmers prime retail locations at cut-rate costs, with the agreement that the produce will be sold at half

the retail price.

Using its power as an institutional buyer, the government purchases directly from area farmers and distributes the food as nutritionally-enriched flour, public school meals, and the Restaurante Popular, a government-run cafeteria offering affordable meals to more than 5,000 people a day. In addition, the program offers information to the public on nutrition and pricing. Twice a week, the city publishes the price of 45 basic food and household items available at 40 different supermarkets.

“I knew we had so much hunger in the world,” said Aranha in an interview with Anna and Francis Moore Lappé for their 2002 book *Hope’s Edge*. “But what is so upsetting, what I didn’t know when I started this, is it’s so easy. It’s so easy to end it.”



10 hopeful trends—sustainability

As signs of climate change grow,
and leaders lack political will to change course,
people are acting in community
to create a world
that works for all

3 Sustainability: Planet at the Crossroads



PO Box 10818, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110



Bill McKibben

IT WOULD BE EASY ENOUGH to make the case that the past 10 years have been ones of unmitigated disaster for the environment.

The atmospheric concentration of carbon dioxide has risen by 20 parts per million. Worse, we've begun to have a sense of what that relentless, accelerating rise actually means: bigger, stronger hurricanes; radically changing seasons; melting sea ice; sinking islands. And worse still, we've seen a world politically unable to cope with its implications: the U.S. has refused to help with global warming in any way, wasting one valuable year after another even as China and India launch into full-on development on the worst possible trajectories, emulating every mistake we've pioneered. There is nothing—nothing—sustainable about the planet we've built.

And yet, against that backdrop, something just as real is happening: the flowering of a thousand individual and community efforts towards a very different world. Those efforts may produce one of two results. Either their visionary beauty will help rouse the larger society, economy, and culture to deep action that wards off the worst trouble now headed our way, or they will serve as the seeds for the working culture that comes ... after. Either way, they are where hope now resides. Consider:

Andy Lipkis, a teenager in the early 1970s, obsessed with organizing a tree-planting project in his native Los Angeles. And not growing out of it. By now, the Tree People have planted millions of trees—to hold back erosion, to offer shade from the heat, to provide fruit for hungry people. And they've planted



Above, below left: Thousands of demonstrators show their colors in Montreal on December 3, 2005, in a peaceful show of support for the Kyoto Protocol. Photos by Ian Barrett

millions of seeds—of ideas about what might be possible sprouting in the minds of an entire generation of Angelenos who have been through their school programs or seen the green pleasure of their groves. Now, willing to deal with the devil that is bureaucracy, they've launched the TREES program: Trans-Agency Resources for Environmental and Economic Sustainability. It aims for nothing less than public funding of a "wide-scale retrofit of the Los Angeles landscape so the city can function and be managed as a living ecosystem."

Up the coast in Portland, meet the volunteer corps behind Intersection Repair. Your intersection doesn't seem broken? Well, watch what happens if, for an afternoon, you close it to cars and set up a tea house in the middle. Suddenly there's community where before there'd just been anonymous traffic. And when the street reopens—well, there's no reason the intersection can't still be a public square. Not if every facing wall and fence is crammed with art, if the street is painted in a giant sunflower or re-cobbled in brick, if there are community bulletin boards on the light poles, if there's a mini-café on



10 hopeful trends—sustainability

the corner. Not if it reclaims the dead, privatized space of the automobile for the living, breathing space of public life.

Across the country, in Burlington, Vermont's Intervale, where 10 years ago a nonprofit group leased the floodplain that had served as the city dump. It was just across the tracks from the city center, and on 200 of its fertile acres, a dozen farmers now supply 8 percent of the city's food: black beans and wheat, eggs from the chickens in the mobile coops pecking insects from between the rows of tomatoes, vegetables, and berries of every kind. Eight percent of the city's food! Not a pilot project, not a little test: proof of what is possible.

Or down the East Coast, in the toughest parts of Philadelphia, where Lily Yeh has built her Village of Arts and Humanities. In a neighborhood where the population had fallen by half, where half of those who remained were living below the poverty line, where the median household income was less than \$10,000, this Chinese-born artist started by reclaiming a single abandoned lot in the summer of 1986 to create an art park. Today there's a network of 14 parks in what were vacant lots. There are refurbished abandoned homes, a youth theater, a crafts center. *continued page 29*



Marsha Gordon

Omar Freilla / Sustainable South Bronx

"These trucks come through here every day and what do we, the folks in the South Bronx, get out of it? All we get is the diesel exhaust from the trucks. It's time we see if we can get some jobs from them ... We're talking about creating jobs that empower people. It's like a worker-owned Home Depot for used stuff," Omar Freilla told the *New York Daily News*.

Omar Freilla, 31, operates from the principle that if you've got lemons, make some terrific lemonade—and find a use for the skin, too. He created the Green Worker Cooperative to turn the mountains of New York City garbage trucked through the South Bronx into jobs for the community. The worker-owned cooperative will recycle and sell construction debris, boosting the local economy and diverting from landfills some of the 13,000 tons of construction waste New York City generates each year. —Carolyn McConnell

Europe Cleans Up Its E-Waste Act

Lilja Otto



"WEEE Man" meets workman. This 21-foot-tall, three-ton sculpture is made of 198 household devices, including five refrigerators, 35 cell phones, and 23 computer mice, representing the lifetime e-waste of the average European

IN THE LAST 10 YEARS, Europe has led the way in reducing the impact of throwaway technology. Here's a quick guide to new European initiatives.

Extended Producer Responsibility:

Clean up your own mess. First, there was Germany's packaging ordinance, which reduced waste by over a million metric tons per year and created strong incentives to cut non-recyclable or toxic components.

BAN: Don't trash your neighbor's

yard. The EU has banned export of hazardous waste, including e-waste from Europe to developing countries.

WEEE: Take it back. With a target of recycling 4 kilos (8.8 pounds) of e-waste per person each year, the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment

(WEEE) directive requires producers to design for easy recycling, repair, and upgrades, and to take back used appliances.

RoHS: Take out toxins. Appliance manufacturers must phase out the six most toxic manufacturing components by July 1, 2006.

Guarantees Directive: Make it last. EU law now mandates a two-year guarantee on all electrical appliances, encouraging producers to shift away from throwaway products.

Japan is following Europe's lead, passing its own Extended Producer Responsibility laws and developing substitutes for toxic components in order to stay competitive in European markets.

sustainability—10 hopeful trends



EARTH CHARTER / YES! Curriculum for Earth Community

"We must recognize that in the midst of a magnificent diversity of cultures and life forms we are one human family and one Earth community with a common destiny."

—From the Preamble to The Earth Charter.

The Earth Charter is a declaration of fundamental principles for building a just, sustainable, and peaceful world. Thousands of people around the globe were part of the 10-year drafting process. To help students and teachers understand the Charter's vision through real-life stories, YES! offers the YES! Earth Charter Curricular Module online. It ties YES! articles to the Charter's principles with questions and glossaries for each solution-oriented story—helping students build skills and hope. Learn more at the Education Connection section of the YES! website. Painting by Fran Gregory

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"I am an artist who works with many different media and in different disciplines," she said recently. "Sculpture, painting, photography, fiber, theater, and ritual celebration."

But in fact she specializes in a different medium entirely: she's an artist who uses community in her work. Uses it and builds it and uses it and builds it, in an infinite cycle.

"It has given me a great sense of pride to read in the newspapers and see on television people talking about my community in relation to beauty and hope rather than drugs and death," said one resident. Beauty and hope!

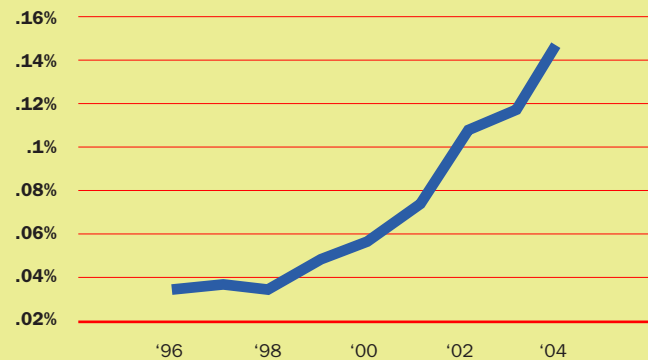
What about Detroit, if Philly isn't tough enough for you—probably the United States' single biggest example of a city in decline. As white people fled to the suburbs the city crumbled behind them, a monument to neglect. If you study it from a satellite, a third of its 139 square miles consists of vacant lots and abandoned buildings. But now something new is happening on that land. Urban farmers have begun to turn it into productive acreage—some of their microfarms take up a city block and turn out everything from alfalfa and eggs to goat's milk. Innovative architects have proposed converting four-and-a-half square miles on the city's east side into a self-sustaining village with its own dairy and cannery.

"It's a totally surreal experience," one farmer told *The New York Times* as he described seeing rabbit warrens and pheasants on his lot. "You are in this urban area and you are seeing this whole natural transformation."

There's always Salina, Kansas, too. Salina's not like Detroit—its fields are filling with big box stores

WIND ENERGY 1996-2004

(As a percentage of total energy consumption in the U.S.)



and chain restaurants. But on the edge of town the Land Institute has dug in for decades, doing the work that offers maybe the best hope for real sustainability on this continent: building an agriculture that doesn't depend on fossil fuels and fertilizer, but instead relies on the perennial plants that once covered the continent. They cross varieties of wheat and sunflower in the same way that Lily Yeh crosses theater and sculpture, and with the same aim: to build a community, natural and human, that actually works. Communities that don't depend on degradation for wealth, that might last longer than the next fiscal quarter or the next election cycle.

In fact, that's as good a definition of "sustainability" as you're likely to get. Sustainability is a vexed term—no one knows quite what it means. But we know, instinctively, what it doesn't mean. It doesn't mean fast, and it doesn't mean cheap, and it doesn't mean easy. Those are the hallmarks of our

Wind soars: from 1996 to 2004, wind energy production in the U.S. increased by more than 400 percent, while total energy production rose 6 percent

10 hopeful trends—sustainability

Youth Energizes Kyoto

Holly Dressel

ACCORDING TO THE U.S. MEDIA, Montreal was to be the burying ground for the Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change. Instead, an infusion of energy from young people fueled successful efforts by NGOs to push for the extension of the treaty and to negotiate new targets for reduction of greenhouse gases.

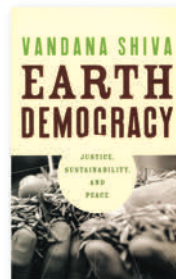
When political actions and environmental management plans follow the criteria of sustainability, they work. A record contingent of youth from all over the world who tirelessly lobbied the Montreal delegates illustrated that. They were humble, flexible, and tried to imitate nature's methods. So if they couldn't get into a meeting, they waited outside with coffee or skits, like holding a funeral for

Canada's global-warming-endangered national sport, ice hockey, on a slushy day or staging a "Bed-In" at the foot of the escalators on the anniversary of John Lennon's death. They were democratic, adding many hours of consensus planning meetings to their lobbying.

Near the end of the meetings, the youth delighted delegates with fortune cookies bearing messages like, "You will agree to post-2012 commitments," and "You will make decisions with your children in mind." Lighthearted as those messages were, they reminded the delegates of their own highest goals and responsibility to future generations. The youth set the bar high, and the delegates cleared it.



Young people recreate John Lennon's 1969 Montreal "Bed-In" with a 2005 version at the main entrance to the Montreal Kyoto Summit



Earth Democracy: Justice, Sustainability and Peace

Vandana Shiva

South End Press, 2005, 210 pages, \$15.00

"Earth Democracy connects us through the perennial renewal and regeneration of life—from our daily life to the life of the universe. Earth Democracy is the universal story of our times, in our different places. It pulsates with the limitless potential of an unfolding universe even while it addresses the real threats to our very survival as a species. It is hope in a time of hopelessness, it brings forth peace in a time of wars without end, and it encourages us to love life fiercely and passionately at a time when leaders and the media breed hatred and fear."

Right Livelihood Award winner Vandana Shiva draws on three decades of activism to create a vision of a world that honors the value of all life. Her stories of battles against corporate giants; of people working to create living, local economies; and of the empowerment that comes from local control point the way to true democracy and show that a better way is not only possible, it is coming into being.

