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5th Anniversary Issue

# Earth First!

The Radical Environmental Journal  
November-December 2005  
Samhain/Yule

**The Betrayal of the  
Endangered Species Act**

**A Look at EF!  
Then and Now  
with Rod Coronado**

**The Next Hurricane  
with Bill McKibben**

**Monkeywrenching  
Civilization  
with Derrick Jensen**

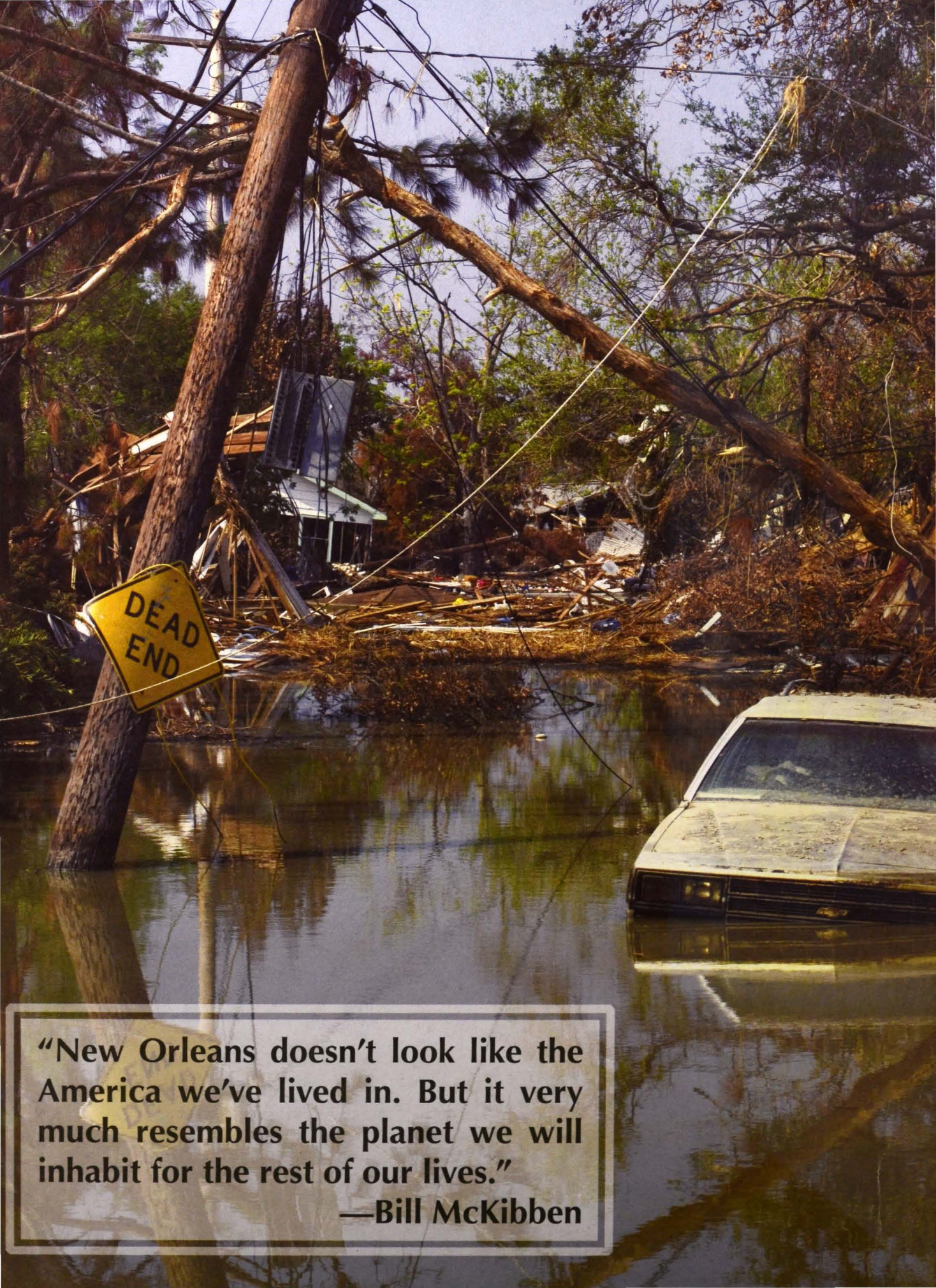
**An EF! View  
from the Border**



\$4.50 US \$7 Canada · Volume 26 #1







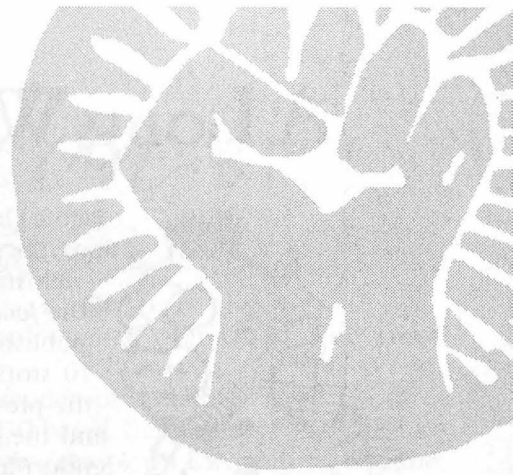
**“New Orleans doesn’t look like the America we’ve lived in. But it very much resembles the planet we will inhabit for the rest of our lives.”**

**—Bill McKibben**



# Earth First!

The Radical Environmental Journal  
November-December 2005 Samhain/Yule



25th Anniversary Issue



*One of many endangered species betrayed by Defenders of Wildlife*

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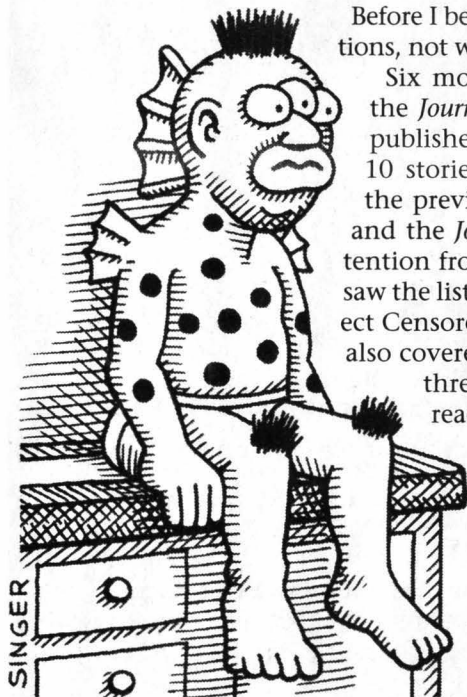
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# A Long Way Yet to Go



Before I begin here, let me say that I believe that actions, not words, are what will protect this world....

Six months ago, we received a phone call at the *Journal* office informing us that a story we published had won an award as one of the top 10 stories censored by the corporate media in the previous year. Thrilled that the work of EF! and the *Journal* would gain more widespread attention from the ensuing publicity, we eventually saw the list of the other top stories selected by Project Censored. And we realized that the *Journal* had also covered several of the topics listed—from the threats of nanotechnology to the expanded reach of the USA PATRIOT Act.

While we were grateful for this particular award for a story on mountaintop removal, the entire affair helped us to remember that so many of the stories we publish every year are vitally important—whether they win an award or not.

