The Priced versus the Priceless

By DEREK RASMUSSEN

1.0 NO ONE IS A 'BACK-TO-THE-LANDER.'

I was listening to CBC, the national Canadian radio service, a couple of years ago and the interviewer, Michael Enright, was chatting with a fellow named Alouitious in Newfoundland. It seems Alouitious had a farm which was within the city limits of the capital, St John's. The first question that Enright asked him was, "How does it feel to be living such an old-fashioned way of life in the middle of a bustling city?" Alouitious answered politely. But I was not so polite as I found myself hollering back at the radio: "What's so old-fashioned about food? Don't you still eat food? Or do you live on techno-nutrients from outer-space or something?" Later on I tried to discuss the program with a usually sympathetic colleague, but he snorted in disagreement: "So you're one of those back-to-the-landers eh, Derek? Don't be so naïve."

Today's city folk seem to talk and behave as though they've transcended the need for land, crops, animals, weather—as if these things are old fashioned. But the fact is, no one can be a 'back-to-the-lander.' We never left the land. None of us. Even those super-SUV-driving types who deny it are still 'on the land'. After all, what do they eat—space juice from Mars? They still eat food grown on planet earth (somewhere)—be it bananas from Columbia or rice from Cambodia. It's still dirt, sky, water, photosynthesis. Beetles, bugs, water buffalo, bacteria and birds. And people and songs, and apprenticeships and advice (somewhere). Even their super-SUVs are propelled by animals. Shellfish and other sea creatures, dead and crushed millions of years ago and fossilized into a fuel that they pump from the depths into their gas tanks. They haven't left the land—none of us has. We've just put layers of concrete between it and us. Layers of concrete and concepts—but we cling even more to concepts than we do to concrete. We still need the land, for as much as we deny it or distract ourselves from it, we live off the land, and we die on the land.

2000 kilometres north, Tommy Akulukjuk, part-time hunter and journalist, has noticed this odd preoccupation of Euro-Canadians to deny that they are part of nature:

> The Qallunaat (European-Canadians) have a strange concept of their environment. For instance, the term "wildlife" is used to separate themselves from their home and separate their community from the natural environment. They do not realize that they're part of the wildlife; they were wild once and will be part of the wild forever, but they like to exclude themselves from anything the natural world provides. Inuit do not have such a word in their language, we are part of nature and cannot to be excluded from it. (The word 'Inuit' itself means: Living beings, it doesn't connote any superiority).
>
> Inuktitut captures what the nature has said to Inuit. Even what seems to be a simple word in Inuktitut is so difficult to translate into English. A word like *kajjarniq*. *Kajjarniq* means "to reflect positively about our surroundings". We usually say it when we like the weather, and people like all sorts of weather, so we say it in any weather. Even indoors when people experience what they

remember and have that positive outlook on it.

Sometimes you can read southerners describe the Arctic regions as "daunting" and they write about how Inuit survived in the "inhospitable" Canadian north. I don't think there is anything daunting about where I'm from. I think this paints a bleak picture of Inuit, as if we are always struggling to survive. …Actually it's not nature that threatens our survival as Inuit, it's the dominant southern culture that threatens our survival.

The School tries to fill us up with history about Napoleon and so on—things, "facts" that don't really mean anything to us—things that aren't helpful—when we haven't even had the time to become a Person yet. To become a Person we need time: time with our family, time with our elders and community, time out on the land, and time with ourselves—to reflect upon our actions. Instead the Qalunnaat government puts us in school—away from the land, away from our family, our community, our elders. In many ways School takes away the very thing it is to be a human being: to feel and love the Earth and what it provides. Instead it makes us look forward to an artificial world of economics. Makes us think about what job we want, how much money do we want. (Akulukjuk and Rasmussen 2007)

Akulukjuk juxtaposes the artificial world of economics with love for the earth; something I call "the priced versus the priceless." In the few pages that follow I'd like to try and paint a picture of the priced realm from the perspective of a mature culture like Inuit. Although I am not Inuk, I'm going to try to convince you (although you probably already know more about this than me) that we—the Qalunaat—are a very young civilization, and a weird one to boot. Also as part of this "priced" discussion I want to propose that departments of "overdevelopment studies" be struck to address our economic obesity; and I'll also touch briefly on the dire consequences of our metastasizing economy[1] and how it might be wise for us to prepare for a terminal diagnosis on our luxury life-style.

But the potential demise of our Priced civilization brings us to Part Two: the Priceless; because, I believe, along with BC community activist Ann Damude that "You don't just grow food locally to save money or defend against a crisis, you do it because it's a better way to live." The land is priceless, as are our friendships, and as is the wisdom of our elders; in the second part of the essay, we'll explore the priceless realm and how to expand it. Let's start.

PART ONE: THE PRICED

2.0 PRICE=SCARCE=FEAR

Three years ago, Robert Vachon, at the Intercultural Institute in Montreal, put out an edition of their journal *InterCulture* on the "terrorism of money." It was about the fear that underlies a civilization like ours which emphasizes scarcity instead of abundance. Because our relations—human, natural, financial—are rooted in scarcity, the constant theme of our civilization is the fear of things 'running out', the fear of 'not having', and the sad reality of having no one to turn to. No family-community-tribal safety net. Unlike almost all civilizations that have gone before ours, most of us live day-to-day without knowing that there is a group of

[1] "Metastasizing economy" is Geoff Heinrick's apt phrase.

people (family/community/tribe) beholden to us (and to whom we are beholden) to whom we can turn for food, shelter, or medicine. And so Euro-American people live in fear. An all-pervasive, low-level subtly toxic degree of fear. Fear of having no one else to help one get by. Benjamin Disraeli noticed this as early as 1845: "There is no community in England", he said, "there is aggregation."

> In great cities men are brought together by the desire of gain. They are not in a state of cooperation, but of isolation, as to the making of fortunes; and for all the rest they are careless of their neighbours. Christianity teaches us to love our neighbour as ourself; modern society acknowledges no neighbours." (cited in Williams 1983, 106)

Society, "societas", originally meant a group of people with face-to-face relations (Williams 1976, 246). Today it has morphed into the very abstract sense of "that to which we all belong, even if it is very general and impersonal" (Williams, 243-5). The word that used to have the sense of face-to-face relations now means 'a large agglomeration of atomized individuals moulded into mobile human rental units, without mutigenerational links, trying to define themselves within the dominant institutions, language, and geographical boundaries of recently established nation-states.'

No wonder we have trouble caring about "our society", and "our neighbours"—we don't know them—our agglomerations are too large (Kohr 1977). Margaret Mead noted that "for 99 percent of the time humans have lived on this planet we've lived in tribes—groups of 12 to 36 people"; but today the medium-sized human group is extinct (Utne 1992, 6). The biggest remaining unit of caring is the nuclear family; it's the biggest unit of non-compulsory generosity. The next level up is the nation state and its compulsory monetary generosity (a.k.a. "taxation"). We have no in-betweens.

> "We don't need each other for anything anymore. If we have enough money, we're insulated from depending on those around us—which is at least as much a loss as a gain. By some surveys, three-quarters of Americans confess that they don't know their next-door neighbours. That's a novel condition for primates, it will take a while to repair those networks" (McKibben 2007, 117).

Now that a few generations of us Euro-Americans have lived with this ever-present type of anxiety we've forgotten that this isn't normal, that other cultures haven't always lived like this. People might hear a phrase like "the terrorism of money" and retort: "Well, how do *you* suggest we live without money?" But the goal isn't living without money, the goal is living without *fear*.

> [A]ll this points to the fundamental defect of our economic system, and any other system that requires continual growth if it is not to collapse: What motivates it is *not need* but *fear*, for it feeds on and feeds our sense of *lack* (Loy 2002, 83).

Because so many of nature's abundances have been walled off, made private, we live in fear of being without food and shelter. Living abstract lives dependent on money we are no longer familiar with nature's seasonal replenishment of these abundances—free of charge, available to the deserving and undeserving alike. As Phillipe Aries' once said: we Westerners

mislead ourselves when we blithely say we are too materialist—we are *not* a materialist culture—we barely know anything about material—most of us can't repair our own clothing, fix or build our houses, grow food, or find medicinal plants (Aries 1981, 136). We don't live in our bodies; we are not material-oriented people. We live in our heads; we are abstractionists. Natural non-human forces may refill the breadbasket for 99 percent of the species on earth, but we have forgotten and lost confidence in these forces. When millions of people all share the same belief in the limited circulation of coloured paper, and they all live in fear of not having it, then "mentally the world has been changed out of all recognition" (Buchan 1997, 54).