Reviewed by Doug Pibel

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economy at the moment, the things we hold up as our highest goals—but we'd cringe if someone used those words to describe a child of ours. Instead, we want a planet that's deeply rooted and patient and solid, a world that we can count on, an economy that's mature. A friend of mine has taken to replacing "sustainable" in his lexicon with the word "durable."

Which makes sense. We don't know if the solutions we're building now, even the finest ones, will still make sense in a millennium. But we don't need to worry about millennia, not yet. If we could slow down the momentum of our helter-skelter world just enough to let us see a mildly plausible future for our children and then their children, that would be an enormous victory. Our planet is clearly at an intersection, and that intersection is clearly in need of repair. Keep your fingers busy, and your eyes on all that is lovely. Which is not hard—it stands out so against the backdrop of "normal."

Bill McKibben is the author, most recently, of *Wandering Home: A Long Walk Across America's Most Hopeful Landscape*. He is currently at work on a book called *Deep Economy* which is about building a smaller scale future that might serve both ecological necessity and human happiness.



art—10 hopeful trends

After a century of art for art's sake, art in the last decade
has been increasingly giving voice to the silenced,
illuminating complex political issues, and
bringing joy to the public square

4 **Art:** For the Common Delight

Dee Axelrod



WHILE THE LAST 10 YEARS have seen the weakening of funding to individual artists and the end of many alternative venues for showing art, a global art scene is thriving. The broadening and democratization of mainstream art, largely driven by the Internet, has helped reshape the aesthetic landscape from a New York-centric, gallery-driven scene to a thriving online global arts community.

In 1995, widespread access to the Internet produced a dazzling explosion of opportunities for artists to connect with practitioners from all over the world. Suddenly, in a single afternoon, an artist could “visit” a Prague printshop, view the Cone sisters’ collection of early Modernist works at the Baltimore Museum, chat with a collective of feminist artists in New Zealand, submit work to an

abundance of shows worldwide—or show and sell from her own website.

The Internet has created not just virtual art spaces but new opportunities for showing physical art in the real world, giving new scope to DIY (do it yourself) ingenuity. A traveling exhibit, for example, that would once have been organized by curators might now be artist-created and controlled—and feature works from all over the world.

One such show, organized online, opened in Milwaukee in 2001, featuring mixed media works ranging from Chicago artist Carlos Cortez’ woodcut posters for Industrial Workers of the World (I.W.W.) to Beehive Design Collective artists Kehban Grifter and Juan Manchu’s images in collaboration with several Colombian communities. By August 2005,



10 hopeful trends—art



Buster Simpson / Art in Service to Ecology

Merging his concern for the environment with an acute sense of three-dimensional form, artist Buster Simpson makes sculptures that enhance and explain, rather than merely decorate, the landscape. Seattle-based Simpson, who shows internationally, recently completed *Beckoning Cistern*, an aluminum and steel structure that collects water from the roof of a downtown Seattle building. Diverted from the usual route to a treatment plant, the grey water passes through the sculpture—which resembles a semi-abstract hand—and is oxygenated as it follows a path along the natural downhill slope, irrigating native plantings as it flows. Supported by the efforts of a design team of architects and engineers, *Beckoning Cistern* is a pilot for a larger project to reintegrate the city and its watershed. —Dee Axelrod

the exhibit had been shown in 27 cities and traveled more than 25,000 miles, aided by a website, www.drawingresistance.org, that became a virtual gathering place. “Drawing Resistance” depended on publicity and fund-raising from each local venue.

The capacity to stay connected online has helped power a healthy diaspora of artists to places besides New York, just as the Internet emphasis on communication has encouraged artists toward collective art activities that make an end run around market influences.

It has also encouraged new forms of arts education. The Beehive Collective (www.beehivecollective.org), an ongoing, decentralized collaboration of anonymous “bees,” has made it its mission “to cross-pollinate the grassroots” by producing images that anyone is free to take and use. Among other projects, the “hive” delivers some 200 lectures per year on globalization and promotes collaborations between the visual and literary arts.

Community arts programs—curricula for teaching a more socially engaged art—emerged at such campuses as the Institute for Social Ecology and Goddard College, both in Plainfield, Vermont.

A group of 60 “eco artists” who gathered at the 1998 College Art Association meeting in L.A. formed an ongoing network of artists concerned with preserving and restoring the natural world.

One such project, completed in June 2005, is “Three Rivers Second Nature”—an analysis of three river systems and 53 streams of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania initiated by Carnegie Mellon University’s Studio for Creative Inquiry. A team of artists and researchers, headed by Tim Collins and Reiko Goto, synthesized information gathered from historians, landscape architects, geographic information systems specialists, botanists, engineers, and water-policy experts to map the region’s natural history, analyze water use, and consider stream restoration. On completion of the project, the team presented their findings to the public.

Meanwhile, the traditional notion of public art—a discrete object made without much consideration for a particular place—has undergone a transformation that reflects artists’ deepening understanding of what it means to work in community. Artists first began to take into account the history and ecology of a particular site in the early 1970s. A natural next step was to consult with community members, perhaps eliciting their ideas and even some contributions. Over the last decade, a public art has emerged that seeks to place the creative process wholly in the hands of the community, with the artist in the role of facilitator, helping to draw forth a community’s stories. Community has been defined broadly to include such marginalized groups as inmates and shelter inhabitants.

But of all recent developments, it may be the emergence of artist-activists in their 20s that is most exciting. A different breed from past art school graduates competing to become “art stars,” these young people make art in service to social change. They do “reclamation art” projects at degraded sites. They help create dialogue among polarized groups. They work to foster a sense of community.

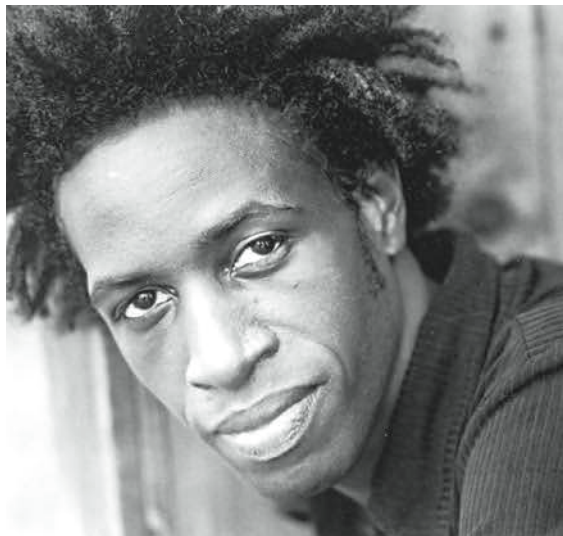
They are the hopeful future of art.

Photos on page 30: “Cydlifiad (Confluences)” by Buster Simpson, is a 2003 installation of 20 galvanized pails at the National Botanic Garden of Wales. Each bucket, painted by garden visitors, bears the name of a stream that forms the region’s watershed. Juxtaposing the man-made with the natural invokes the “overlay of the built environment and its man-made confluences,” according to Simpson



Saul Williams

Andrew Lovejoy



SLAM POET AND RAPPER Saul Williams' performances ride entirely on the shoulders of his presence. He stands alone onstage except for an accompanying DJ, and his voice stands alone except for a few simple beats—there are no pyrotechnics, no backup dancers, no wailing guitar solos.

He dances sometimes, clad in simple jeans and a green t-shirt (the front reads "ME"), but the performance is no less powerful when he simply stands and delivers, reciting his poems stationary and solo. Williams' show focuses on his words and the way he speaks them.

Williams, whom NME Magazine has called "the world's hottest lyricist,"

knows a lot about lyrics and about delivery. He got his start as a slam poet in New York, and it shows, whether he is reciting or rapping.

Williams doesn't talk about getting shot, doing drugs, or other staples of the modern rapper's repertoire. He makes no secret of the fact that he went to college (he has a B.A. in philosophy from Morehouse College, and a master's in acting from NYU).

What Williams lacks in street cred, he makes up in sheer lyrical skill and social conscience. Williams' lyrics often show the anger so common in rap music, but his rage is directed constructively—he uses his music and poetry to speak out against violence, discrimination, and social injustice.

Penny for a Thought

an armed robber stepped to a bank and told everyone to put
their hands in the air
a Christian minister gives his benediction while the congregation
hold their hands in the air
love the image of the happy Buddha with his hands in the air
hands up if you're confused, define tomorrow
your belief system ain't louder than my car system
'nigga' walked down my block with his Rottweiler, a subwoofer
on a leash
each one teach one
the DJ spins a new philosophy into a barren mind
I can't front on it
my head nods as if to clear the last image from an etch-a-sketch
something like Rakim said—I could quote any emcee,
but why should I?
how would it benefit me? karmic repercussions
are your tales of reality worth their sonic-laced discussions?
suddenly, the ground shivers and quakes
a newborn startles and wakes
her mother rushes to her bedside to hold her to her breast
milk of sustenance heals and nourishes
from the depths of creation life still flourishes
yet we focus on death and destruction, violence, corruption
my people, let pharaoh go
what have you bought into? how much will it cost to buy you out?
what have you bought into? how much will it cost to buy you out?
what have you bought into? how much will it cost to buy you out?

Excerpted from *Penny for a Thought* by Saul Williams
(*Amethyst Rock Star*, 2001)



Art in Other Places

William Cleveland

Praeger Publishers, 2000, 275 pages, \$14.00

While art has most often been construed as self-expression, Bill Cleveland's portrait of 22 arts programs chronicles the emergence of art as a vehicle for social change.

From Susan Tanner's creation of a "labor theater" with displaced steel workers in Vernon, California, to Philadelphia printmaker Allan Edmunds' Brandywine Workshop for inner-city youth, readers find artists harnessing their talents in service of arts-based community development. *Reviewed by Dee Axelrod*





New Cosmology:

A Great Story— Our Common Story

K. Lauren de Boer

SOME CALL IT A DANCE. Many call it reason for a new faith in the human prospect. More often, it's called a story, a grand, unifying narrative that points to the awakening of the human to meaning and wonder in a cosmos that had become increasingly impersonal and purposeless under the sway of Western science and the classical humanist tradition. However it's referred to, the new cosmology (also called the new story, the Great Story, the Universe Story) is energizing hearts and minds the planet over.

The key discovery is this: The Universe isn't simply a place or a vast mechanism. Nor is it aimless and random. It's an event, a sacred story begun 13 to 14 billion years ago, and one that continues to unfold and reach greater depths of beauty and complexity. And this complexification appears to be slanted so that the emergence of life and intelligence was inevitable. For the first time, through the discoveries of science, we have a common story. Points of transformation in the story have been moments of grace brought about in moments of crisis (see *YES!*, Spring 2000).

Photosynthesis is one such moment of grace. About 3.9 billion years ago, the planet faced a cri-

sis when the early Earth's generation of chemically rich compounds was slowing just at a time when the population of procaryotic cells (bacteria and blue-green algae, for example) feeding off the compounds was expanding exponentially. Instead of a major die-off from starvation, some procaryotes learned to capture photons hurtling at the speed of light from the Sun and convert them to food. The result, photosynthesis, was a creative act of elegance born out of crisis.

Humans: another moment of grace

The human, as one product of that evolutionary journey, represents yet another moment of grace—we are a species that reflects on the Universe consciously and on our own role in it. As such, we are a species who will consciously choose what kind of world we want. Our participation gives value and meaning to our lives. At our moment of crisis, will we choose to advance the evolutionary process consciously?



new cosmology—10 hopeful trends

The powers and forces that have shaped the story have shaped us, says mathematical cosmologist Brian Swimme, one of the most inspiring articulators of the new story. It is to these powers we must go for guidance. To do so is to tap into a source of remarkable energy, one that can guide us humans away from being a destructive presence on the planet.

Swimme's identification of the powers is based in impeccable science, mainly the discoveries of physics. "The Universe is permeated by cosmological powers that wove us into being," says Swimme, "and we are those powers in a new form." This realization is not simply an idle intellectual diversion, but a transformation in the way we view ourselves as humans that rivals the Copernican Revolution. The discovery by Copernicus that Earth circled the Sun caused a complete rethinking of the place of the human in the cosmos.

Eventually, an emphasis on the physical sciences led to the worldview that we live in a mechanical, largely incoherent cosmos and that human existence is pointless in the larger scheme. Now, the new cosmology, through a new understanding of the evolutionary story, places people back into a significant role as conscious, spiritual participants at the leading edge of evolution. We are key characters in the grand narrative of the Universe, which is a purposeful event permeated with intelligence.