I feel the same way about each issue of the *Journal*. While I'm not sure that this issue of the *Journal* is any more of

an accomplishment than the last several issues or even the next, it is with this issue that the *Journal* observes its own milestone. Celebrating the 25th anniversary of the *Journal*, we feel it is appropriate to take a moment to reflect on where the radical environmental movement has been in the last quarter of a century and where it is heading.

"For many, the *EF! Journal* was our first exposure to others who share a vision and commitment to a worldview where natural creation has worth much greater than humans determine. The *EF! Journal* represents the vital role we all play in something much greater than ourselves." With these words, several cohorts and I made a suggestion that the *Journal* should uproot from its home in Eugene, Oregon, and come join us in southern Arizona. At the time, I enthusiastically saw so much potential in the *Journal* and in what our developing collective wanted to contribute to its pages. Five years later, some of that potential has been reached, and I find that I am more humble. Yet I also remain excited by the fact that the *Journal* still has so much more to realize, as does the EF! movement itself.

Despite the fact that those working on the *Journal* have more or less succeeded at consistently putting out a quality publication of interest to direct-action activists—always trying to infuse the magazine with creativity and develop intriguing content—I think it is an under-utilized resource. There are some days where I wonder if people even read the *Journal*. I know Project Censored does, at least, and I know that a lot of new people are always subscribing.