2.1 HOW CAN ABUNDANCE BE BAD NEWS?

Try this exercise to help you to appreciate the impact of this. Read the back page of the business section of your national newspaper today; usually after the stock exchange listings is one column devoted to "commodities": sugar, coffee, orange juice, hogs. Read the headline. The headline will say one of two things: either it will say something like "Record Orange Crop: Prices Plummet", or it will say, "Prices Surge on News of Frost Damage to Orange Crop." Oh, heartbreak. This tells you all you need to know about our adolescent culture: in 40,000 years of our species' history, no other human community ever greeted abundance as *bad news*. Or treated crop failure as cause for celebration. Money has successfully terrorized our minds when scarcity is good news, and abundance is bad news. Calamity means profit. Fisherman and academic Raymond Rogers says, "Through the massive inversion of reality that drives capital, we increasingly grant social standing to dead things (commodities) and deny it to living things (humans and nature)" (Fisher 2002, 84).

It doesn't take more than that to illuminate the vast moral distance we have traveled away from the "mature civilizations" of the planet. Eleven years ago, the caribou herds moved back in close to Iqaluit, Nunavut. The Inuit elders had predicted this, their stories told of a multi-year migration cycle (forty years) which European biologists hadn't been around to notice the previous time. Or the time before that. But the stories told it. And when the caribou came back, the community went out and hunted. There was a lot of meat, (there still is). There was a lot to share. Abundance was celebrated. There were many feasts—I was living there at the time and enjoyed the fun. The community freezers filled up[2]. Hunters also brought back meat for the elders and others who couldn't get out on the land.

Inuit society in Nunavut can still rightly be called a "society", one under assault from monetization to be sure, but still with much that is embedded and embodied, with much that is moral, not moneyed. American environmentalist and poet Gary Snyder likes to use the phrase "mature cultures" to refer to civilizations that are experienced, long-lived and ecologically-balanced (Snyder 1980, 115-116). Nunavummiut[3] live in a mature civilization; Euro-America is an adolescent civilization. Here's another example of the difference.

2.2 LAND CLAIMING

[2] Some Inuit towns have community freezers situated in public places where hunters put meat to be shared freely with others.

[3] "People of Nunavut."

The visionary Inuit leader John Amagoalik, who led the 30 year struggle to force Canada to recognize Inuit rights and occupancy of the Arctic was once asked to be a guest on the national Canadian TV quiz show *Front Page Challenge* back in 1976. Here is a transcript of Amagoalik being cross-examined by the program's pundits:

> Betty Robertson: *If someone were to say "OK we recognize this (land) claim, how much do you want for it?" What kind of figure would you put on it and how would that be paid?*
>
> John Amagoalik: *I'm not sure what you mean by being paid….*
>
> Betty Robertson: *Well, alright, you say that you have a claim to this amount of land and you want some compensation for it; how much do you want for it?*
>
> John Amagoalik: *I can't say. I can't really say what our people want. That will have to come from the communities themselves.*
>
> Betty Robertson: *Well, do they want money or do they want services….or goods…or houses? I'm not clear when you get into something of that size how you feel you ever can be recompensed for it….*
>
> John Amagoalik: *I think it's very important for people to remember the original intent of land claims. Over the past few years people seem to think that we're after money, that we're after services, but the original intent was, very simply, the survival of our people as a unique race in Canada; we want to save our language, our heritage, our philosophy—our whole way of life.*
>
> Gordon Sinclair: *Would you say John, would you say that perhaps your land isn't for sale?*
>
> John Amagoalik: *Yes, that's very true. You know, you cannot really sell your heritage, you know. We don't look at land as something to be owned, something to be given away or to be sold. It's a heritage, it's something <u>inside you</u>.*
> (CBC *Front Page Challenge*, 1976)

Is it any wonder that mature civilizations sometimes think Euro-American civilization behaves like an unrestrained adolescent—ignorant, violent and driven to excess? (Hartmann 1998, 118-163)

Some of the Host Peoples have continually occupied parts of this hemisphere for over 13,000 years. "Land claim" is a word invented by a property-based individualistic culture—not by Inuit. During one of the UN rounds of environmental negotiations, representatives from a variety of Indigenous groups got together to express their common concerns in the Kari-Oca Declaration. "We must never use the term 'land claim'", they argued, "It is non-indigenous people who are making claims to our lands. We are not making claims to our lands" (IWGIA 1992, 59-60).

Euro-Americans don't stay in any one place for longer than about 6 years on average; we buy and sell land like crazy. In a television interview five years ago Adele Perry, a history

professor at the University of Manitoba, was asked how Canada might look different today if Indian Treaties had been honoured. "Well, they are being honoured", answered Perry. "At least half of them are anyways. That is: the half of each treaty that serves the interests of the settlers." Perry said she had, in fact, exercised her treaty rights that very year when she bought a house in Winnipeg. This is a treaty right for us newcomers; we just seem to have forgotten the other half of these treaties wherein we made commitments to our hosts.

But how did we Euro-Americans come to be here in the first place?

2.3 THE MISSING STORY OF THE 50 MILLION

How did all these Europeans come to be in the Western Hemisphere? This hemisphere was once home to between 100-145 million indigenous people (8 to 12 million living north of Mexico), 95 percent of whom were wiped out by European weapons or disease (Stannard 1992, 11). From 1821 onward, tens of millions of Europeans arrived on two continents misnamed "Amerige" 300 years before by a clumsy German cartographer who thought Amerigo Vespucci had "discovered" these now radically depopulated lands.

We are quite new here. Never mind the attempts to antique our pedigree: we are new here. This is perhaps the greatest story never told: how recently and how suddenly we arrived. Fifty million human beings came from Europe to the Americas between 1821 and 1932. Not in the 1600s or 1700s, but at the turn of the 20th century—only three or four generations ago. My own family fits this mould: my father's grandfather migrated to Argentina from Denmark in 1880; my mother's grandfather came to Manitoba from Scotland in 1870.

Between 1821 and 1932, 34 million Europeans emigrated to the USA; 16 million more went to Canada, Brazil and Argentina. *All in 111 years.* This movement of humanity was like an explosion. Even though this happened quite recently and even though nothing like it has ever happened before in history, this shocking event isn't highlighted in our schooling or popular history. But 50 million people have never before up and moved from one continent to another in such a short period—not in Greek, Chinese, Egyptian, Mayan or Indian history.

In any reasonably curious academic discipline, one might expect that the intercontinental flight of millions of members of any large species would be a focus of intensive research—imagine biologists' fascination if 50 million zebras or camels crossed from one continent to another! All in just over a hundred years? Whole scientific careers would be based on trying to figure out what had prompted so many creatures to move. Whole departments would be studying the territories that the animals invaded and their impact on the local flora and fauna. But the instigators and impacts of a sudden movement of 50 million humans don't merit a textbook—let alone a department—in any North American university.

The only researcher to put dates and numbers to this rapid human exodus is historian Gabriel Kolko, and when he did, he discovered something surprising: in many years, between a third and a half of those landing on America's shores were "re-immigrants" (Kolko 1984, 67-69). Many of these people were coming here for a second or third time. They had already been to North America to work for a few years, and then had returned to their European roots to try and buy homes and land for their families; now they were returning to America. We might say they were the first commuters. They didn't think they were moving here permanently; America was just a job. And they didn't behave as though they were going to stay. According to Kolko, this is one of the reasons why our ancestors didn't join unions or community organizations here as much as they did "back home"—they didn't consider North America to be home (Kolko, 71).

For most of our great-grandparents, "home" until 1940 still meant England, Scotland, France, Ireland, Poland, Germany, Italy and so on.

Our ancestors came to the Americas to find wage-work, but many of them returned home to Europe to try to buy a 'pied a terre' (foothold) in their true 'indigenous' homelands. Who or what uprooted them in the first place? Why did they leave?