We can (again) be of use to the Earth

Our call now is to move beyond the hubris of the past into our greater promise as a species by creating what cultural historian Thomas Berry has termed "mutually enhancing human-Earth relations." The Earth, through the human species, is coming into an awareness of its own emergence and that of the Universe. We participate in this awakening of Earth by reinventing the major forms of human presence on the planet. This is happening in many areas, from education to economics to agriculture and more, a creative emergence that *YES!* has been chronicling for these first ten years.

I chose the excerpt from Thomas Berry's writing (see sidebar) because it expresses, for me, how this story provides a very real and grounded sense of hope. Berry, as the touchstone of this movement, has ignited many other voices, from land-based communities, to wisdom schools, a think tank on the coming "Ecozoic" era, academic forums on religion and ecology, and more. The story is being sung, danced, and told by people who are choosing the side of a vibrant Earth community. Like an elder

oak, his vision has elicited a sensibility in Western hearts and minds which—as practiced in many indigenous societies—is ancient. It is also new in that it integrates the discoveries of the sciences, a sprouting acorn that promises to flourish into a sturdy tree. That is the sense that we can be of the Earth again, that we can care for the land, that we will remember the value of each member of the Earth community, remember what has come before, and embrace the promise of what is yet to come.

K. Lauren de Boer, an essayist and poet, was editor of *Earth-Light Journal* for 10 years. He is currently the core faculty member for a Master in Education program based in ecology and cosmology offered through the Institute for Educational Studies at Endicott College, www.ties-edu.org. See also de Boer's website at www.k-lauren.net. To learn more about the new cosmology, find links at the *YES!* website: www.yesmagazine.org.

Page 34 photo by NASA. Photo below courtesy of Bullfrog Films



Thomas Berry / New Cosmologist

"If the dynamics of the Universe from the beginning shaped the course of the heavens, lighted the Sun, and formed the Earth, if this same dynamism brought forth the continents and the seas and atmosphere, if it awakened life in the primordial cell and then brought into being the unnumbered variety of living beings, and finally brought us into being and guided us safely through the turbulent centuries, there is reason to believe that this same guiding process is precisely what has awakened in us our present understanding of ourselves and our relation to this stupendous process. Sensitized to such guidance from the very structure and functioning of the Universe, we can have confidence in the future that awaits the human venture."

Thomas Berry is a priest, a scholar of Asian and indigenous spiritual traditions, a cultural historian, and a teacher currently living in the southern Appalachians. He is one of the key visionaries teaching about the possibilities for this historic moment as catalyzed by the new cosmology.

—Sarah Ruth van Gelder

10 hopeful trends—the good life

In growing numbers,
Americans are rediscovering that the real meaning of the good life
doesn't come from things they can buy
but from things they can feel

6 **The Good Life:** Consumerism is so-o-o '90s





the good life—10 hopeful trends

*What is the good life? The good life is to be a good neighbor,
to consider your neighbor as yourself.*

—K. Vishwanathan, Kerala, India

Holly Dressel

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IVING THE GOOD LIFE is a subject that has been featured often in *YES!* stories since the magazine's first issue, for the simple reason that this issue is so central to human culture.

In the first book I wrote with David Suzuki, back in 1999, we had a chapter called "Complex Pleasures" that tried to analyze what it is that we humans really want. Today there are even more studies, polls and surveys that attempt to answer this most compelling of questions. And what they've uncovered has been a little surprising, in that it has been repeatedly demonstrated that once basic human needs for shelter and food are met, people are not made very much happier by even vastly larger quantities of material goods. In fact, decently nourished villagers in India or U.S. blue-collar workers are often just as happy with their lives as society matrons and rich businessmen.

What makes people unhappy is easier to gauge: feeling too isolated, unappreciated, insecure (both materially and socially), or unloved will do it. But people are also miserable if they have to try to function in a society that is inequalitarian, makes no sense, and over which they have no influence.

What people thrive on is love and intimacy within a family; stability within societies where the gap between the rich and poor, as well as the gap between people of high and low status is not extreme; and a feeling of usefulness and worth within both family and society. We don't get those things by buying goods, but rather by participating with each other, helping each other, even, dare we say, giving to each



10 hopeful trends—the good life

other. As Bill McKibben has often put it, when you help someone out, the pleasure is mostly yours. That seems to be true because it's actually the way we're made.

The reason David and I called the chapter "Complex Pleasures," is because immature beings, like babies, are made happy by simple pleasures: a bottle or a dry diaper. But mature beings need a good deal more. Many *YES!* contributors, among them a well-known champion of simple living, Vicki Robin, have noted that most young mammals, for example, need enormous amounts of food and warmth, while they later do not require as much. Mature beings not only demand less, but can produce something new out of themselves—fruit, children, creations—that creates a positive future for their entire group. As we grow up, we learn to share, to give, even to sacrifice; to find joy in community and also in creating ideas,

which are very different kinds of "happiness" from eating, sleeping or consuming any material good.

The consumer society that we have developed has to keep its members in a state of perpetual infancy because if consumers ever become satisfied with their material lives, they will cease to play the game of expanding desire that keeps the perpetual economy going. The fact that we're surrounded by so much advertising is, in a perverse way, a positive sign. It means that absolutely desperate (and very expensive) efforts have to be made to stimulate human material desires, which naturally fade as we mature. In this context, it's not so surprising that as the simple-pleasures model has proliferated, so has the complex one. In fact, over the last 10 years, thousands of movements involving millions of people working for truly positive futures have spontaneously sprung up around the world. *YES!* has

Bhutan's Secret for Happiness

Pamela Chang

PROGRESSIVE ECONOMISTS who believe that measuring wealth solely in monetary terms skews government policy to favor greed have started looking to Bhutan for an alternative model.

Bhutan, a mountainous country about twice the size of Vermont, sits between India and China. In 1972, its British- and Bhutan-educated and Buddhist-influenced king adopted Gross Na-

tional Happiness (GNH) as his country's priority. Each year, Bhutan's prime minister reports to the National Assembly on "the four pillars of GNH: promotion of equitable and sustainable socioeconomic development; preservation and promotion of cultural values; conservation of the natural environment; and establishment of good governance."

As a result, Bhutan has implemented policies such as: establishing public schools with rotation of teachers between rural and urban regions; providing both Western and traditional medicine; maintaining at least 60 percent of Bhutan's land as forest; and issuing, in March 2005, a draft constitution to establish a two-party democracy.

Although Bhutan's per capita household income remains among the lowest in the world, and despite unresolved tribal conflicts that have exiled Bhutanese of Nepalese descent to refugee camps, several indicators show a brighter picture. Although 93 percent of Bhutan's labor force remains agricultural, life expectancy rose from

47 years to 66 years and infant mortality dropped from 103 per 1,000 live births to 60 per 1,000 between 1984 and 2001. The fraction of the population with access to safe drinking water rose from 45 percent to 75 percent in the same time period and adult literacy increased from 23 percent to 54 percent.

Other countries are beginning to consider adopting a GNH index. Canadian political scientist Dr. Ronald Colman organized a 2004 conference on Bhutan in Nova Scotia. Canada is currently developing a national well-being index to assess community vitality. In June 2005, Britain issued a summary of sustainable development indicators as a first attempt at creating a quality of life index.

While its success is neither definitive nor, perhaps, fully exportable, Bhutan's experience with Gross National Happiness has attracted worldwide attention.

Pamela Chang is a contributing editor of YES!





the good life—10 hopeful trends

been devoted to documenting these positive examples, and in the second book David Suzuki and I wrote, *Good News for a Change*, we managed to isolate what real sustainability is and how to recognize it. There are five criteria that are repeated, independently and through both space and time, all over the world. These are: imitating nature; using democratic organization; remaining humble; staying flexible; and setting very high goals. When these are present, you know you're onto something.

Photo page 36: Michael Blann, pages 37, 38: Peter Langer, page 39: Neshama Abraham Paiss



Simple Living with Wanda Urbanska

Television: PBS

Wanda Urbanska hosts "Simple Living with Wanda Urbanska," now in its third season on PBS. With her husband and son, Wanda gave up a successful life in Los Angeles to seek a more meaningful and simple life in North Carolina. The program focuses on the small ways we can each improve our own lives and enhance the Earth, from buying locally to volunteering.

Check your local PBS station or www.simplelivingtv.net for program times. Read YES! editor Sarah van Gelder's roundtable discussion with Wanda, Juliet Schor, Vicki Robin, Duane Elgin, and other leaders of the simplicity movement in YES! Summer 1998. *Reviewed by Elle McPherson*

Cohousing Comes of Age Neshama Abraham Paiss

Above: Glacier Circle Senior Community, the nation's first elder cohousing, opened in 2005 in Davis, California

TEN YEARS AGO I was introduced to the cohousing movement by Zev Paiss, co-founder of the Cohousing Association of the U.S. He spoke passionately about creating environmentally sustainable communities through cohousing's signature design: private homes with communal land and a "common house" for shared meals and social activities. At that time there were 12 cohousing neighborhoods nationwide. Now, thousands of people enjoy this lifestyle.

One of the lessons of the last 10 years is that cohousing's high degree of social cohesion fosters commitment to environmental stewardship. Cohousing residents preserve green space by living in clusters of small homes with

energy-saving shared walls. They share other resources also, including tools, garden tools, toys, and cars. Residents bike and use public transportation.

Currently there are more than 100 cohousing communities being planned or built. At this rate, cohousing communities in the U.S. may triple over the next 10 years. "Green building," "healthy homes," and "sustainable community" will continue to be core values for cohousing. Mixed-income cohousing projects will be built with both government and foundation support. Another trend will be continued social/political action arising from cohousing neighborhoods, like the residents of Tierra Nueva cohousing in Oceano, California, who

acted to reduce local pesticide use.

A third emerging trend is the growth of elder cohousing neighborhoods—a model successfully implemented in Denmark where there are more than 100 cohousing projects for people age 55 and up (see ElderCohousing.org).

I salute the cohousing residents of the past 10 years who had the courage to try something new. Perhaps the next decade will see my husband Zev's vision come to pass—that you can walk across the country and stay each night in a cohousing common house!

Neshama Abraham Paiss is president of Abraham Paiss & Associates, Inc. a Boulder, CO cohousing consulting firm.



10 hopeful trends—indigenous power

Indigenous peoples are asserting their
moral right to live as distinct communities
and reminding us of the power of
cooperation with nature

7 Indigenous Power: Indigenous Rights Go Global

John Mohawk

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HEN THE SPANISH first arrived in the Caribbean over 500 years ago, the idea that indigenous peoples might possess rights was given scant attention. The *conquistadores* approached many of the indigenous communities with a priest who read a document called the *Requerimento*, a demand that the people come forth with their bodies and souls and all their property and offer these to the service of the Spanish crown or the Spanish would attack. It was read in Latin as prelude to an orgy of rape, plunder, and genocide.

It wasn't until the middle of the 16th century that a bishop, Bartolome de Las Casas, championed the idea of some rights of the Indians before the Council of the Indies. Although that body agreed in principle that indigenous peoples should not be abused, the conquest continued unabated.

Fairness and reciprocity

The Europeans who first landed here in the Americas saw their problems very differently than indigenous peoples did and still do. In Europe, the biggest problem was that the people couldn't produce enough food. They were hungry, and there was always the threat of famine. When they got to the Americas they found a first-rate edible landscape. But bring a bunch of sheep and cows and cut down all the trees for a couple of hundred years, and you don't have an edible landscape anymore.

European wanted to battle, to outsmart nature





indigenous power—10 hopeful trends

—that's what all their technology is about; that's what biotechnology particularly is about.

But for the Indians, the question was not how to make war on nature, but how to cooperate with nature. When the Europeans came, the Indians were taking care of the land, so there was grass to feed the deer. The deer and the buffalo were our domesticated animals. The Indians had a very sophisticated system of food management based on cooperation with nature.

The Indians asked questions about fairness, not only human to human, but human to land, human to animal, human to everything. And they tried to get Europeans to see that. The thinking in Indian country was one of respect. The Indians were constantly imploring the Europeans to rethink their relationship with nature. "You've got it wrong," we said. "You've got to be fair."

Taking it to the global stage

Beginning in the early 1950s, some indigenous peoples began urging the international community to recognize their inherent rights to continue to exist as distinct peoples.