But I want the *Journal* to reach more readers and help build movement momentum. Whether that means taking the next step by getting out to places where people have never seen it before; encouraging EF! groups to be more excited about using the magazine as a recruiting tool, a forum for discussion and a way to inspire action; or reaching all those "former EF!ers" who've disappeared in recent years and drawing them back into the no-compromise environmental movement, there is great potential.

These are things we set out to accomplish when the *Journal* returned to Tucson nearly five years ago. I think we're only just beginning.

—TURTLE

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*Earth First!* is a forum for the no-compromise environmental movement. Responsibility rests with the individual authors and correspondents. The contents do not necessarily represent the viewpoint of this magazine, the Earth First! movement, local Earth First! groups or individual Earth First!ers.

We welcome submissions of articles, letters, poetry and art that put the Earth first, aid in healthy debate shaping the growth of the movement and advance the creation of a world free of speciesism, classism, racism, sexism, violence, exploitation and oppression.

Submission deadlines are the first of every odd-numbered month in the calendar year. Articles should be typed or clearly printed. We encourage submissions via email. Art or photographs are desirable to illustrate articles and essays. Send a SASE if you would like submissions returned. If you want confirmation of receipt of a submission, please request it.

All submissions are edited for length and clarity. If an article is significantly edited, we will make a reasonable effort to contact the author prior to publication.

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# POMBO'S *Extinction* BILL

BROUGHT TO YOU BY DEFENDERS OF WILDLIFE

BY TURTLE

On September 29, the House of Representatives passed a sweeping bill, introduced by California Republican Richard Pombo, that would cripple the Endangered Species Act (ESA). This new legislation would end all future designations of critical habitat, eliminate the more than 150 million acres of existing critical habitat and give all ESA jurisdiction to the extinction-oriented Department of the Interior.

The ESA currently offers protection to more than 1,250 species, yet for an endangered species to survive, the habitat it depends upon must be protected. A key component of the ESA, critical habitat is defined as those areas with the physical and biological features that are essential for a particular species to survive and recover.

While pretending to promote science-based decisions, Pombo's bill pre-approves all destructive projects on private lands unless the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) objects within 180 days. Yet it doesn't give the agency any more money or biologists to rapidly review these projects with, and it allows corporations to submit an inadequate amount of information, making it impossible for FWS to make an informed decision.

Under Pombo's legislation, any time government biologists actually do object to a horrific development, timber sale or mine, the Department of the Interior will have to pay the corporation to obey the law. And not just for the real economic impacts. It will also have to pay for speculative impacts. Want to make lots of money and have a free vacation? Buy 30 acres of endangered species habitat for \$300,000; tell the government that you plan to build 10 homes on it that will net you \$100,000 in profits each; have them tell you that's a very bad idea, you can only build one house. Now you can collect a check for \$900,000, retire, put up a yurt and listen to Dana Lyons CDs for the rest of your life. If you are a logging or mining company, it's even better. Since these companies often will sell their lands for development after trashing them, they can get paid once for not mining it—then get paid again for not developing it.

How did this insane bill pass? How did it even get enough credibility to make it to the House floor for a vote? After all, Pombo has made it his personal mission to kill the ESA for 15 years now. More than 100 anti-ESA bills and riders have been introduced, yet no major ESA bill even made it to the floor until 2005. And while previous bills tried to weaken critical habitat by

filling it with loopholes, none ever tried to do away with it altogether.

What changed? Defenders of Wildlife.

The Washington, DC-based Defenders of Wildlife has a decent history of being strong on ESA politics, and the organization has filed a number of lawsuits to create and protect critical habitat areas. But in 2004, it made the mistake of hiring former FWS Director Jamie Clark as its executive vice president.

Clark quickly turned Defenders of Wildlife into an anti-critical habitat machine, forcing it to resign from the Unified Endangered Species Campaign—a partnership including the Endangered Species Coalition, Sierra Club, Earthjustice, National Wildlife Federation, Natural Resources Defense Council and the Center for Biological Diversity. Clark defied the campaign's strong stance on critical habitat and the successful strategy used by the environmental movement for the past 15 years: complete and aggressive opposition to every Pombo bill.