2.4 THE SOCIOLOGICAL EQUIVALENT OF THE SPLITTING OF THE ATOM

Euro-America is the result of the biggest, quickest and most dramatic behavioural experiment the planet has ever seen. Euro-America, according to anthropologist Wade Davis, is a "new and original culture that celebrates the individual at the expense of family and community—a stunning innovation in human affairs, the sociological equivalent of the splitting of the atom" (Davis 2002).

Scientists split the atom in order to unleash an enormous amount of energy; the market economy splits open the family and the community in order to harness the enormous energy of individually rentable and mobile humans—wage laborers. We live in an "Age of Disintegration" says Davis, and "as cultures wither away, individuals remain." From one way of looking at it you could call this "no more being tied down"; but from another perspective it is "no more belonging"—to your land, to your place, to your kin. This new type of civilization would not weave its members into societies, cultures, communities; instead individuals would be "freed" to rent their life hours to corporations and state bureaucracies. Disembedded individuals march to the tune of money and employment, while their loyalty to habitats and communities withers. This is the ideology of "property-based individualism" (MacPherson 1964).

This "historically specific social form" has "only existed for a short while—barely a fraction of humanity's existence on earth"; and it represents a "rupture" with all previous social forms (Meiksins Wood, 3-7). "Why is it," asked Helen Keller in 1912, "that so many workers live in unspeakable misery?"

> With their hands they have built great cities, and they cannot be sure of a roof over their heads. …They have gone down into the bowels of the earth for diamonds and gold, and they haggle for a loaf of bread….Why? …[It] is the record of profits and losses called *the market*. (Foner 1967, 43)

Markets used to be a carefully controlled activity; societies cordoned them off, held them in certain places at specific times; markets were nested inside societies. Today this trading activity that used to be subordinate to and embedded in societies, now encases human communities and dictates terms to the people (Polanyi 1957, 71, 57; Cayley 1992, 191-2; Loy 2003, 66).

> In order for "free markets" to be "free", the exchange of labour, land, goods and currency must not be encumbered by elements of psychosocial integration such as clan loyalties, village responsibilities, guild or union rights, charity, family obligations, social roles, or religious values…People are expected to move to where the jobs are to be found, and to adjust their work lives and cultural tastes to the demands of a global market. (Alexander, 2001)

2.5 THE FOUR FICTIONS

The necessary spark for this bonfire of societies was Europe's "commercialization of the soil," the "weirdest" of all undertakings, which started when England converted the commons to "private property", thereby turning land into "congealed money" (Polanyi 1957, 178; Buchan, 91). The word "private" comes from the Latin "*privatus*: withdrawn from public life", itself from "*privare*: to bereave or deprive" (Williams 1976, 242). Proudhon denounced this plundering with the slogan: "Property is theft!" (*What is Property?* 1840)—but the thefts of the commons continued, reaching their "engulfing climax" in the early 19th century, when "ten million acres, nearly half of England's arable land had been enclosed" (Heilbroner, 1980: 60).

> Land is tied up with the organizations of kinship, neighbourhood, craft, and creed… [It] invests man's life with stability; it is the site of his habitation; it is a condition of his physical safety; it is the landscape and the seasons. We might as well imagine his being born without hands and feet as carrying on his life without land. (Polanyi 1957, 178)

The landed gentry and the new class of capitalists "privatized" the commons, and those without property were forced into human rental (wage labour) in order to obtain the necessary bits of metal or coloured paper (money) to exchange for the basics of life—food, shelter, clothing. Although greed is the motivation capitalism admits to, its true propellant is *fear*—fear arising out of human arrangements founded on scarcity. "Capitalism invented scarcity—at least as a deliberate method of economic organization" (McQuaig 2001, 29).

No previous human group had managed to convince its entire membership to believe that bits of the earth's surface could be 'owned' by individual members of one species. No civilization ever before had managed to convince its entire membership of non-rich persons to voluntarily sell themselves for currency, to convince everyone of the glory of human rental (while condemning human ownership—slavery). No prior civilization had allowed itself to be permeated by cancerous clusters known as corporations: "hugely fictitious bodies" which were allowed to assume the legal rights of human beings without the parallel responsibilities (for example, there would be no death penalty for corporations, no matter how heinous their crime). And, finally, no other civilization had achieved such widespread acceptance and use of money to represent almost all matters and materials of value.

This list of the four prybars used to split open communities and homelands— money, privatized land, human rental, and corporations—was first enumerated by economist Karl Polanyi in the 1940s, when he referred to their cumulative effect as "the Great Transformation" (Polanyi 1957, 68, 71, 130, 178-9). Today we take it for granted that these fictions are facts; since we are "so enveloped in the capitalist world, so used to our own way of behaving, that it is difficult to imagine people ever behaved differently" (McQuaig 2001, 16). But indeed, this sole focus on "material gain was largely foreign to most people in ancient Egyptian, Greek, Roman and medieval cultures, as well as in most Eastern civilizations" (McQuaig, 17). For Euro-Americans, it is this Great Transformation that dissolved our belonging to a hereditary home.

> We no longer have a home except in the brute commercial sense: home is where the bills come. To seriously help homeless humans and animals will require a sense of home that

> is not commercial. The Inuit, the Aranda, the Sioux—all belong to a place. Where is our habitat? Where do I belong? …We know that the historical move from community to society proceeded by destroying unique local structures—religion, economy, food patterns, custom, possessions, families, traditions—and replaced these with national, or international, structures that created the modern "individual" and integrated him into society. Modern man last his home; and in the process everything else did too. (Turner 1996, 34-35)

When a map of species extinctions is superimposed over a map of human wanderings, we notice that the areas with greatest human immigration and emigration are the areas with the highest level of plant and animal extinctions (Nabhan 1997, 45). People who connect with a place look after it, those who are rootless do not, and thus "globalization is creating a world of powerless places at the mercy of placeless powers" (Wackernagel and Rees 1995, 143).

2.6 PAYMENT or GIFT?

The free-market economist Milton Friedman once summed up the utilitarian appeal of capitalism by saying, "We owe our daily bread to the forces of the market, not to the benevolence of the baker" (Bakan 2004, 117). Historians Ivan Illich and Elie Halevy identified such uses of the utilitarian yardstick as marking society's turning point toward the immoral (Cayley, 1992, 195; Halevy 1960).

Who is this 'we' that Friedman refers to? Does this include our children? A father goes to work, earns money and buys bread from a baker. Several people in the family eat the bread, there's a chain of feeding here. Does a 7-year-old son say "I owe this bread to market forces...to my father's utilitarian interest in me"? Or does he owe it to his parents' love? Family members don't "'truck and barter' over how much you're going to eat for dinner"; this is a vision "so full of hate that no human being would want to live in it" (Chomsky 2002, 203, 200). But this is the lie propounded by economists. In 1956, economist D.H Robertson asked: "What is it that economists economize?" His answer: "love, the scarcest and most precious of all resources" (Daly and Cobb 1994, 140).

The chorus to Malvina Reynolds' classic song "Magic Penny" says: "Love is something that if you give it away—You end up having more." *Business Week* columnist Robert Kuttner replies,

> This conception of love, of course, is the antithesis of the market model, whose essence is scarcity. In market exchange, it is absurd to think you can get more of a commodity by giving it away… Indeed a number of smart economists have argued precisely that we need to maximize our reliance on the market because altruism and love are themselves scarce commodities. …By harnessing self-interest, markets reserved altruism, empathy, and fellow-feeling for special occasions. (Kuttner 1997, 59)

Should we follow Friedman and allow market relations to reach down into the family, into human bonds of love, and dissolve and replace them with money? The majority of intra-family relations are based on love—not money. Do we want to shrink these boundaries of love or

expand them? A father doesn't buy bread for his daughter out of market motivations, but out of love. He gives.

Generosity, called *dana* in Sanskrit, is the first principle of morality in the Asia, a pillar of Hinduism and Buddhism. It is the most revolutionary act one can engage in: to give without weighing returns (Caplow 2007). *Dana* is not a calculation, it is not a transaction, it is not reciprocity. It is The Gift.