The idea was given a significant boost in 1977 when the non-governmental organizations of the United Nations organized a meeting in Geneva to discuss the creation of indigenous rights under international law. In 1982, indigenous representatives were invited to Geneva to witness the development of the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations.

This was an important step because, until that time, indigenous peoples had been relegated to the most extreme margins of international affairs.

At first, the nation-states were cautious and occasionally hostile to the idea of indigenous rights and to the movement representing it. As recently as 1999 the Organization of American States (OAS) was essentially closed to indigenous peoples, but the OAS was presented with a mandate from the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, and indigenous peoples insisted on a presence in those proceedings. Today, indigenous representatives attend the annual meetings of the 34 member states of the OAS. They are greeted with dignity, and their issues are extended respectful attention.

In fact, many states have now begun to acknowledge the rights of groups to a continued existence as distinct peoples, and this movement has spread rapidly over the past 15 years to Europe, Australia, Asia, the Pacific, and Africa. Today there are young

Indian lawyers working on protecting indigenous peoples under principles which only a few short years ago were unimaginable. The OAS, the World Bank, the IMF, and other international institutions now have policies to protect indigenous peoples.

Indigenous people bring a unique argument to the world stage. We don't have armies or navies, we don't have national currencies, we don't have many of the attributes that Western nations think make up nationhood.

And yet we propose that we have a moral right to continue to live as a distinct community and in the manner we have for millennia. And in many ways, it is the indigenous cultures' relationship to the earth that represents the only real hope for the long term survival of people on any scale in the world.

John C. Mohawk, Ph.D., columnist for *Indian Country Today*, is an author and professor at the Center for the Americas at the State University of New York at Buffalo.

Opposite:

Representatives of indigenous peoples of South America at the 2005 World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, Brazil, seek support for efforts to protect their homes and ancestral lands from mining, ranching, and violent efforts to remove them from their land. Photo by Sarah van Gelder



Christopher Richards

Vine Deloria 1933-2005 / In memoriam

"We have brought the white man a long way, from a childish search for mythical cities of gold and fountains of youth to the simple recognition that lands are essential for human existence."

Vine Deloria, a member of the Standing Rock Sioux, a scholar, and an activist who inspired the American Indian Movement, died on November 6, 2005. Known for his scathing and sardonic accounts of white treachery toward Native Americans, he was hailed by *Time* as one of the 10 great religious thinkers of the 20th century. Among his best known books are *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto*, *God is Red: A Native View of Religion*, and *Red Earth, White Lies: Native Americans and the Myth of Scientific Fact*. —Carolyn McConnell



10 hopeful trends—indigenous power

Hopis and Greens win—solar power to replace coal power; sacred springs protected

Carolyn McConnell

THE HOPI SAY “Patuwaqatsi,” “Water is life.” It is a central tenet of a culture that has managed to sustain agriculture in the harsh Arizona desert for thousands of years. Yet the world’s only coal slurry pipeline sucks billions of gallons of pristine water from under the Hopi reservation each year. The water is a cheap way to move coal 273 miles from Peabody Coal’s Black Mesa strip mine on the reservation to a power plant that supplies electricity to cities in California, Arizona, and Nevada.

After 35 years of watching their precious springs dry up, the Hopi have won a sweet victory. At the end of 2005, the mine, the slurry

line, and the power plant that burns the Hopi coal closed, thanks to grassroots activism by the Hopi and a lawsuit by a coalition of environmental groups that charged the power plant with polluting the air of the Grand Canyon. Under the terms of the lawsuit settlement, to keep the power plant open, Southern California Edison would have had to install expensive upgrades.

But with the Hopi pressing for an end to the water pumping, SCE decided to cut its losses and close the plant. The plant was the sole customer for Black Mesa’s coal, so this meant the closure of the mine and an end to the water pumping.

The victory comes with a

cost—about 650 jobs and tens of millions of dollars in annual mining royalties to the Navajo and Hopi. But Vernon Masayesva, executive director of Black Mesa Trust, which led the Hopi fight against the water pumping, sees this transition as an opportunity for the tribes to invest in sustainable energy. “It’s time we begin to think more creatively, to live within the limits of the resources and return to the Hopi way,” says Masayesva.

Black Mesa Trust and a coalition of environmental groups have proposed two Navajo- and Hopi-owned 500-megawatt solar installations that would provide peak power for 600,000 homes, 2,500 construction jobs, 250 permanent jobs, and a source of revenue controlled by the tribes. The project would use Stirling Energy’s solar dish technology to convert sunlight into heat and then into electricity (see “Solar Energy Booms,” page 9). The Grand Canyon Trust, one of the parties to the lawsuit, has asked regulators to require Southern California Edison to fund the project with the millions of dollars it will reap in pollution credits from closing the plant.

Having achieved its goal, Black Mesa Trust plans to shift from fighting to educating, passing on water wisdom gleaned from one of the world’s oldest and most successful desert cultures. But first, as the pumps stopped, Masayesva and members of the Hopi nation held a dance to celebrate an end to the depletion of their sacred water.

For more information on the Hopi’s struggle to reclaim their land and water, see “Bringing Back Desert Springs,” *YES!*, Fall 2004.



William Campbell

Vernon Masayesva, executive director of Black Mesa Trust, led opposition to Peabody Coal’s pumping of Hopi water to transport coal. His group has proposed a massive Hopi- and Navajo-owned solar project to replace the electricity generated by the coal



democracy—10 hopeful trends

In danger of losing their vote
and voice, Americans are demanding
a return to
founding principles

Democracy: The (Re)Claiming of Democracy

8

Doug Pibel



AT GETTYSBURG, ABRAHAM LINCOLN said America was dedicated to assuring that “government of the people, by the people, for the people” would not perish. It’s hard to find a time, other than Lincoln’s, when reality has so challenged those grand words.

Americans are trained, and deeply believe, that they live in a country where government operates by their consent. They are protective of their form of government, and willing to put up with considerable suffering before demanding change. Given enough abuse, however—given sufficient evidence that the power of government is being hijacked for ends contrary to the common interest, Americans have in the past demanded fundamental change.

These ideas—consent of the governed and the right to demand change—are not some new radicalism: they are the foundational radicalism of the Declaration of Independence. And the willingness of Americans to protect their rights is not a matter of history: it’s happening right now.

The last 10 years have produced a resurgence of political involvement as people realize that American democracy is in danger. It’s taken a beating, especially in the last five years:

- The 2000 election illustrated the anti-democratic effect of the Electoral College as, for only the third time, the loser of the popular vote became president. The election featured widespread vote



10 hopeful trends—democracy

Ben Brandzel / MoveOn's Student Mobilizer



Over 20 million young people voted in the 2004 presidential elections, the highest turn out since the voting age was lowered to 18. Much of the credit goes to the passionate efforts of youth organizers like Ben Brandzel. "Nobody is an island as a student. The collective, networked life of college campuses puts students in a powerful position to get involved in politics," Brandzel says.

Brandzel founded MoveOn Student Action in August of 2004 to register and turn out youth for the November elections. The initiative was a huge success, involving 230,000 students on 2,300 campuses in all 50 states.

MoveOn Student Action's success is rooted in Brandzel's recognition of the Internet as a powerful organizing and fund-raising tool. Their College Click Drive "Race to a Million" subsidized progressive ads in key states as students competed for their campuses, raising matching funds each time they participated in an online advocacy campaign. The project also promoted innovative get-out-the-vote programs, like Trick-or-Vote, a Halloween campaign to spread the word about voting locations. —Elle McPherson

suppression and disenfranchisement, particularly of people of color. The outcome was decided by an unprecedented ruling from the Supreme Court, which stopped vote counting in Florida, and took the decision from the voters.

- The country is so strongly under one-party rule that George Bush has not vetoed a bill, although he threatened to veto a defense budget which prohibited torture. He's on track to be the first veto-free president since the six-month term of James Garfield in 1881. Because of the anti-democratic structure of the Senate, the 44 Democratic senators represent a majority of the population, yet have virtually no power. The Senate became Republican-majority in the 2002 elections that marked the first major deployment of touch-screen voting machines and featured widely questioned results.
- The country is mired in a war started under false pretenses, in the face of protest by millions, and against majority public opinion. A majority of Americans favors ending the war; the administration and its supporters in Congress insist they will stay the course.
- The 2004 presidential election is still, for many, marked with an asterisk. As with 2000, credible reports of voter disenfranchisement and vote suppression were widespread. The election again turned on a single state where litigation continues over allegations of vote fraud and official misconduct.
- Disapproval of the president runs 60 to 65 percent; Congress fares worse at 75 percent. The most recent AP/Ipsos poll shows 64 percent of

Americans think the country is on the wrong track, a majority opinion since January 2004.

- The debacle surrounding Hurricane Katrina made undeniable the growing race and class division in the country, and illustrated the federal government's skewed priorities as money and manpower that could have made a difference in that disaster continue to be expended in Iraq.

It's not a pretty picture, neither is it an exhaustive list. This is, nonetheless, a story of hope. Growing numbers of Americans see the peril and, in large part through the Internet and the independent press, are identifying problems, disseminating information ignored by the mainstream media, and taking action. Grassroots activists in four critical areas—protecting the vote, cleaning up campaign financing, using local power to address global issues, and Internet organizing and media—are producing results that are placing the country back on the path to true democracy.

Taking Back the Vote

The vote is central to the modern American conception of democracy. For most Americans, it is their sole participation in politics. Securing the right of women and minorities to vote were two of the great struggles, and great progressive victories, of the 20th century.

Strange, then, that this treasured emblem of democracy has, with startling speed, been privatized. Even stranger that it has been privatized in ways that leave elected, accountable officials largely out of the process of collecting and counting the votes. Strangest of all, this privatized system is designed to leave no paper trail and no way of verifying vote



democracy—10 hopeful trends

tallies. By 2004, about 80 percent of Americans' votes were tallied by just two corporations, ES&S and Diebold.

The speed of this transformation has been equaled by the speed of the resistance to it. Ten years ago, no one had heard of Diebold, ATM-style direct recording electronic (DRE) voting machines didn't exist, and no one thought about the issue of voter-verifiable ballots. But the election of 2000 galvanized the independent press and the online community, and by the 2002 election, when DRE machines were rolled out in large numbers, there were thousands of people monitoring the election online.

Now, a mere three years later, 25 states have laws requiring all voting equipment to produce an auditable paper ballot. Similar legislation is pending in another 14 states.

Without reliable vote counting, democracy is a sham. Faced with losing that cornerstone of democracy, Americans did not wait to be led. They demanded, and got, action.

Taking Back the Money

Running for office is expensive. The Center for Responsive Politics reports that candidates for federal office spent nearly \$2 billion on their campaigns

in 2004. According to Micah Sifry and Nancy Watzman of Public Campaign, lobbyists pump \$2 million a day into the DC money machine. There are 125 lobbyists per legislator in Washington, DC; even in state legislatures the average is five to one.

As people saw lobbyists and big money taking over government, they came up with a solution. In November 1996, citizens passed an initiative making Maine the first state with a clean elections law, under which candidates get public campaign funds if they agree to spending limits and take only small private contributions to start their campaigns. Five other states have passed clean elections initiatives for some or all offices. On December 1, 2005, Connecticut became the first state to have a clean elections law passed by its legislature, rather than by initiative.

Sifry says these laws result in legislation more responsive to people. Since Maine and Arizona went clean, both have made substantial strides in health-care reform. Politicians elected "clean" say they are freed from the burden of eternal fund-raising and kowtowing to lobbyists, leaving them more time to deal with the business of legislating.

The idea is catching on. Public Campaign now counts only eight states without an active campaign for clean elections.

When the people decide Doug Pibel



Sarah van Gelder

Women in Porto Alegre sport the logo of "Orcamento Participativo," the participatory budgeting process that captured the imagination of the World Social Forum

DIRECT DEMOCRACY CONJURES

images of crusty New Englanders arguing in town meetings. But it's happening on a larger scale, and it's a growing movement. Porto Alegre, Brazil (YES! Winter 2003) has used a participative budgeting to plan its discretionary spending for 16 years. Thousands of citizens sit through meetings, discuss budget priorities, and elect delegates to represent their neighborhoods—all things Americans claim no sane person would do. Porto Alegre is no sleepy New England village; it's a city of 1.5 million.