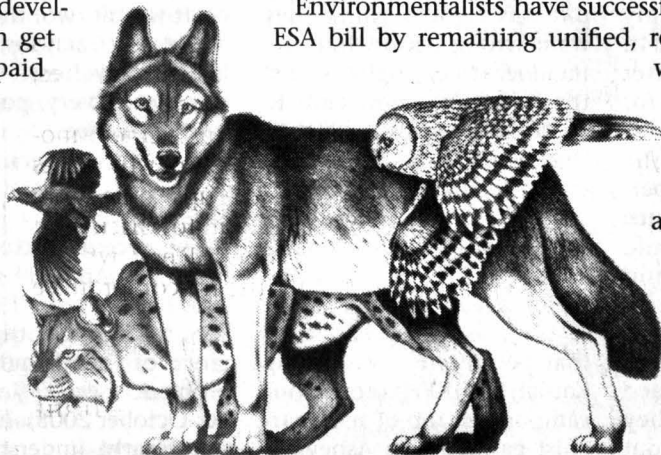
Wanting Defenders to be a player, Clark sat down with Pombo to write an ESA bill and brought him a proposal that had already been rejected by the environmental community—the elimination of all critical habitat. Yes, it was Defenders of Wildlife, not Pombo, that came up with the idea.

But what about all of those press releases and fundraising letters from Defenders that attacked Pombo? Defenders lost control of its own creation and had to attack the legislation—as it simultaneously raised money and obscured its role in the bill's creation.

While Pombo told the media that he was working with reasonable environmentalists, Defenders worked the other side of the aisle as well, lobbying Democrats to develop a weak substitute to the Pombo bill. Oddly, the substitute's position on critical habitat looked strikingly like Pombo's. While the Democrats' bill was certainly "better," it still killed critical habitat, and it did so at the insistence of Defenders of Wildlife and over the objection of most other environmental groups.

Environmentalists have successfully defeated every anti-ESA bill by remaining unified, refusing any engagement

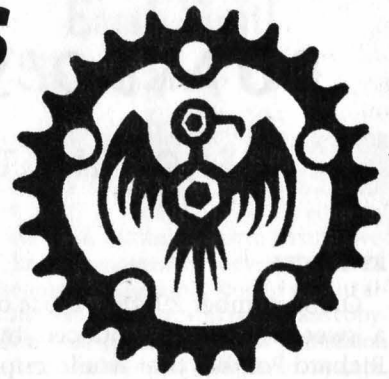
with Pombo and aggressively attacking every bill. With immense naiveté and ego, Defenders tried to make a deal with the devil. Its only accomplishment was to give Pombo credibility. In the end, Defenders got burned for its stupidity. So did the ESA.





# dear shit for brains

Please keep your letters to the editors to 300 words or less



artwork by Bird & Seth Tobocman

Dear SFB,

In the last issue, I was moved by Asante's positive piece about the RRR, then the death announcements. Many powerful activists have died in recent years, including Bari, Beneville, Haun, Burlew, Seth and others. We should never forget them, and should remind new EF'ers about their fire and sacrifice. Stay healthy and safe as we fight for the wild.

By the way, I'm with John Johnson on "The Bullshit That Must End" argument. The *EF!* is more important now than ever.

—D.R. PATTERSON

Dear Editors,

I must politely disagree with Paul Watson regarding the reasons he gave for the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society (SSCS) firing Dr. Jerry Vlasak from the Board of Directors (see *EF!* September-October 2005). The fact is, the controversy regarding Jerry Vlasak's personal statement to the press (one that Jerry made clear was *not* shared by SSCS) simply kept the media interested in covering the seal hunt after the slaughter had ended for the year.

Jerry Vlasak stated to the press that, in his own "personal opinion," violence against the seal killers would be morally justifiable, and he would be in support of that if it were to happen. As soon as this was quoted in the media, SSCS phoned Jerry and told him that they had received a call(s) from

a donor who was also a scientific advisor, who threatened to pull out of SSCS if Jerry did not resign. Then SSCS stated to Jerry their fear of possibly not being allowed to dock their boat in Bermuda if Jerry didn't resign. But Jerry refused to resign, believing that he had done nothing wrong.

Twenty minutes after refusing to resign from the Board, Jerry was told via cell phone that he had been fired.

Jerry enjoyed very much his time with SSCS. He volunteered for over two years helping them with office and managerial issues, and went aboard the ship as often as he could. He took a punch by a seal killer and was arrested protecting film footage exposing the seal slaughter, then ably represented himself and the other activists arrested on the ice in Prince Edward court.

Jerry still considers Paul a friend, and understands that Paul Watson and the Board did what they felt was right. Time will tell if what they did was right; I think they were wrong. Meanwhile, remember it's the fight against the seal killers who club to death baby seals for profit that should be occupying our thoughts and actions.