> Let me say this before rain becomes a utility that they can plan and distribute for money. By "they" I mean the people who cannot understand that rain is a festival, who do not appreciate its gratuity, who think that what has no price has no value, that what cannot be sold is not real, so that the only way to make something *actual* is to place it on the market. The time will come when they will sell you even your rain. At the moment it is still free, and I am in it. I celebrate its gratuity and its meaninglessness. (Merton 1965, 9)

The lakes do not charge us for the water we drink; the forests do not bill us for the air we breathe. When Bechtel Corporation privatizes water delivery in Bolivia, and gets a law passed making drinking rainwater *illegal*—well—we *know* this is outrageous.[4] Rain is a gift. It is the generosity of the sky. It is one of the planet's acts of love. And all of these gifts are priceless.

To some folks "owning" water might sound reasonable. If market relations have swallowed up the society, then the answer might lie in making the market pay for the things its getting for free—right? Wrong. The modern global economy is a monetized game of musical chairs; it only works if someone is left without a chair. Something or someone has to have little or no value if someone further down the line is going to receive that value in the form of profit. The system is based in *scarcity*. If it's going to work, someone or something has to go without. In practice, this means that this forest is worthless, as is that mountain, that lake, that person.

In ancient times, markets had a limited prescribed place within societies; today they enclose societies. Markets used to be embedded in and controlled by societies, now societies are embedded in and controlled by markets. Full-cost accounting aims to embed *more* things in markets, extend monetized values into every corner of life—expand the prison walls so that *everyone* has to obey the warden. But monetized values are unsympathetic to initiatives to re-establish human and natural values like reciprocal giving and generosity, the bonds that link and create meaning from human to human, and between people and nature.

If—if—we could place some proximate dollar amount on this mountain or that forest which would in some sketchy way capture the thousands of years of evolution of these natural spaces and the species dependent on them, and the beauty and pleasure they brought (and would account for into the future) to humanity (and other species), then, presumably the price would be astronomical[5]. A price that was close to being fair would certainly be "uneconomical"—blocking any business from cutting down the trees or strip-mining the coal from the mountain. So the forests and mountains will not be priced; and if they are then you can be sure that the price will be so insanely low so as to not impede profit-making for a few short-lived members of the species *homo sapiens*.

---

[4] The people of Bolivia eventually kicked Bechtel out and got their water back; see the film *The Corporation*.

[5] 13 scientists in Nature magazine priced "ecosystem services" such as pollination and decomposition at $33 trillion in 1997; see Bill McKibben, *Deep Economy* (2007) Henry Holt: New York. p.27.

Our system is predicated upon scarcity of worth: if everything is worth a lot of money, the market economy collapses; so some "unmeasureables"—like childrearing, unblasted mountains, clean lakes, domestic labor,—will necessarily fall outside of the priced realm. Some of our "most cherished social treasures"—"communal solidarity," "cultural gestures"—are considered unworthy of "dollarized" representation (Latouche 1997, 260). And maybe that's a good thing.

2.7 ANTIDOTE: UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENTS OF OVERDEVELOPMENT STUDIES

> To think ecologically is to understand that while some parts of the world are undoubtedly underdeveloped, if one is at all inclined to use that modality of thinking, it is nonetheless the overdeveloped parts of the world which ought to give greater cause for anxiety. The rich, not the poor, are the problem for humankind and the earth's resources in the long run. (Lal 2002, 14)

North America graduates hundreds of university students from programs in "development studies", exporting them to study the victims of globalization; but maybe we ought to keep a few at home to study the perpetrators? Couldn't we do with at least a few Departments of Overdevelopment Studies to help us tally the costs of our economic obesity? Some of my Inuit friends have said that "it's the Euro-American way of life that needs to be put under the microscope, not intriguing tribes in far-away lands" (Rasmussen 2004, 128). When our market economy knocks millions overboard, and we dispatch students and NGOs to rescue a few victims we're enacting what Inuit leader Sheila Watt-Cloutier calls "the rescuer phenomena" (NETF1992, 12). Environmentalist Wolfgang Sachs gives this pithy analysis:

> "Conventional development thinking…define(s) equity as a problem of the poor. Facing the gap that separates the rich from the poor, developmentalists perceive this gap in the first place as a deficit of the powerless and not as a fault of the powerful…They launch themselves into raising the living standards of the poor towards the level of the rich….[D]evelopmentalists work towards lifting the bottom, rather than lowering the top…However, with the emergence of biophysical limits to growth…justice is about changing the rich and not about changing the poor…Given that the Northern consumer class occupies the environmental space to an excessive extent, a systematic retreat from using other people's land and share of the global commons, like the atmosphere and oceans, is the most important step to take in the spirit of global responsibility." (Sachs 1999, 173).

If we, the richest 20 percent of humanity are gobbling up 80 percent of the world's resources, leaving 80 percent of humanity to try to get by on the leftovers, then the world doesn't suffer from a poverty problem, it suffers from a wealth problem (Wackernagel and Rees 1996, 102; Loy 2003, 62; Sachs 1999, 86-7, 170-4).

Already, half of all bird species are gone, three-quarters of butterfly species are extinct, and almost one-third of all plant species are extinct—all in the past few decades (Schindler et al 2004). Scientists regularly compare industrialized humanity's effect to that of a meteor hitting

the planet. Does the earth groan every time another First World baby is born? asks novelist John Nichols:

> [B]ecause every time a North American child is born, that child is going to put a demand on the earth's resources that, in its lifetime, would take 5000 Bolivians to meet, or 10,000 Bangladeshis to meet. … So the most serious threat to the physical survival of the planet is when a North American child is born. …It's not a billion Chinese who threaten it, or 800 million Indian people who threaten it… it's not the third world countries that threaten its survival, …(it's) America and Western Europe. (Loeffler 1989, 63-64)

I think you can actually take this to be good news: If you were a doctor facing an epidemic, wouldn't you search for the cause? And if the devastation was spread all over the world, but the causes were in just a few countries—wouldn't that be better than the other way around? We are in the *best position to change things*, because most of the levers of power are here. Those who drive the global economic system—those people are us—the global middle class "[whose] size roughly equals that 8 percent of the world population which owns an automobile" (Sachs 1999, 74). We don't have to change 6 billion minds; we just have to change 8 percent.

Let me go further and suggest, as others have, that the most important place to focus this effort is on our university campuses (Bowers 1995, 1997). It is incumbent upon Euro-American universities to study what we've done to ourselves and the world—how dramatic and unprecedented our way of life is.[6]

> If you're going to be an anthropology teacher you should be also able to teach your students the dynamics of their own culture, at least in the critical area of understanding imperialism and capitalism. If you can't communicate that to your students, then you've got no business talking to them about the Xingu [of Brazil]. (Snyder 1977, 23)

There is no need to go "long-distance" to deal with the *source* of the problem. Religious leader and activist A.J. Muste summed it up well back in 1928: "War is not an accident. It is the logical outcome of a certain way of life. If we want to attack war, we have to attack that way of life… So long as we are not dealing honestly and adequately with this *ninety percent of our problem*, there is something ludicrous, and perhaps hypocritical, about our concern over the ten percent of violence employed by the rebels against oppression" (Hentoff 1967, 180).

Eric Reeves did this. He's an English professor at a University in Massachusetts. He discovered that Talisman Resources, a Canadian company, was exploiting destruction in the Sudan to access that country's oil reserves. Reeves took 6 months off work, learned everything

[6] Karl Polanyi and his colleagues were in the process of establishing such studies at Columbia University in the 1950s when Joseph McCarthy drove Polanyi out of America and up to York University in Canada. The fledgling discipline, economic anthropology, more or less died out, but maybe now is a good time for its rebirth. See Laura Nader, "The Phantom Factor: Impact of the Cold War on Anthropology." Pp. 117-139 in *The Cold War and the University* edited by Noam Chomsky and Howard Zinn. New York: The New Press.

he could about the issue and then became a leader in the divestment movement, successfully convincing several large U.S. public pension funds to pull their money out of Talisman (Canadian pension funds wouldn't budge). Eventually pressure from church groups and people like Reeves forced Talisman to flee the Sudan (Drohan 2003, 279-81, 264). Success stories like this need to become university curricula.

We need brave teachers and students to study our own obese GDP and tell us how to trim our economic waistline. Our way of life causes most of the worlds' suffering; so we should fix it. It's the right thing to do. We also need to learn how to bring back trains, encourage bicycling, and divorce our cars—so we can be less dependent on fossil fuels and put less stress on other cultures and the ecosystem.