The result has been increased civic activity and city budgets which fairly address the needs of the whole city, rather than the wealthy and powerful few. The transparency of the process has eliminated corruption, which had nearly bankrupted the city.

Since the participative budgeting program started:

- There are 120 public day-care facilities instead of two
- Fifty-seven new schools have opened; twice as many children attend school
- The percentage of homes with running water and sewer service has gone from 46 to 85 percent
- The transit system is modern, affordable, efficient, and widely used.

The Porto Alegre budgeting process is now used in 200 Brazilian cities, including São Paulo, one of the largest cities in the world. If participatory democracy can work at that scale, there's no reason it can't work anywhere, including on the national level.



10 hopeful trends—democracy



Citizens march to demand a full count of the vote in Florida following the 2000 presidential election

Taking Initiative Locally

As the federal government shows little interest in the opinions, let alone the consent, of the governed, people are successfully addressing national and global issues at the state and local level.

The Bush administration continues to oppose the Kyoto Accord; the U.S. delegation staged a walkout at the recent Montreal meetings, then participated in a compromise. But Americans care about global climate change, and have made their voices heard at the local level. In June 2005, the U.S. Conference of Mayors unanimously endorsed the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, which calls for cities

to meet the goals of the Kyoto Accord, and to urge the U.S. Congress to act to reduce greenhouse gases. One hundred seventy-three mayors from 37 states have signed the U.S. Mayors Agreement.

In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington, Congress passed the USA PATRIOT Act. That law has been roundly criticized as a threat to the Bill of Rights and has generated activism at the local level. According to the ACLU, nearly 400 cities in 43 states have passed resolutions declaring opposition to the rights-chilling effects of the USA PATRIOT Act. Seven states have passed statewide resolutions. Portions of the law came up for renewal, and passed easily in the House. Senator Russ Feingold led opposition to renewal in the Senate, citing widespread citizen concerns. The Senate was on the verge of renewing the law; the day before the vote, *The New York Times* broke the story of National Security Administration domestic spying. Public outrage was swift and vocal; with full renewal likely to fail, the Senate extended the law for one month.

Taking the Internet

So far, it has not been necessary to take back the Internet. It early became more a tool of the people than of the powerful. It has been a key in organizing at all levels, from the anti-Iraq-war protests to monitoring elections to political organizing and fund-raising. Howard Dean's surprising run for the Democratic presidential nomination took off only after his staff

Internet Activism Barbara Sehr & Courtney Martin

IN 10 YEARS the Internet has remade activism. Instant transglobal connection has created a nimble, creative legion ready to launch a cause at the drop of an e-mail:

Meet up: What began as a place where people could talk about puppies and kittens quickly evolved into a gathering spot for political activists. Meet-ups today serve millions of people who once bowled alone (www.meetup.com).

Move on: Before "shock and awe" stunned Baghdad, Washington policy makers pondered the shock of thousands of people worldwide instantly mobilized to march against the war in

Iraq. The Internet recruited an anti-war army; e-mail keeps volunteers engaged (www.moveon.org).

Women, unite: Women have proved they know Craigslist from Emily's List. Women's engagement with politics online has reached the point of serious discussion about a presidential race between Hillary Clinton and Condoleezza Rice in 2008 (www.feminist.org).

Make news: Everyone is a journalist, as blogs and fledgling news outlets scoop entrenched media (www.indymedia.com).

Fund your agenda: For every "Pioneer" who raises \$100,000 for an

inside track to shaping law, there are 4,000 individuals adding \$25 to their credit card bill for nothing more than a "thank you" e-mail.

Respond to Disaster: The Internet gives private responders instant access to donors. The Internet gives relief agencies a tool to mobilize and recruit. Feeding a hungry child is now as easy as giving to a politician—and probably more satisfying.

Courtney E. Martin is a writer, documentary artist, and teacher who's working on a new book. Barbara Sehr is YES! Online Editor.



democracy—10 hopeful trends

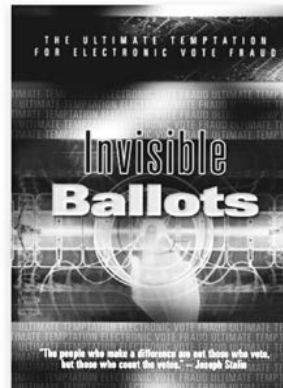
tapped the power of the Internet. MoveOn.org is a force in fund-raising and mobilizing large numbers of people. Of equal importance to the resurgence of American democracy is the access the Internet provides to news from all over the world. It allows anyone to be a reporter or commentator, without seeking the blessing of the established media. It is creating communities, via forums and blogs, where people can discuss issues and news stories with those of like or opposed mind.

The Internet is, without doubt, a source of reams of misinformation. But the mainstream media have also had notable failures recently: *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* both issued public apologies for lack of rigor in their pre-Iraq-war reporting. As with those stalwarts, and other media, the Internet is also the source of an amazing amount of fact, much of which is hard to get elsewhere. The difference is transparency and access: the mainstream media can filter or ignore criticism; the Internet brings collective wisdom to bear on any assertion—it's as close as we've come to the realization of the "marketplace of ideas" that is the touchstone of free speech theory.

The events of the past decade are not the result of a new culture of corruption. The Bush administration is bolder than most in its anti-democratic initiatives, but there has always been tension in America between democracy and oligarchy, and between freedom and security. A growing segment of the electorate is bolder, too. The community-building, networking, organizing, and rapid communication made possible by the Internet and independent media are producing immediate responses and fast results. The visible successes show that the people can make their voices heard.

The Bush administration invokes the security of the American people to justify for its actions; most recently, the President has promised to continue apparently illegal wiretaps on that basis. A rallying cry of the opposition is this quote from Benjamin Franklin: "They that can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety."

The question is whether we now have the will to demand government by our consent and for our freedom. The Declaration of Independence says it is our right to. The evidence says we can make that demand—and make it stick—peacefully, and through the very democratic processes people are now working to protect.



Invisible Ballots: Temptation for Electronic Vote Fraud

American Media

Video, 2004, 90 minutes, \$19.95

"My greatest fear is that we won't have a basis for trusting elections ... every single election, there will be some question about who really won. And if you have a situation where in every election there's a question ... you lose the property where you're governing with the consent of the governed."

—Dr. David Dill, Ph.D., Department of Computer Science, Stanford University, founder of VerifiedVoting.org

"Invisible Ballots" shows how electronic voting poses an unprecedented threat to the foundation of our democracy. Interviews with politicians, activists, and computer scientists reveal the dangers, including poor security, haphazard coding, and lack of oversight. This is no big-budget documentary, but the quality and depth of the interviews make it a must-see for anyone concerned with the well-being of our democratic process. Find out more at www.invisibleballots.com, or buy a copy at www.realityzone.com/ballots.html.

The film is also available through a free lending library set up by Joan Brunwasser, a self-described "mother of three, concerned citizen, and committed democrat." Contact her at counteveryvote@gmail.com; read her excellent blog at www.counteveryvote.blogspot.com. *Reviewed by Andrew Lovejoy*



10 hopeful trends—global justice

9 Global Justice: Another U.S. is Possible

Since 2001, thousands have gathered at
the World Social Forum believing that
another world is possible.
Now, U.S. activists are
bringing it home



48



Jefferson Bernardes

PO Box 10818, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110



Tanya Dawkins

IN 2001, THE WORLD SOCIAL FORUM burst onto the world stage with its ambitious rallying call, “Another World is Possible.” This now-familiar mantra has come to symbolize the dynamism of movements for social and economic justice around the world. If attendance is any measure of success, it is worth noting that the World Social Forum has grown from 20,000 participants at its first gathering (5,000 were expected) to 150,000-plus at the 2005 gathering in Porto Alegre, Brazil.

The Forum responded to a hunger for a differ-

ent kind of possibilities-oriented dialogue that embraces principles of pluralism, deep debate, respect, justice, and an internationalist perspective.

A broad-based network of U.S.-based activists, grassroots organizations, and their allies are betting that a similar hunger exists in the U.S. and that this is a time when a U.S. Social Forum could be a vehicle for moving a social, environmental and economic justice agenda to center stage.

Recent census figures confirm what most know intuitively or by lived experience. Poverty and inequality are on the increase in the United States. Since 2003 an additional 1.1 million people have slipped below the poverty line. The May 15, 2005, *Business Week* cover story, entitled, “I Want My Safety Net!” sums up a growing backlash that transcends party, race, class, and geography.

“Hurricane Katrina has put the historic racism, white supremacy, and poverty that has always been a part of this country on center stage,” says Walda Katz-Fishman, a Howard University scholar-activist and member of the U.S. Social Forum planning committee. “It has come at a moment when people are building a common analysis and are conscious about dealing with basic and structural problems.”

The U.S. Social Forum planning effort grew out of a series of consultations held in 2003 between activists in the United States and members of the World Social Forum International Council. Grassroots Global Justice (GGJ), a national alliance of U.S.-based grassroots organizations, facilitated the process, including a 2004 meeting of 50 grassroots organizations in Washington, D.C.

The 22 organizations spearheading the planning came of age in response to varying forms of community displacement resulting from the last 20-plus years of neoliberal economic policies. Most are led by people of color. All are rooted in a commitment to building power for social justice through building low-income community leadership, strategic alliances, and learning from and with movements in the global South.



10 hopeful trends—global justice

U.S. Social Forum: Atlanta, 2007

Atlanta will host the gathering. According to Jerome Scott, director of Project South and member of the planning committee, “It is important for this first U.S. Social Forum to be in this historic area of the country. The South continues to have great strategic importance—lots of oppression and lots of resistance.”

The Forum will take place in the summer of 2007, with 2006 devoted to strengthening the outreach and organizing efforts of its 10 regional organizing committees. The timing was moved back following Hurricane Katrina, after planners consulted with groups in the hurricane-affected communities, including about 50 internally displaced organizers from New Orleans and the Gulf States who participated in a recent meeting called by the People’s Hurricane and Relief Fund in Penn Center, South Carolina.

The U.S. Social Forum effort builds on what has become a widespread practice since the social forums began: local, regional and national social forum “spinoffs” that seek to expand the World

Social Forum model of movement-building around the world.

Last year, the World Social Forum International Council decided that the time had come to focus on pushing the debate and organizing closer to home. In addition to a diverse array of social forums around the world, 2006 will be the year of the “polycentric” social forum. Simultaneous regional gatherings are being held in Bamako, Mali (Africa) and Caracas, Venezuela (Americas). The Venezuela forum organizers made U.S. participation a priority. The Asia region polycentric forum slated for Karachi, Pakistan, was postponed due to last year’s earthquake.

“A U.S. Social Forum has tremendous potential as both a process and an event. It connects us to the rest of the world and the global South,” says Michael Guerrero, director of Grassroots Global Justice. “That is essential right now. Corporate power exists at the global level. We have to find ways to organize at that level without losing the local work.”

Now that a location has been selected, U.S. Social Forum planners are turning to organizing and fund-raising. The group has hired Alice Lovelace as the lead national staff organizer and is working to raise the \$100,000 needed to scale up, secure sites, and develop the website and communications infrastructure that can serve as a movement-building tool leading up to and after the actual event.

The forum will take place at a key moment between Hurricane Katrina and the 2008 U.S. election and has the potential to serve as a rare and powerful moment in the history of organizing and movement-building in the United States.

Organizers hope it will be the largest and most significant gathering of progressive U.S. civil society in decades, with up to 20,000 participants from across the geographic, racial, cultural, economic, and issue spectrum. There is much more social justice work taking place in the United States than most realize, the organizers point out. The forum process will be a critical point for creating connections, developing strategy and breaking the isolation people often feel as they work at the local level.

Tanya Dawkins (dawkins@mindspring.com) is the founder/director of the Global-Local Links Project and a member of the board of the Positive Futures Network, publisher of *YES!*.

Photo on page 49: Participants hold a peace flag during the opening march of the 2005 World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, Brazil



The First U.S. Social Forum

Summer 2007, Atlanta, Georgia

How you can get involved:

Donate—The Forum is seeking to raise \$100,000 in start-up funds.

Organize—Get involved with regional organizing: the U.S. Social Forum has divided the country into 10 regions in order to ensure that the work leading up to the gathering is firmly rooted in regional and local realities.

Participate—Forum organizers will be updating the website with avenues for participation as the event approaches.

For more information—Contact national staff organizer, Alice Lovelace (alovelace@mindspring.com) or visit www.ussocialforum.org.



global justice—10 hopeful trends

Local Businesses Counter Corporate Rule

Merrian Fuller

WHEN JUDY WICKS, owner of the White Dog Café in Philadelphia, learned about conditions in factory hog farming, she immediately removed all pork products from her restaurant's menu. Then she met a farmer who raised pigs humanely on open pasture just outside the city, and she contracted with him to supply the restaurant.

Together with other restaurant owners, she began to purchase meat, cheese, and produce from nearby family farms. The restaurants not only got fresher food for customers, they supported a strong regional economy that kept the farmers on the land, protected against sprawl, and avoided the environmental costs of transporting food thousands of miles.

Could other segments of the economy be "localized" to likewise create a more humane and sustainable economy? Wicks and other business owners founded The Business Alliance for Local Living Economies (BALLE) in 2001 to find out.

These locally owned businesses offer an alternative to the global corporations that now dominate our economy, powered by Wall Street-driven capital markets and controlled by absentee owners.

Today, across North America, 22 BALLE networks composed of over 4,000 entrepreneurs are putting together the "building blocks" of local living economies—offering food, clothing, shelter, energy, healthcare, media, finance, and manufacturing to customers, while influencing public policy, encouraging community-based entrepreneurship, and educating citizens about sustainable purchasing choices.

Among the current projects:

- In Bellingham, Washington, busi-

ness leaders created a "Local First" campaign that encourages citizens to buy from local businesses as a way to keep money circulating within the community.

- Members of Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility, a BALLE network whose members employ 8 percent of the state's workforce, lobby for increased support for renewable energy and healthcare.

- In Philadelphia, the network trains new social entrepreneurs in the skills they need to be successful through their Social Venture Institute.

BALLE networks are proving that coordinated groups of locally owned companies can stand up to some of the harmful forces of globalization and foster the health and vitality of a region.

BALLE's Fourth International Conference is June 8–10, 2006 in Burlington, Vermont. See www.livingeconomies.org.



Walden Bello / Global Justice Leader

"Our movement is on the ascendant. But our agenda is massive, our tasks formidable. ... Above all, we must change the rules of the global economy, for it is the logic of global capitalism that is the source of the disruption of society and of the environment. ... The market must be—to use the image of the great Hungarian Social Democrat Karl Polanyi—'re-embedded' in society and governed by the overarching values of community, solidarity, justice, and equity."

Walden Bello, executive director of Focus on the Global South and a 2003 winner of the Right Livelihood Award, is one of the leaders of the global justice movement. He played a key role in organizing the protests at the WTO meeting in Seattle in 1999 and in Cancun in 2003; he is a YES! contributing editor. —Carolyn McConnell

The Sweat-Free Movement

Lilja Otto

A SWEAT-FREE MOVEMENT has swept the U.S., carried by students, union members, and textile workers all over the world. Today, about 200 U.S. colleges have policies requiring their athletic wear to be produced sweat-free, and 78 government entities have adopted sweat-free procurement policies.

Working condition improvements are becoming evi-

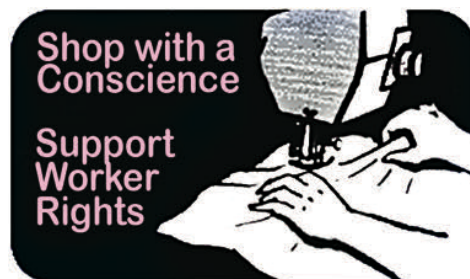
dent as these policies go into effect.

The weekly base salary at the Codevi Free Trade Zone in Haiti for example, increased more than 100 percent (by about US\$22.00), after a no-sweat agreement was reached in 2005, reports the Clean Clothes Campaign.

And the cost to consumers?

The price of a \$25 sweatshirt would increase just \$0.50 to \$1, if wages were doubled to guarantee a living wage, according to an article in *The Nation*.

See www.studentsagainstsweatshops.org, www.cleanclothes.org. Graphic courtesy of Sweat-free Communities, www.sweatfree.org



Defending the Commons, Defending Life Jonathan Rowe

IN A SENSE, President Bush has done humanity a service. He has provided a foil in a drama that was lacking one, and set in motion a politics that did not before exist.

The president did not invent the assault on that which we Americans own together—our air and water, our public lands, our Main Streets and public spaces, our public domain of culture and knowledge, and the rest. The enclosure of these for corporate gain has been going on for decades.



Photo by Ansel Adams shows the spaciousness of the commons—a reminder of the treasures we share with each other and all life

But generally it has been what my colleague David Bollier has called a “silent theft.” (See his excellent book by that name.) There was a residual sense of boundaries to be tiptoed across.

President Bush, by contrast, has turned the taking into a raucous frat party. Hey, some national park land with your brewski? Public airwaves? How about we dump some gunk into the air and watch the enviro pansies cringe? The naked greed and the brazen sense of entitlement have caused people to take notice. More, they have given shape to that which is being taken.

That’s the strange thing about the corporate incursions into our time and space: we haven’t had a language for them. The economic culture views the process from the standpoint of that which takes, rather than that which is taken from. The takers are called, collectively, the “market.” The process is called, collectively “growth.”

What exactly is taken? There has not been a word. The assumption is that the market—the realm of money—expands into a void. The world is little besides economic primal sludge that awaits the beneficent hand of the money makers to attain reality and life.

That’s mythology of course. But in the absence of a counter-language, the advocates for the taken have had to fight their battles by themselves. Water issues in one cubby, battles to preserve Main Streets from Wal-Mart and McDonalds in another; battles to save the gene pool from corporate control in another, ad almost infinitum.

One side had the market as a master narrative to glorify the taking. But there was no corresponding narrative or language to explain the loss and make possible a politics of

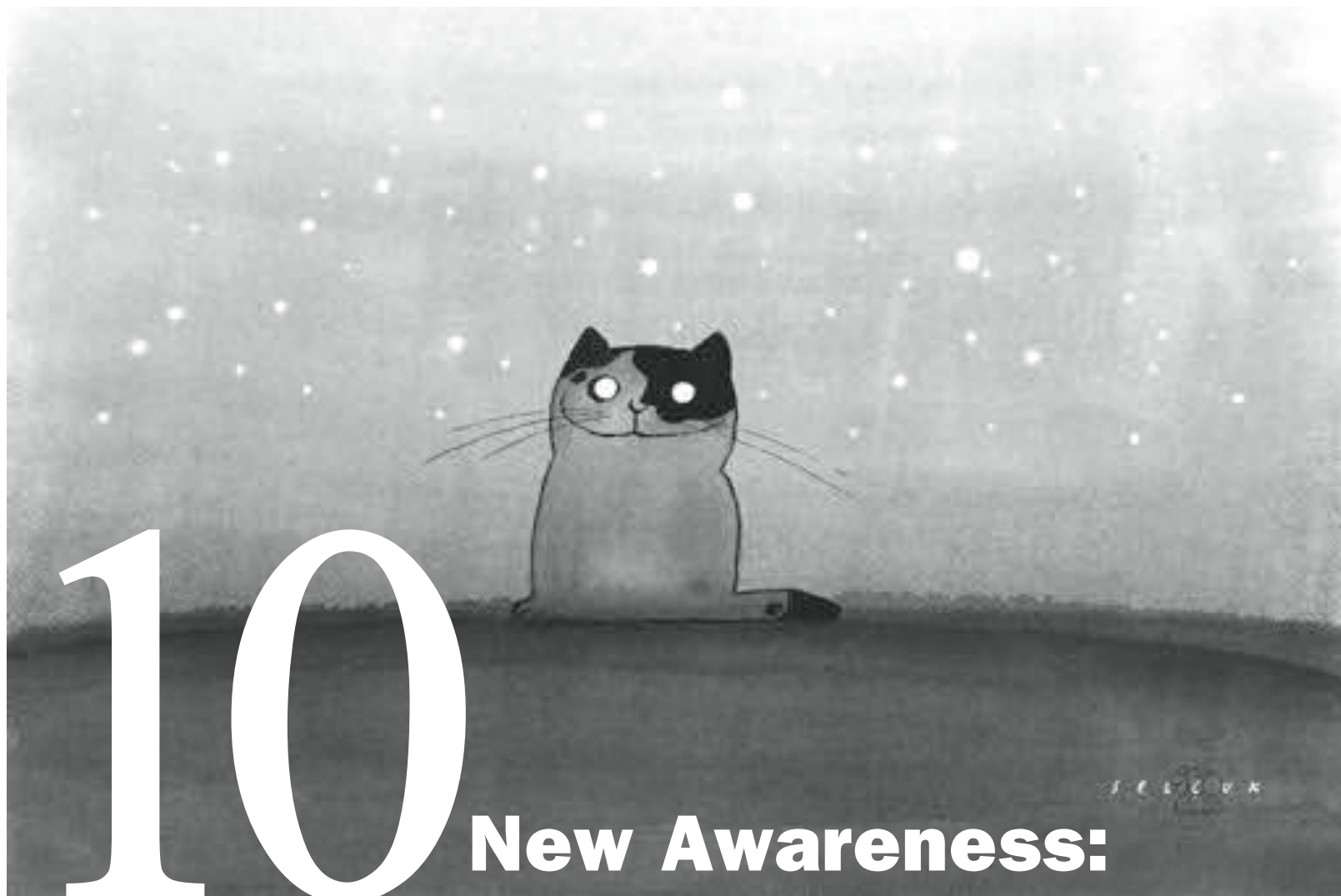
opposition that was more than the sum of its disconnected parts.

“It is hard to focus our attention on the nameless,” William James, the psychologist and philosopher, once wrote. Politics really does start with words. That is why the emergence of the commons in the issues lexicon is so important. It gives a name to that which has been nameless, and therefore the possibility of a politics that is genuinely new. This politics is based not on government programs but rather on a parallel realm of productivity and value that needs protection just as the market does.

This new movement is starting to emerge. Defenders of the air and water, the public domain of knowledge, the cybernetic town square of the World Wide Web, and many other goods are invoking the commons as a central concept in their work. The social and environmental are coming together. It is almost as though the viral aggressions of the current administration have provoked an antibody against themselves.

Economists still scoff, and mainstream journalists follow. No news there. But the old narrative is playing itself out. As breakdowns in the natural and social realm continue, and recourse to the old mechanisms just makes them worse, the opinion establishment won’t have any choice but to accept a new narrative.

Jonathan Rowe is a writer and policy analyst, coauthor of the book *Time Dollars*, a *YES!* contributing editor, and a founder of the Tomales Bay Institute.



A New (and Ancient) Understanding of Who We Are

Frances F. Korten

MY MOTHER-IN-LAW was gently patting the gray cat who was her most constant companion in the last months of her life. Suddenly she paused, looked at me intently, and asked “Do you think cats can think?”

Outwardly, I answered “Yes, I’m sure they can.” But inwardly, I wondered why anyone would imagine that cats could not think. The question called across a chasm of time and culture. It reminded me of how arduously we humans, particularly but not exclusively those of European descent, have worked to disconnect ourselves from the natural world in our quest to feel worthy.

Over the centuries, we have claimed to be the





10 hopeful trends—new awareness

only species that has language, that uses tools, that can reason, and that experiences emotion. Having set ourselves apart from other species, we've gone on to set ourselves apart from other humans—asserting that some who are different from us are primitive, savage, and even without souls.

untitled

If all goes well
The police
out of total boredom
will go home

Borders will disappear
Even the toy factories
will stop making arms

If all goes well
there will be no Premier
President
Savior of Democracy
King
Emperor
Tyrant

If all goes well
they will stop
trying to convince us
with lies.

If all goes well
Ayatollahs
Great Lamas
Popes
will allow God
to once more be human
dolphin
extraterrestrial
cedar and seagull
herb and star

sea
mountain
insect
dog
and cat.

If all goes well
if all goes well
as long as the nova's hour
doesn't come
or the black hole
doesn't absorb our dreams
we will take our children's hands
so they may feel
protected and our gentleness.
We will share our games
We will surrender our kisses
I will laugh
I will sing
I will complain of work's hassles
I'll count my gray hairs
and until the very end
I will delight
in the adventure
of the sensation
of emotion
and thought.

If all goes well
If all goes well

If all goes well.