> The last eighty years or so has been like an explosion. Several billion barrels of oil have been burned up. The rate of population growth, resource extraction, destruction of species, is unparalleled. We live in a totally anomalous time. It's actually quite impossible to make generalizations about history, the past or the future, human nature, or anything else, on the basis of our present experience. It stands outside the mainstream. It's an anomaly. People say, 'We've got to be realistic, we have to talk about the way things are.' But the way things are for now aren't real. It's *a temporary situation*. (Snyder 1980, 112-5)

2.8 A TOTALLY ANOMALOUS TIME, A TEMPORARY SITUATION

In Nunavut, the sea ice is like a highway, everyone waits for freeze-up before they can start to travel widely. But now you hear more and more stories of hunters falling thru the ice on routes that they've been using for decades—suddenly the ice is too thin to cross. When I first moved north in 1991, we noticed that the ice froze over Frobisher Bay on October 14; when I visited at the beginning of December 2006, the bay still hadn't frozen over. In the Arctic, climate change is undeniable and obvious. In the southern Canada, farmer Geoff Heinricks is convinced that Mother Nature is about to call in our debt to the ecosystem and that the industrial world's cozy but wasteful free ride will very soon come to an end. His solution for southerners?—Buy a Farm! Here's an excerpt from his appeal to Canadians published this past summer:

> We are deep in the shit. Only a fool will dispute this.
> …The few elevating rocks we're unconsciously gripping with our toes are about to slip out forever. We are set to become the poor, the dispossessed, the homeless and the hungry. And it will happen so swiftly the anger and instability are going to be frightening in scope. It may unleash political and social horrors we don't believe North Americans are remotely capable of.
> Social violence. Fascism. Slavery.
> It's dirt simple. Gandhi warned us. In forgetting how to dig the earth and tend the soil we have lost ourselves.
> It's unsettling to write paragraphs like that, and maybe it's eye-glazing to read them ... however, pay attention to your own instinct. Remember the ice storm of 1998, the northeastern blackout a few years back, or Hurricane Katrina? Do you recall how much money we all burned through in our gas tanks last year?....

> When my wife and I fled Toronto 12 years ago, it wasn't because of this. I could sort of see where things *might* be heading, but didn't believe we were stupid enough to let it go that far. …[Now] we have a small 40-acre farm, free and clear of mortgage…. It's not much, but if the crops in California or Florida or Mexico wither or are washed away, or become contaminated and are recalled, or double or triple in price due to fuel expense, we can feed ourselves and a handful of other families. We can sell or trade for what we need. We can warm ourselves with wood. And we can band together with neighbours and help each other. Not much, like I said, but apart from the last two or three generations of North American culture, it's the story of most of the world. Our last few generations have been the profound exception—the reasons we have forgotten ourselves.

Joanna Macy has also been talking about the looming ecological and social disaster facing the developed world. Macy believes that "it's too late to turn around the collapse of the industrial growth society" (Boesing and Moon 2006). Therefore, she says there are three things that we should focus on:

(1) engage in "*holding actions* to slow down the destruction being brought by the industrial growth society"; and save what "species, ecosystems and lives" we still can;
(2) create *alternative structures* and alternative ways of doing things"—tools that will serve life: "new ways of holding land, new ways of growing food, new ways of distributing food, new forms of energy, new forms of schooling, healing, alternative currencies"; and
(3) encourage "*a shift in consciousness*": new ways—spiritual, cognitive, scientific—of understanding reality, "new ways of seeing our relationship with ourselves, each other, and the living earth" (Boesing and Moon 2006).

There's a consensus building that things are going to take a turn for the worse, and that we should prepare, as Macy says "to live in a severely degraded world" (Boesing and Moon 2006, Monbiot 2006, McKibben 2007, Hawken 2007). But if we are not convinced by the catastrophe scenarios, perhaps we should at least ask—whether the sky falls or not—are there any practices and ideas that would be good for us to consider because they'd be beneficial for us either way? It makes sense for us to prepare for dramatic changes, but let's prepare in ways that help us build more enriched communities and environments. "I think the earth and some humans will survive," says Macy, "So, let's look at how we can serve the generations coming after us, to save what we can, and to do it with joyous gratitude that we have the opportunity" (Boesing and Moon 2006). "Care for the environment is like *noblesse oblige*," says Gary Snyder. "You don't do it because it has to be done. You do it because it's beautiful" (Carolan 1996).

So let's turn our attention to the Gift—the gift of the planet, the land, the rain, and each other; and the gift of time and resources to anticipate, plan and prepare. And let's ask: amidst environmental degradation and monetized scarcity, how do we recover and encourage our feeling for abundance, our awareness of the boundless, our appreciation of the priceless?

PART TWO: THE PRICELESS

3.0 MULTI–GENERATIONAL PROXIMITY: ELDERS, WISDOM, AND STORIES

Ask most Euro-Canadians if they live in the same neighbourhood as their parents or grandparents, and most will say no. Euro-Canadians move on average once every 6 years, usually leaving our older relatives behind (Berlin 1997, 20). Multi–generational proximity is almost non-existent for us.

Contrast this with Inuit communities, where it is common for 3–4 generations to live within a few blocks of each other; and where a vital part of family life is going "out on the land" hunting, fishing, and berry-picking together. There is a lot of intergenerational contact, easily facilitated by the rhythms of life on the land and the common use of Inuktitut—the healthiest Aboriginal language in Canada. "My mother always said that the best therapy is to be out on the land," says Tommy Akulukjuk, "to clear your mind and think positively about things. To be out on the land with your family is to let civilization's burden of trying to make a living go out of your body—to put it simply—to be free" (Akulukjuk and Rasmussen 2007).

The reason to emphasize intergenerational contact is a practical one: we need to know what the smart people know. Farmer Geoff Hendricks urges folks to get involved in farming—but only if there are some wise neighbours nearby to help you learn about the weather and the land. In Eric Brende's story of living and farming with zero watts the lesson that resounds is how he relied on the farming intelligence of his quasi-Mennonite neighbours to help him survive (Brende 2004). It's apparent if you spend any time off the grid and away from the city that the one thing that humanity relies on when fossil fuels and electricity aren't around is intelligence. Cheap fossil fuels and electricity give us big leeway to be stupid. But they're running out; and we can't afford to be stupid any more.

The type of wisdom we'll need is packed into the old-style containers called elders. Wisdom sits in places, as Keith Basso once wrote (1996). Wisdom is not ethereal and utopian like electricity, we can't send it down wires—wisdom always inhabits particular people and particular circumstances (though they illumine universal truths). It is the shared wisdom of a community that tells us what medicinal plants are nearby and how to use them correctly; or when and what to plant and when and how to harvest.

James Hillman once said that "nature dies because culture dies"—but maybe it's the reverse that should be our guiding light: *Nature thrives when culture thrives* (Hillman 1992, 238). If we resuscitate face-to-face societies wherein we are responsible for and celebrate each other, then we will respond to and care for the land. And we will recover our ability to share stories. In the words of Anishnawbe elder Al Hunter:

> What has sustained Indigenous people all these centuries? Language. Music. Stories. That's what has sustained us. It has not been NGOs. It has not been organizations. (IIM 1992, 213)

Elders' wisdom is passed on through mentoring and the oral tradition and involves "interpersonal accountability that we do not find in print-based communication", "it encodes the intergenerational experience of living in one place over many generations" (Bowers 2004, 146,

168). When the Canadian government first informed the Gitksan people in British Columbia that—in its opinion—the government owned their land, the Gitksan replied by asking: "If this is your land, where are your stories?" (Chamberlain 2003, 1).

3.1 BECOMING INDIGENOUS

You cannot know who you are until you know where you are. So said Wendell Berry. So if we want to lessen the grip that price has on us and find out who we are, we'll need to inhabit this place. "Stay Put," as Gary Snyder admonished environmentalists 30 years ago, "Dig In" (Snyder 1974, 101)[7]. Inhabiting this place is how we will learn and care about our non-human and human kin. How do we stay put? And what makes a people indigenous?