*Juan Antillon Montealegre, translated by
Joseph Richey. From Prayers for a
Thousand Years, edited by Elizabeth Roberts
and Elias Amidon, HarperCollins, 1999.
Used by permission.*

But now decades of rigorous observation have proven that many species have elaborate means of communication, experience a range of emotions, and carry out complicated reasoning. There are primates that use tools, birds that create up to 2,000 songs, dolphins that engage in altruistic behavior. We humans are not so distinct as we once thought. As for our connection to other humans, we, and I speak as a person of European heritage, are discovering that peoples we once dismissed as savage have wise traditions with much to teach us.

These shifts in understanding force a change in perspective as great as that of the Copernican revolution, when the Western world had to adjust—with kicking and screaming and beheading along the way—to the reality that the Earth was not the center of the universe.

Now we are on our way—again with plenty of kicking and screaming—to accepting that we humans are not the central inhabitants of the Earth. And as we come to know each other better across the globe, we realize that no one culture is the center of all the cultures. There is no commanding planet, species, or culture; there is instead a web of distinct, yet interrelated and mutually dependent parts. Denying that we are but a part of that web of being does not change the fact. It only leads to dangerously wrong assessments of how we must live.

We can view this truth as humbling or liberating or both. Personally, I am awestruck at the size of the cosmos of which my planet is but a tiny part. I am moved by the revelations that cats, and bonobos, and even slime mold can think and communicate. I love living in a world of diverse cultures and people from whom I can learn. I rejoice in feeling deeply connected to, not set apart from, the world I inhabit.

The trends the editors of *YES!* have featured as the most hopeful of the last decade are manifestations of this shift from setting ourselves apart to finding our connections. We are grappling with a new understanding of ancient wisdom about our place in the world.

The adjustment can be painful if we think that to be of worth we must be at the center, dominating other people, animals, the Earth, and the heavens. But if we embrace the new (and ancient) understandings, we can discover a richer life—a life based on finding our place in the diverse, evolving, interdependent web of being. As we rediscover the connections our culture has broken, we accelerate the trends that will transform our world.

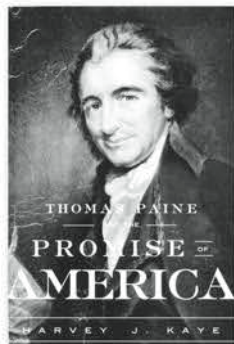




Cook from scratch with friends or family every month	Learn to play a musical instrument or sing	Learn to dance	Learn another language	Take care of someone else's kids at least once a month	Make friends within walking distance	Form a neighborhood association
Invest in a wool sweater and turn the heat down	<div>50 ways to thrive (and survive) in the next 10 years</div>			Make more time with friends	Create a relationship with someone in another country	Start your own vegetable garden
Replace your lawn with native plants						Collect rain water
Eat 10 percent within 10 miles						Eat in season
Use 25 percent less water in your home	Create 25 percent less garbage	Compost	Give something away	Turn off the TV and read a book	Turn off the computer and go for a walk	Work less and spend less
Leave America—Come back	Move into a smaller house	Convert your car to electric	Ride the bus	Carpool	Walk to work	Ride a bicycle to the grocery store
Build sidewalks	Shop locally	Write your own news	Start a blog	Get rid of stuff you don't need through Craig's List or Freecycle	Buy used	Vote on paper
Forgive	Talk to your neighbors	Talk to your enemies	Fear not	Buy only magazines printed on recycled paper	Encourage schools to require community service	Tutor/mentor a young one
Don't print that e-mail	Make a friend who is two generations older or younger	Turn off your cell phone and e-mail and talk to someone face-to-face	Get involved in a local political campaign	Explore the nearest wilderness area	Repair something instead of throwing it away	Create a park nearby



Paine's American Dream



THOMAS PAINE AND THE PROMISE OF AMERICA

by Harvey J. Kaye

Hill and Wang, 2005. 326 pages, \$25.00

reviewed by Ronnie Dugger

We are living and working in the very days and nights of the American Emergency, the climactic American Crisis.

Our elections are bought and our government is run by and for the major transnational corporations. The president announced in 2002 his illegal presidential policy that we can and will attack other nations first, waging war on them, when he so decides. He is now waging, as if in our names, a bloody war of aggression against Iraq, a crime against humanity under the Nuremberg principles that we and our allies established and enforced with hangings after World War II. The president, the vice-president, and their factors sold this war to Congress with twistings and lies that were crafted to infuriate and terrorize us about Iraq's alleged connections to Al Qaeda and endangerment to us—all of which did not exist.

In polls, six of 10 Americans do not believe the president is honest. Yet he has three more years of dictatorial control over our nuclear and other arms and our Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps. Professor Kaye's book on Thomas Paine could not be more timely, for exactly now again these are the times that try men's and women's souls.

Paine's biography occupies only two-fifths of Kaye's text; in the rest the Wisconsin professor hops, skips, and jumps through our history since Paine, citing various posthumous characterizations of him, from Teddy Roosevelt's "filthy little atheist" to T.V. Smith's "the harbinger in darkness of our democratic way." But there are plenty of biographies of Paine, and Kaye does establish the important historical fact that Paine, this poorly educated son of an English corset maker, has been unfairly and often maliciously excluded from the Founding Fathers, and for consequential reasons.

One of those Founding Fathers, he indubitably was. His pamphlet, *Common Sense*, at less than 50 pages, both sensationally converted the colonists to revolution and declared America's founding role in world democracy in our modern period. Yet, Kaye shows, Paine has been vilified again and again for his religious radicalism in *The Age of Reason* and because he—and only he—among the founders believed in the "genius and talents" of common people, was a common man himself, and understood and passionately advocated economic as well as political democracy.



MAD TOM.
or the MAN of RIGHTS.

Caricature of author and humanitarian Thomas Paine (1737-1809) writing his exposition on the principles of republicanism *Rights of Man*, captioned: "Mad Tom or the Man of Rights." Time Life Pictures/Mansell

For example, Paine proposed, in *The Rights of Man*, a public welfare system to offset economic inequalities, and, in *Agrarian Justice*, the payment of a certain tidy sum to every person on their 21st birthday and the payment of another such



sum every year to every person 50 or older. Certainly, as Kaye insists, in Washington, DC, there should be a statue of Paine or a monument to him like Jefferson's, such as on the Mall. In fact Paine should be on Mount Rushmore.

Kaye reminds us, too, that there is much to draw us to Paine again in this, our crisis. It was Paine, who had to go to work at 13, who announced the principle of American government as the "equal rights of man." Paine, a crewman on a British privateer, who wrote, "We have it in our power to begin the world over again." Paine, a dissenter in England, who wrote, "The birth day of a new world is at hand."

It was Paine, a self-educated bookworm, who first proposed a constitutional convention among the colonies. Paine, an editor of a Pennsylvania magazine, who wrote, "It is yet too soon to write the history of the Revolution," Paine, a founding member of the first American Anti-Slavery Society, who wrote, "My country is the world. To do good is my religion." Paine, a fugitive from the armed minions of the King of England for "seditious libel," who then very narrowly escaped beheading under the French guillotine.

And it was Thomas Paine who proposed that the United States help form an "Association of Nations" in "a new epoch of history for all peoples." Our cause, Paine proclaimed, was "to see it in our power to make a world happy—to teach mankind the art of being so—to exhibit, on the theater of the universe a character hitherto unknown."

He died on June 8, 1809, and was buried, with no national dignitaries present, in New Rochelle, New York. A well-meaning admirer, undertaking to rebury him in

England, lost his bodily remains. Three-and-a-half years from the 200th anniversary of his death, it is again "time to stir. ... time for every man to stir," and every woman. "We are a people upon experiments," he proclaimed, "It is an age of revolutions, in which everything may be looked for." His body is lost but his spirit is with us. By the anniversary of his death, we well may have either lost, perhaps for good, or re-secured, the American dream he invented.

Ronnie Dugger, a reporter and writer, was founding editor of the *Texas Observer* and is the founder of the *Alliance for Democracy*, www.thealliancefordemocracy.org.

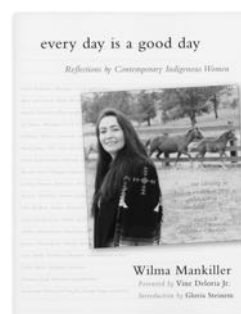


FIELDS THAT DREAM: A Journey to the Roots of Our Food

By Jenny Kurzweil
Fulcrum Publishing, 2005, 224 pages,
\$14.95

reviewed by Elle McPherson

Fields That Dream weaves the compelling stories of a diverse array of small-scale sustainable farmers with a surprisingly readable socio-political history of the current state of American agriculture. Through candid conversations with farmers from Seattle's University District Farmers' Market, Kurzweil explores the joys and hardships of farming, leaving the reader with a profound respect for the dedication of people struggling to reconnect with the land and the origins of our food.



EVERY DAY IS A GOOD DAY: Reflections by Contemporary Indigenous Women

By Wilma Mankiller
Fulcrum Publishing, 2004, 215 pages,
\$16.95

reviewed by Lilja Otto

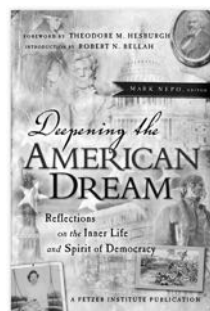
Activist and former principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation Wilma Mankiller gathers wisdom from a diverse group of Native American women from 16 nations in her new book. She invites readers into conversations that touch on such themes as governance, spirituality, womanhood, and community.

As these aspects of native culture and struggles unfold, the diversity among regions, tribes, and individual women becomes as obvious as their shared strength and persistence. Mankiller proves a deft guide, providing readers with a road map of the historical context for each subject.

Despite the challenges of being indigenous in the 21st century, "How can I be anything but positive if I come from a tenacious, resilient people who keep moving forward with an eye towards the future even after enduring unspeakable hardship?" says Mankiller in the closing chapter.

Every Day Is a Good Day provides insights into the lives and ideas of indigenous women and invites readers to re-examine their own cultural and spiritual backgrounds.





DEEPENING THE AMERICAN DREAM: Reflections on the Inner Life and Spirit of Democracy

Edited by Mark Nepo

Jossey-Bass, 2005, 265 pages, \$24.95

reviewed by Doug Pibel

This book is a symposium of leading writers, philosophers, historians, and thinkers—all examining the spiritual aspects of what it means to be American, and what “America” means. In the midst of a glut of materialism, governance by adolescent leadership, and retreat from human engagement, these writers examine the founding values of the country, the course we have taken to get here, and how we can look to wisdom traditions—our own and others—to articulate a more fully adult and inclusive vision of an American dream.

ANNOTATIONS: A Guide to the Independent Critical Press (3rd Revised Edition)

Edited by Marie F. Jones

Alternative Press Center, 2004, 756 pages, \$29.95

reviewed by Doug Pibel

From *A(bafazi)* to *Z(ona Abi-erta)*, with 383 stops between, *Annotations* is a catalog of the alternative press. Capsule summaries of each periodical are followed by sections on editorial and manuscript policies, financial and staff data, circulation, and much more. List-

ings of columnists and noted contributors convey something of the flavor of each publication.

In the aggregate, the listings give readers an overview of the vitality of an international literary culture. As Robert McChesney writes in his introduction: “These publications are like the Book People in *Fahrenheit 451*. ... They are indispensable to any hope for a vitalized democracy; they are our lifeline to a future worth living.”



BIODIESEL POWER

By Lyle Estill

New Society Publishers, 2005

260 pages, \$16.95

reviewed by Andrew Lovejoy

Biodiesel Power tells the story of the Piedmont Biofuels co-op, which grew from a backyard experiment to a relatively large-scale operation on the leading edge of biodiesel production, research and activism. Piedmont, located in Pittsboro, North Carolina, focuses on the production of biodiesel from renewable sources such as recycled vegetable oils.

Estill often complains about government regulations, and about the sometimes problematic relations between grassroots operations like his own and the National Biodiesel Board, the trade association representing the biodiesel industry. But while the going is both slow and hard, Estill ultimately

strikes a positive note: the biofuels movement is making progress, and biodiesel is gaining credibility as a viable fuel source.



CHALLENGING EMPIRE: How People, Governments, and the UN defy U.S. power

by Phyllis Bennis, foreword by Danny Glover

Olive Branch Press, 2006, 257 pages, \$18

reviewed by Dee Axelrod

Institute for Policy Studies fellow Phyllis Bennis traces the roots and outgrowths of anti-Iraq war protest.