Inuit are indigenous; they know their land, their kinship ties, their long oral history, their associations with the animals, the weather, the place. The difference between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples is how we relate to this place. Here's a definition to try out:

> *An Indigenous People are those who believe that they belong to a place;*
> *a Non-Indigenous People are those who believe that places belong to them.*

Can we "dig in" and belong to this place? Frankly, this will be a difficult task for us. Our schooling and economy train us *not* to stay put, not to have trust in each other, *not* to cooperate, *not* to share; but in the 1970's North American young people did band together to try to swim upstream against these forces. In 1971 there were over 3000 communes in the USA, home to over a million people trying to re-grow the ability to live socially. There were "more rural communes established between 1965-70 than in all American history" (Hunt 1999, 8). Eventually market forces re-divided and re-atomized folks, and eroded trust and cooperation. But we shouldn't forget that young Americans and Canadians made the attempt, and we can try again.

> "I have said that people should try to become "paysan, paisanos, peons" in the meaning—people of the land—people of the place. But note: there's no limit to how big the place can be. The size of the place that one becomes a member of is limited only by the size of one's heart….Yet one has to start where one is and become nature-literate to the scale of the home place. With home-based knowledge, it is then within our power to get a glimpse of the whole planet as home." (Snyder 2007, 98)

3.2 FOOD

The other arena to affect a turnaround is with our food (although as we've just seen—food can't be separated from land, people, plants, and animals). Eating locally provokes awareness of our ecosystem's patterns and ability to provide. It also opens the door to more

[7] By the way, "No one ever said that the old bioregional slogan "don't move" means you can't go on trips…Even when on a trip, you are always clear as to where you came from… [B]ioregional practice…calls for us to be ecologically and culturally cosmopolitan." Gary Snyder, p.98 *Back on the Fire: Essays* (2007) Shoemaker & Hoard: Emeryville, CA.

convivial communities: “shoppers have “ten times as many conversations at farmers markets as they do at supermarkets” (McKibben 2007, 105).

“The average forkful of dinner travels 1,500 miles to reach your lips” says Bill McKibben (2003, 47). Fossil fuels, food, and self-reliance are all captured in that equation. “If every U.S. citizen ate just one meal a week composed of locally and organically raised meats and produce, we would reduce our country’s oil consumption by over 1.1 million barrels of oil every week” (Hopp 2007). What are other ways to start getting our food closer to home and getting to know a bit more about what will grow in our own soils and weather? We can put in our own gardens, or connect with Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), or support the buy-local movement.

> Todd Murphy opened up a diner about a year ago…Ham and eggs, all-day breakfast, bottomless cup of coffee… But the Farmer’s Diner is maybe the most local joint in the whole United States—something like 80 percent of the food it serves was raised within sixty miles of the kitchen. …[M]aybe ‘local’ really is what comes next…people wanting to shorten their supply lines. (McKibben 2003, 47)

Such attention to local food production raises important questions about community and our definitions of wealth and poverty. “Poverty breeds community” says activist Ann Damude, “wealth breeds isolation.” When you’ve got less money you share more things and borrow more things—you need your neighbours to rely on. But growing more of your own food, and playing more of your own music (rather than store-buying stuff) is not just about saving money— “it’s also a better way to live”, says Damude. “Support handicrafts, gardening, home skills, mid-wifery, herbs—all the things that can make us independent, beautiful and whole” says Gary Snyder. “Simplicity is light, carefree, neat and loving—not a self-punishing ascetic trip” (Snyder 1974, 98).

Here’s farmer Geoff Heinricks “to do” list for those of us who want to prepare for an uncertain future by planting some roots—socially or vegetably:

1. Live in a walkable city neighbourhood that can be supplied reliably from the rural hinterland (if any remains non-suburbanized) and keep your fingers crossed. A city with good rail transport internally and to the hinterland or other cities is best. A variation on this would be to stay put, and join a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) operation as a shareholder.
2. Move to a good, walkable small city or town—which likely will be more readily supplied from the immediate rural hinterland. Proximity to water or rail transport will improve the quality of life noticeably. Joining a CSA is also a good idea.
3. Purchase a small farm. Learn to farm: mixed, subsistence, specialized, CSA—there are a number of options. We are now two or three generations removed from traditional family farming, but a few still know how to farm well and how things were effectively done before oil. Try to utilize this small knowledge base before it disappears; most rural communities have wise and generous farm people who will teach those willing to learn.
4. Learn a skill. Learn four. Stonemasonry, bricklaying, cooperage, welding, masonry fireplaces, Rumford fireplaces, basket weaving, preserving, small

> electrics, metalsmithing, teamstering, hunting, fishing, building ice houses—and just general scavenging. If you are in medical school, select general practice—you'll have your pick of communities to settle in. (Heinricks 2007)

We are an uprooted cluster of individuals, and we need to come home. But we cannot do it by evicting the Host Peoples who were already here. We cannot do it by price-tagging every tree, poem, river or helping hand. We *can* do it by inviting our neighbours over for tea, or by planting a plum tree knowing our children will be around in 10 years to pick the first fruit. We can do it by letting the land call us home.

> Social change takes time. Communities are built on the practice of patience and imagination—the belief that we are here for the duration and will take care of our relations in times of both drought and abundance. These are the blood and flesh gestures of commitment… each time we knock on our neighbours' doors, each time we sit down together and share a meal. In our increasingly fundamentalist country, we have to remember what is fundamental: *gravity*—what draws us to a place and keeps us there, like love, like kinship. (Williams 2004)

3.3 HOW DO WE KEEP GOING?

Several years ago, I went down to Berea, Kentucky to a small Christian College, to meet Ivan Illich. Illich gave a public talk to maybe 200 students and activists from the area. Illich had walked down from the stage, refusing to use the microphones, preferring instead to speak with his unamplified voice. He stood and spoke from the first row of seats in the auditorium. We all moved in closer to hear him. Near the end of the talk there was a time for questions, and an African-American woman rose to ask him a question. "Given the difficulty of improving things in society, and given how often there is frustration and failure, how do we keep from despair? How do we keep going?" she asked.

Illich didn't have a pat answer. There was a long pause while he considered her question. We all waited quietly. Then Illich motioned to Lee Hoinecki, his best friend, who was sitting in the audience; he motioned to Lee to come up. Lee stood next to Ivan, and Illich put his arm around his shoulders. Ivan smiled at the woman who had asked the question, and said one word: "Friendship."

3.4 EXPANDING THE HEART

How can we increase friendliness? I think this is very important for the "shift in consciousness" that Joanna Macy was talking about. How can we increase our feeling of kinship with all phenomena? The word for "friend" in Sanskrit is *mitra*; it is the root of the word *maitri* (*metta* in Pali) which can be translated as "friendliness" or "loving-kindness." *Metta* (friendliness), *karuna* (compassion), *mudita* (shared joy), and *upekkha* (serenity) are four ancient meditations known as the *Brahma Viharas* or "Divine

Abidings" in Buddhism.[8] Anyone can do these practices; they open the heart and encourage us to notice and appreciate our interconnectedness with nature. They bring us closer to experiencing "the hidden ground of Love" as Merton called it (Merton 1985, 115). "It's a problem of love," says Gary Snyder, "not the humanistic love of the West—but love that extends to animals, rocks, dirt, all of it. Without this love, we can end, even *without* war, with an uninhabitable place" (Halper 1991, 247). "Extensive" people with a habit of commitment and care for others and a "universalistic" orientation are more likely to help others than those with a "constricted" or detached rigidly autonomous outlook (Oliner and Oliner 1988, 160-178, 188, 198, 257-8).

Here is the main practice: first remember an experience of friendliness—perhaps by recalling an interaction with a person or a pet or an experience in nature. Once you have strongly contacted that emotion—then imagine permeating your body with that feeling—you can be specific—imagine the 208 bones of your body permeated with friendliness and warmth, then the organs and muscles, your circulation and breathing, the brain and nerves and the senses.

Next extend this feeling of warmth, or kind-heartedness out from your body, as near or as far as feels natural and comfortable; imagine that it radiates out in ten directions (the four primary directions—front, right, behind, left—and then the diagonals in between, and then below and above). Imagine any plants or animals or people or insects or fish—whatever comes to your mind—imagine these beings permeated with friendliness. This is the main body of the practice and you can spend as much or as little time as you like on it. You conclude by sharing the merit of this practice with any and all beings. That's it.

You can also spontaneously practice this while walking—mentally sharing a feeling of friendliness with any plants or animals you notice on the path; or if you are swimming in the sea or a lake, sharing a feeling of warmth and friendliness with any fish you meet or can imagine.

You can do this work to increase the loving-kindness in the world: to increase your awareness of it and to increase your confidence in kindness as illimitable. This is one important point that this practice brings home: love can be boundless, hatred cannot. You can imagine sharing loving kindness in all directions for all beings, but hatred is limited—hate requires a specific object to focus on. I've found these practices are really helpful in training the mind away from its tendency to focus on negatives.

Cultivating an open heart is also part of increasing our altruistic attitudes, increasing our ability and inclination to help others. *Karuna*, the Sanskrit word for compassion actually comes from the root *karoti*—"to do." We have to be able to do things to help—not merely think nice thoughts.[9] And *mudita*—"appreciative joy"—actually has no adequate translation (yet) in English. Schopenhauer once said that if there was an emotion that was the twin of empathy that arose when we saw the joy of others—

---

[8] For more on these practices, see Chapter 9 of the *Path of Purification* (Visuddhimagga) by Nanamoli Bhikkhu and Buddhaghosa (1979, Boston: Wisdom Publishing), *Altruism*, by Karma Sonam Senge (1986, Kinmount: Bodhi Publishing), or *Coming Back to Life: Practices to Reconnect Our Lives, Our World*, by Joanna Macy and Molly Young Brown. (1998, Gabriola Is. BC: New Society Publishers).

[9] A.T. Ariyaratne and friends have constructed the entire Sarvodaya social and ecological justice movement in Sri Lanka around the practice of these four Divine Abidings: metta, karuna, mudita, and upekkha. See A.T. Ariyaratne, Collected Works (Volumes 1-3) (1985, Sri Lanka: Sarvodaya Shramadana).

then that emotion would be an "emotion of angels." That's mudita. Rejoicing in the joys and successes of others.

An exercise you can do to develop *mudita* is to go through the *Larousse Encyclopaedia of Animals*, one page at a time, and share friendliness with each creature—wishing that each one "be well and happy"—moving up from single cell organisms up to Zebras. This develops our "appreciative joy" for life in all its beautiful complexity. Meditation teacher George Dawson used to say that this type of training helps a person develop "the equanimity of love" (Rinpoche 1980, 13).

Contemplations like these belong to all of us, they are not limited to religious people. *Re-ligio*—re-ligament—means to re-attach, and what these meditations bring home is that we have never been detached from the universe to start with. William Breyfogle, expressed this most practically and beautifully:

> Chlorophyll is 'the green stuff in leaves.' And biochemists know that if you take from a molecule of chlorophyll one atom of magnesium and put in its place one atom of iron, you get the formula for the haemoglobin in animal blood….The haemoglobin in our blood is first cousin to the chlorophyll in a maple tree. We live on the same earth, under the same sun….In the woods we are fellow citizens with the fox and the ruffed grouse, trailing arbutus and wild grape. We have sought out many inventions, but this is where we belong. This was our first home on earth, and when the metaphysicians have exhausted themselves in arranging a more suitable future for us, this will still be our last, long home. (Breyfogle, 1961, 25, 174).

Acknowledgements

The ideas in this essay originate from discussions with the Venerable Sonam Senge, Tommy Akulukjuk, Ian McIntosh, Ann Damude, David Joanasie, Bob and Mary Steele, Chet Bowers, Ivan Illich, Graeme Macqueen, Paul Crowley, Brian McLeod, Kowesa Etitiq, Frank Tester, Zebedee Nungak, Joanasie Akumalik, Morley Hanson, Heeson Bai, Rebecca Martusewicz, Stephen Dale, Jessica Guillou, John Bainbridge, Robert Vachon, Annie Quirke, Grant Rasmussen and George and Dayle Rasmussen. The direction of this essay is inspired by the activism of Clare Culhane, Phil Berrigan, and the Venerable Namgyal Rinpoche. An earlier version of this paper was published in *InterCultureJournal* # 147, October 2004 (Montreal:IIM). The author can be reached at www.lionsroar.ca, or dharma_eh@yahoo.ca.

References

Akulukjuk, Tommy and Rasmussen, Derek. 2007 forthcoming. “My Father was told to talk to the environment first before anything else**:** Arctic Environmental Education in the Language of the Land.” In Marcia McKenzie, Heesoon Bai, Paul Hart, & Bob Jickling (Eds.) *Fields of Green: Re-storying Education* (forthcoming: UBC Press: Vancouver 2007).

Alexander, Bruce. 2001. “Roots of Addiction in a Free Market Society.” *Canadian Centre For Policy Alternatives*. April 2001.

Aries, Philippe. 1981 *The Hour of Our Death.* London: Penguin.

Bakan, Joel. 2004. *The Corporation*, Toronto: Viking

Basso, Keith H. 1996. *Wisdom Sits in Places*. Albuquerque: University Of New Mexico Press.

Berlin, Susan. 1997. *Ways We Live*, Gabriola Island, B.C.: New Society Publishers.

Berrigan, Philip, Ssj. 1973. *Widen the Prison Gates*, New York: Touchstone

Boesing, Martha and Moon, Susan. 2006. “Our Long Journey Together: An Interview with Joanna Macy.” *Turning Wheel: Newsletter of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship*. Fall/Winter 2006. Accessed from www.joannamacy.net

Bowers, C.A. 1995. *Educating for an Ecologically Sustainable Culture: Rethinking Moral Education, Creativity, Intelligence, and Other Modern Orthodoxies.* Albany: SUNY

Bowers, C.A 1997. *The Culture of Denial: Why the Environmental Movement Needs a Strategy for Reforming Universities and Public Schools.* Albany: SUNY

Bowers, C.A and Apffel Marglin, Frederique (Editors). 2004. *Rethinking Friere: Globalization and the Environment.* New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum..

Brende, Eric. 2004. *Better Off: Flipping the Switch on Technology (Two People, One Year, Zero Watts).* New York: Harper Collins.

Breyfogle, William. 1961. *Speak to the Earth.* New York: Macmillan.

Buchan, James.1997. *Frozen Desire, the Meaning of Money*, New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Caplow, Florence. 2007. “Revolutionary Dana.” *Turning Wheel: The Journal of Socially Engaged Buddhism*. Fall/Winter 2007.

Carolan, Trevor. 1996. “The Wild Mind of Gary Snyder.” *Shambhala Sun*. May 1996.

Cayley, David.1992. *Ivan Illich in Conversation*, Concord, Ontario: Anansi Press.

CBC Dec 13, 1976. *Front Page Challenge*. http://archives.cbc.ca/IDC-1-73-1238-6853/politics_economy/aboriginal_treaty_rights/

Chamberlain, J, Edward. 2003. *If This is Your Land, Where Are Your Stories?* Toronto: Knopf.

Chomsky, Noam. 2002. *Understanding Power*, New York: New Press.

Daly, Herman, and John Cobb. 1994. *For The Common Good*, Boston: Beacon.

Davis, Wade. 2002. “The Ticking Bomb", *Globe and Mail*, July 6, 2002: A11

Drohan, Madelaine. 2003. *Making a Killing*, Random House, Toronto.

Jackson, Wes. 1994. *Becoming Native to This Place* , Washington: Counterpoint.

Fisher, Andy. 2002. *Radical Ecopsychology*, New York: Suny Press.

Foner, Philip S., Ed. 1967. *Helen Keller: Her Socialist Years*, New York: International Pub.

Halevy, Elie. 1960. *The Growth of Philosophic Radicalism*, Boston: Beacon Press.

Halper, Jon. 1991. *Gary Snyder: Dimensions of a Life*. San Francisco: Sierrra Club Books

Hartmann, Thom. 1998. *The Last Hours Of Ancient Sunlight*, New York: Three Rivers Press.

Hawken, Paul. 2007. *Blessed Unrest.* New York: Penguin.

Heilbroner, Robert. 1980. *The Making of Economic Society*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Heinricks, Geoff. 2007. “Back to the land: Why moving to the country will save us all.” *This Magazine*. May-June 2007. Accessed from: www.thismagazine.ca/issues/2007/05/backtotheland.php

Hentoff, Nat. 1967. *The Essays of A.J.Muste* Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co

Hillman, James, and Ventura, Michael. 1992. *We've Had a Hundred Years of Psychotherapy and the World's Getting Worse*. New York: Harper Collins.