Citing collaborations among civil society groups, the UN, and governments prepared to stand up to the U.S., Bennis points to the growing war resistance as “the second superpower,” a counterweight to the Bush Administration’s quest for empire.

Perhaps most important, Bennis gives anti-war, anti-globalization forces reason to hope.

As Danny Glover writes in his foreword for *Challenging Empire*, “She helps us remember ... that change is a process passed, fought for, and earned through generations, not a quick fix. She puts the historic, extraordinary ‘The World Says No to War’ demonstrations throughout the globe, on February 15, 2003, in their appropriate place—as the beginning of an historic movement, a promise. Not as a failure to prevent a war.”



Linda Wolf

Thanks to You, We're Celebrating

You did it! Your generous donations allowed us to pay all our bills and leap into 2006—our 10th anniversary year.

On behalf of all the staff, board, volunteers, interns—and the broader *YES!* community—let me say a whole-hearted thank you to each person listed below, and to many others who gave gift subscriptions, made small donations, told friends and colleagues about *YES!*, wrote to us and for us, and gave of your time. Each contribution helps *YES!* survive and thrive. Thanks to you, in 2006 we're on our way to a whole new level of reach and impact. In gratitude,

Fran Korten
Executive Director

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Website Heats Up, *YES!* Grows

Website Jumps Into Gear

The *YES!* website has recently become a more active place. Already, we've offered an exclusive report from the historic Bolivian elections, visionary ideas from Starhawk on the possibilities for bioremediation in New Orleans, and several new blogs.

This was all made possible by our new online editor, Barbara Sehr, who joined us in late November. She comes with a background in technology, the web, and journalism, having worked for Microsoft, Getty Images, and About.com.

If you're subscribed to our e-mail newsletter, you're already getting messages from Barbara. If you've not yet subscribed, sign up on the website, and you'll hear from Barbara regularly.

—Fran Korten

Earth Charter Summit

The *YES!* education program and our educational partners will present an educational summit for

K-12 educators at Islandwood on Bainbridge Island, Washington, in March 2006.

We'll provide teachers with access to experts on environmental issues, hands-on classroom resources, and positive and practical ideas for teaching about the Earth Charter in time for Earth Day, on April 22. Call 206/842-5009x225 to learn more.

—Kim Corrigan

Staff Grows

At the turn of the new year, Edward Mabanglo became our marketing manager. Edward's worked for the likes of Eddie Bauer, NBC, Mervyn's, and Bank of America.

With Edward's arrival, Susan Gleason, who capably ran our marketing and outreach programs, became our Media and Outreach Manager. The change allows Susan to devote her media and networking talents to getting *YES!* stories out to millions—and helping people fired up by David Korten's forthcoming

book, *The Great Turning*, learn of actions they can take at this momentous time in history.

Melissa Alvarez Anderson is our new office manager. She is replacing Kathleen Peel, our super multi-tasker, who left us to pursue her career in physical therapy. Melissa brings lots of talents including, in her words, being a computer geek—a handy skill in our technology-loaded office.

—Fran Korten

New staff at *YES!*, from the left: Melissa Alvarez Anderson, Barbara Sehr, and Edward Mabanglo



Audrey Watson

Events & Announcements

Spiritual Activism

May 17–20, Washington, DC. National conference to create a spiritual political agenda and train organizers to take it into their communities. For more details, visit www.tikkun.org/community/spritual_activism_conference.

Quest for Global Healing

May 3–8, Bali, Indonesia. An international gathering addressing fundamental social change, focusing on such issues as poverty, women's rights, the environment, and business responsibility. Speakers include

Desmond Tutu, Walter Cronkite, Lynne Twist, Afghan activist Fatima Gailani, and Singapore journalist May Lee. For details, visit www.questforglobalhealing.org.

David Korten Book Launch

In May *YES!* co-founder and board chair, David Korten (*When Corporations Rule the World*), launches his long-awaited new book, *The Great Turning: From Empire to Earth Community*.

Related community events, including lectures and Earth Community Dialogues, are being planned with

partner organizations in cities around the country. Visit www.yesmagazine.org/greatturning for details and updates.

May 12 & 13, Pasadena, California, with All Saints Episcopal Church

May 15, Oakland, California, with Global Exchange

May 16, Sonoma, California, with Praxis Peace Institute

May 25, Portland, Oregon, with Living Earth Gatherings

June 2, Gainesville, Florida: Keynote presentation as part of the Florida Coalition for Peace and Justice State Convocation.



Searching for simple and practical ways to live sustainably?
Want to be part of the solution? Here are answers to the questions
you're asking about creating a safer world for yourself and your family

Yes! But How?

Bleached tampons

I have heard that using bleached tampons or super-absorbent tampons with rayon can be harmful to women's health. What is so harmful about these tampons and do you have an inexpensive solution? Unbleached, all-cotton tampons are so much more expensive, and I'm also concerned about the effect of tampons on the environment.

Bleached tampons—the kind you'll find on most drugstore shelves—may expose users to dioxin, a highly carcinogenic substance that is a by-product of the chlorine bleaching process. Though most tampon manufacturers insist they test for the presence of chlorine, bleaching still makes many women nervous.

Also, the more absorbent a tampon is, the higher the percentage of rayon it contains, since the fiber holds more liquid than cotton. Rayon, however, promotes growth of the bacteria *Staphylococcus aureus* which causes Toxic Shock Syndrome, a potentially deadly disease. Women can lower their risk by not using “super” tampons.

You're right to be concerned about the environmental impact of tampons, because one woman uses a staggering 10,000 tampons over the course of her reproductive life.

The good news is that there are reusable options that are cost-effective and environmentally friendly.

Two of our favorites are menstrual cups and reusable pads. Menstrual cups are made of natural rubber or silicone and are worn internally. Users rave about how comfortable they are. At \$35 per cup, the up-front cost may seem high, but contrasted with the ongoing monthly expense of tampons, the cup is a bargain. They can be ordered online at www.keeper.com or www.mooncup.co.uk.

For women who prefer an external pad, cotton cloth is a great alternative. Purchase or make your own. Learn more at www.gladrags.com or www.lunapads.com.

Meredith Dearborn

From Lawn to Prairie

I am starting to get restless indoors and want to begin my garden planning. I have to say, though, that I am getting tired of all that weeding, watering, and lawn-mowing. But I still want a beautiful garden. Do you have any magic tricks? Inspire me!

Your question came just at the right time. I am sprouting mung beans on my windowsill, and it's not just for their great nutritional value.

Though my body sure appre-

ciates the extra vitamins, I believe my soul longs to see things grow again.

I am with you on the tiring weeding and mowing and watering. To escape the drudgery, I suggest you get rid of (some of) your lawn, go local, and try working with, not against, nature this year.

There are different ways to keep open spaces without having a lawn: Wooden decks are dry spaces to play and gather. Attractive mulched, tiled or cobblestone paths and mowed paths in fields give access to your garden. Raised outlooks, steps, or tree houses create varied perspectives. Benches, tree trunks, large rocks and hammocks provide spaces to rest.

If you still want a lawn, choose the size based on the use you have in mind.

Native prairie grasses like Buffalo grass and Blue Grama grass make excellent lawn substitutes, and thrive with little water in the Great Plains and California. In more humid climates, native mosses can take over if you let them, forming a soft, velvety ground cover.

Less lawn means more space for native flowers, shrubs, and trees—plants that are by definition strong and well-adapted. Choose plants suited to your particular climate zone—seven zones spanning from



the Pacific Northwest to the Coastal Plains of the Southeast and indicating the broad ranges where different groups of native plants can be found.

To learn more, contact native plant organizations in your area. The North American Native Plants Society has a list of regional associations at www.nanps.org. Two fine reference books are Carole Rubin's *How to Get Your Lawn off Grass* and Ken Druse's *The Natural Habitat Garden*.

Lilja Otto

Local vs. Organic

When I can't find food that is both local and organic, which should I prioritize?

Tempted to snub those regional apples in favor of shiny organic Chilean ones? Or enjoy organic raspberries in December when local ones aren't available?

Yes, the organic label means those foods were farmed via environmentally sustainable methods and are free of genetic engineering, pesticides, and hormones. But just because your food is labeled "organic" doesn't mean it's necessarily better than what's available just down the road.

Most often, buying local is not only better for the Earth, but better for you and your community.

A 2005 report published in the journal *Food Policy* calculated that buying foods grown within a 12-mile radius was less environmentally costly than buying organic, non-local foods. And researchers from the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture in Iowa found locally and regionally based meals used four to 17 times less fuel during transport than a meal from the conventional food system. (Not to mention all the costs of refrigeration and packaging.)

In an industry dominated by

corporate agribusiness, buying local supports the growing movement toward sustainable food production. Brian Halweil of the Worldwatch Institute estimates that the typical U.S. wheat farmer receives only 6 cents per dollar spent on a loaf of bread. By shortening the retail chain between you and the grower, you increase the amount of money he or she receives. Not only does this allow family farmers to maintain a time-honored tradition, but it protects farmland from development, boosts your local economy, and ensures food security for your community.

Local food is generally fresher, so it's tastier and more nutritious—as anyone who's ever eaten a freshly picked tomato can attest. Produce begins deteriorating the moment it is picked, as the natural sugars turn to starches and enzymes destroy nutrients. Eating locally also means using what's available seasonally, thus reconnecting us with the natural cycles of the Earth.

For help finding local produce, check out www.localharvest.com. And check out www.farmland.org/market/season.htm to find what's in season when and recipes for how to enjoy it!

Elle McPherson

Yoga Mats

I've heard that standard yoga mats aren't environmentally friendly. Do you have any advice for finding PVC-free alternatives?

Polyvinyl chloride (PVC), the plastic used in most yoga mats, raises health and environmental concerns. PVC additives leach out and can build up in your body and in the environment. PVC does not degrade, and is extremely difficult to recycle. When

burned it releases dioxin, a toxic substance that can cause cancer.

Fortunately, there are eco-friendly alternatives, such as natural rubber, jute, latex, and hemp. EcoYoga (www.ecoyoga.com) makes a mat with a pure rubber underside and jute fabric/rubber mix on top. It has no synthetic additives or plastic components and is completely biodegradable. Try also Jade's Harmony mat (www.jadeyoga.com) and MinaSai's hemp and rubber mat (www.minasai.com).

Elle McPherson

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10 Years of Ig Nobel Peace

The *Ig Nobel* Prizes honor “achievements that cannot or *should* not be reproduced.” Here they are—the *Ig Nobel* Peace Prize winners of the last 10 years ...

2005: Claire Rind and Peter Simmons of Newcastle University, in the U.K., for electrically monitoring the activity of a brain cell in a locust while that locust was watching selected highlights from the movie “Star Wars.”

2004: Daisuke Inoue of Hyogo, Japan, for inventing karaoke, thereby providing an entirely new way for people to learn to tolerate each other.

2003: Lal Bihari, of Uttar Pradesh, India, for a triple accomplishment: First, for leading an active life even though he has been declared legally dead; second, for waging a lively posthumous campaign against bureaucratic inertia and greedy relatives; and third, for creating the Association of Dead People.

2002: Keita Sato of Takara Co., Dr. Matsumi Suzuki of Japan Acoustic Lab, and Dr. Norio Kogure of Kogure Veterinary Hospital, for promoting peace and harmony between the species by inventing Bow-Lingual, a computer-based automatic dog-to-human language translation device.

2001: Viliumas Malinauskus of Grutas, Lithuania, for creating the amusement park known as “Stalin World.”

2000: The British Royal Navy, for ordering its sailors to stop using live cannon shells, and to instead just shout “Bang!”

1999: Charl Fourie & Michelle Wong of Johannesburg, South Africa, for inventing an automobile burglar alarm consisting of a detection circuit and a flame-thrower.

1998: Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee of India and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan, for their aggressively peaceful explosions of atomic bombs.

1997: Harold Hillman of the University of Surrey, England, for his lovingly rendered and ultimately peaceful report “The Possible Pain Experienced During Execution by Different Methods.”

1996: Jacques Chirac, president of France, for commemorating the 50th anniversary of Hiroshima with atomic bomb tests in the Pacific.

1995: The Taiwan National Parliament, for demonstrating that politicians gain more by punching, kicking, and gouging each other than by waging war against other nations.



Viliumas Malinauskus of Grutas, Lithuania, was honored in 2001 for creating “Stalin World”. All photos courtesy of the Ig Nobel Awards