Hopp, Steven L. 2007. Comments from *Animal Vegetable Miracle* website. www.animalvegetablemiracle.com/index.html

Hunt, Andrew. 1999. “When Did the 60’s Happen? Searching For New Directions.” *Journal of Social History*, Fall 1999.

Illich, Ivan et al. 1977. *Disabling Professions.* New York: Marion Boyars.

Illich, Ivan. 1982. *Gender.* New York: Random House.
IIIM. 1992. *Living with the Earth: Conference Proceedinigs.* Montreal, Quebec: Intercultural Institute Of Montreal.
IWGIA. 1992. The Kari-Oca Declaration" (Section 71), *Newsletter of the International Working Group on Indigenous Affairs*, No. 4.
Keating, Michael. 1997. *Canada and the State of the Planet*. Toronto: Oxford University Press.
Kohr, Leopold. 1957. *The Breakdown of Nations,* London: Routledge And Kegan Paul.
Kohr, Leopold 1977. *The Overdeveloped Nations: The Diseconomies of Scale*. New York: Schocken,
Kloppenburg Jr, Jack. 1991. "No Hunting! Biodiversity, Indigenous Rights and Scientific Poaching", *Cultural Survival Quarterly* 15, No. 3.
Kolko, Gabriel. 1984. *Main Currentsin Modern American History*. New York: Pantheon.
Kuttner, Robert. 1997. *Everything for Sale: The Virtues and Limits of Markets,* New York: Knopf.
Labarre, Weston. 1954. *The Human Animal*. University of Chicago Press.
Lal, Vinay. 2002. *Empire of Knowledge*, London: Pluto Press.
Loy, David. 1992. "Money and the Meaning of Life" in Whitmyer, Claude F. (ed.) *Mindfulness and Meaningful Work : Explorations in Right Livelihood* Albany, CA: Parallax Press
Loy, David. 2002. *A Buddhist History of The West: Studies in Lack.* New York: SUNY Press.
Loy, David. 2003. *The Great Awakening: A Buddhist Social Theory.* Boston: Wisdom.
Latouche, Serge. 1997. "Standard Of Living." Pp. 250-263 in *The Development Dictionary* edited by Wolfgang Sachs. London: Zed Press
Loeffler, Jack. 1989. *Headed Upstream: Interviews With Iconoclasts.* Tucson: Harbinger House.

McKibben, Bill. 2003. "Small World: Why One Small Town Stays Unplugged" *Harpers*, Dec.
McKibben, Bill. 1995. *Hope, Human and Wild: True Stories of Living Lightly on the Earth.* Saint Paul, Minn: Hungry Mind Press.
McKibben, Bill. 2007. *Deep Economy.* New York: Henry Holt.
McQuaig, Linda. 2001. *All You Can Eat: Greed, Lust and the New Capitalism*. Toronto: Penguin.
Macpherson, C.B. 1964. *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Meiksins Wood, Ellen. 1999. *The Origin of Capitalism*. New York: Monthly Review Press.
Merton, Thomas. 1965. "Rain and the Rhinoceros" *Raids on the Unspeakable.* New York: New Directions.
Merton, Thomas. 1965. *The Hidden Ground of Love: The Letters of Thomas Merton on Religious Experience and Social Concerns*. New York: Farrar Strauss Giroux.
Monbiot, George. 2007. *Heat: How to Stop the Planet from Burning*. Toronto: Anchor.
Mosquin, Ted. 1994. "Thinking, Talking, Acting for Biodiversity," *Borealis*, Vol. 5: 11
Nabhan, Gary. 1997. *Cultures of Habitat.* Counterpoint: Washington.
Nadasdy, Paul. 2003. *Hunters and Bureaucrats.* Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.
Nader, Laura. 1997. "The Phantom Factor: Impact of the Cold War on Anthropology." Pp. 117-139 in *The Cold War and the University* edited by Noam Chomsky and Howard Zinn. New York: The New Press.
Needleman, J. 1991. *Money and the Meaning of Life.* New York: Doubleday.
Nunavik Educational Task Force (NETF). 1992. *Silaturnit.* Lachine Que.: Makivik Corporation.
Oliner, Samuel P, and Oliner, Pearl. 1988. *The Altruistic Personality: Rescuers of Jews in Nazi Europe (What Led Ordinary Men and Women to Risk Their Lives on Behalf of Others?).* New York: The Free Press.
Panikkar, Raimon. 1996. "A Nonary of Priorities." *Interculture. No. 130: 49-58*; Montreal: Intercultural Institute of Montreal.
Polanyi, Karl. 1957. *The Great Transformation*, Boston: Beacon Press.
Rasmussen, Derek. 2000. "Dissolving Inuit Society Through Education and Money: The Myth of Educating Inuit Out of 'Primitive Childhood' and into Economic Adulthood." *Interculture.* No. 139, October; Montreal: Intercultural Institute of Montreal.
Rasmussen, Derek. 2000. "Our Life Out of Balance: The Rise of Literacy and the Demise of Pattern Languages." *Encounter: Education For Meaning and Social Justice*, Vol. 13: 13-21.
Rasmussen, Derek. 2004. "Cease To Do Evil, Then Learn To Do Good: A Pedagogy for the Oppressor" Pp 115-130 in *Rethinking Friere: Globalization and the Environment* edited by C.A. Bowers and Frederique Apffel Marglin., New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum..
Rinpoche, Namgyal (George Dawson) 1980. *The Path of Victory.* Kinmount Bodhi Publishing.
Rogers, Raymond. 1994. *Nature and the Crisis of Modernity*. Montreal: Black Rose Books
Sachs, Wolfgang. Fall 1990. "The Archeology of the Development Idea." *Interculture*, Vol. 23: 22-34
Sachs, Wolfgang, Ed. 1992. *The Development Dictionary*. London: Zed Books.

Sachs, Wolfgang. 1999. *Planet Dialectics: Explorations in environment and Development.* London: Zed Books.
Sahlins, Marshall. 1972. *Stone Age Economics*. Chicago: Aldine Atherton, Inc.
Schindler, David, Karen Kraft Sloan and Rick Smith. 2004. "If We Don't Give a Hoot about Spotted Owls, What Will Move Us?" *Globe and Mail*. March 26: A13.
Senge, Karma Sonam. 1986. *Altruism: Contemplations for the Scientific Age*. Boise: Open Path and Kinmount: Bodhi Publishing.
Sierra Magazine. 2002. "The Hidden Cost of Gas." *Sierra Magazine*, March-April 2002: 15.
Simmel, Georg. 1990. *The Philosophy of Money*. London: Routledge.
Simmel, Georg. 1950. *The Sociology of Georg Simmel.* New York: Free Press.
Shiva, Vandana. 2000. "The World on the Edge." Pp. 87-95 in *Global Capitalism* edited by Will Hutton and Anthony Giddens New York: New Press.
Stannard, David E. 1992. *American Holocaust.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Snyder, Gary. 1977. *The Old Ways.* San Francisco: City Lights.
Snyder, Gary. 1980. *The Real Work.* New York: New Directions.
Snyder, Gary. 1999. *The Gary Snyder Reader.* Counterpoint: Washington, DC.
Snyder, Gary. 2007. *Back on the Fire: Essays.* Shoemaker & Hoard: Emeryville, CA.
Turner, Jack. 1996. *The Abstract Wild*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press.
Utne, Eric. 1992."Editorial (A Conversation with Margaret Mead)," *Utne Reader*, July/August
Wackernagel, Mathias and William Rees. 1996. *Our Ecological Footprint: Reducing Human Impact on the Earth.* Gabriola Island, BC: New Society Press.
Weil, Simone. 1972/1952. *The Need for Roots.* New York: Harper and Row.
Williams, Raymond. 1976. *Keywords.* Glasgow: Fontana.
Williams, Raymond. 1983. *Culture and Society, 1780- 1950 (Revised Edition).* New York: Columbia University Press.
Williams, Raymond. 1997/1980. *Problems in Materialism and Culture*. London: Verso.
Williams, Terry Tempest. 2004. "Engagement" *Orion Magazine*.July/Aug.