—PAMELYN FERDIN

Dear SFB,

Hey, I read in the last issue of the *Journal* the article by that person who was saying Katúah EF! (KEF!) moved our campout on top of ze's anarchist gathering in Asheville.

FYI, Solstice and Equinox has been our camp/meeting period for over 10 years—ze scheduled on top of us, not vice versa. We have been meeting on that date for over 10 years. Never met the chap myself though.

And ze was dead wrong about saying two solidarity actions—it's been nine so far. And they aren't solidarity actions—we are doing it purely for self-survival. No one else is organizing these counter-rallies—it has been KEF!. I haven't been doing the counter-rallies in solidarity really—it's been purely personal. The Klan is a knife at all our throats—anybody who studies their history can see that. I just got an impression that ze was implying we do it cause we hope black and other folks of color will like us and that ain't it at all. And I am only counting nine rallies of just one faction of the Klan we have been fighting—before that was a major Klan counter-rally that KEF!'s Mountain Faction was in the middle of. It wasn't two, they aren't "solidarity" actions, and it's just history here—the Klan was never very popular in east Tennessee.

—JOHN CONNER

Dear SFB,

The recent discussion on "Problem Animal" and racism has served, if nothing else, to highlight the importance of the US population problem (see *EF!* September-October 2005). Paul Watson clearly understands its

severity; if anything, he underestimates its extent.

As he says, the US is currently at 300 million, heading toward one billion by the year 2100. But this is only half the ugly picture.

The math is pretty basic. The burden on the land is the product of "number of people" and "rate of consumption." According to the World Wildlife Fund, our ecological footprint (resource use, development, waste disposal) is around 25 acres of land per person. Three hundred million Americans thus use about 7.5 billion acres of land—which might be fine if we had that much. Unfortunately, the continental 48 states constitute only two billion acres, so we are using a whole lot of other people's land. This in itself indicates a major injustice; certainly it is not unreasonable to expect each nation to live within its ecological means.

But it gets worse. Clearly we cannot pave, plow and dump on every square inch of land. Purely for the sake of sustainability, we need to leave a very large portion untouched, as true wilderness. Some have suggested that each bioregion needs fully 50 percent preserved as wilderness, to give adequate space for large predators and to allow the broader processes of evolution to continue. Half for us, half for nature—what could be more fair? It is a clean and articulate ecological vision.

So, with half wilderness, that leaves us with a billion

acres for direct human use. At 25 acres per person, this will support *only 40 million people!* Today we are at 300 million. Five hundred million by 2050. One billion by 2100. Forty million sustainable. These numbers should be etched into our psyche. They should guide all our thinking and actions.

Unless we can convince people to radically lower their scale of consumption, we are stuck with this conclusion. Advocates for social justice neglect the root causes of our crisis: too many people, a system of techno-industrial capitalism run amok and a mindset in which the Earth is a machine for wealth creation. These root causes are blind to race, sex, religion and sexual orientation.

Regards,

—DAVID SKRBINA

Dear SFB,

Two apologists for snitches and grand jury cooperators suddenly hailed as “taking the path of resistance” (see *EF!* September-October 2005)? As I sit in a Wisconsin jail on federal Animal Enterprise Terrorism charges for my alleged involvement in six mink releases, and as a victim of informant Justin Samuel, it is yet another burden upon me to read of his two most vocal apologists portrayed as heroes. One, Nicole Fink, the girlfriend of Samuel. The other, David Agranoff, Samuel’s most vocal defender and one-man P.R. machine in his attempt to reintegrate into the movement. Both currently jailed for refusing testimony to a grand jury in San Diego. It is unfortunate we find the subject of supporting these two debatable—that on the topic of informants and those who enable them to walk among us, when it is not we who suffer their direct effects, we sit back and debate the issue from the safety zone.

The view from behind bars is much different.

Before hailing them as noble “resisters,” let us ask where that voice of resistance was when the grand jury target was myself, and their dear friend offered 85 pages of tell-all testimony against me. Their voice was clear, and it wasn’t one of resistance—it was one of excuses, lies and collaboration. Until this month, the message of both David and Nicole was, “Sometimes, it’s OK to testify to a grand jury to save yourself.”

Now, these same people stand before us, puffing their chests, full of feigned bravado, telling us with straight faces that they sit in jail to protect our movement from attack. With their history in mind, we see that the only attacks they oppose are the ones against themselves. It was they who offered public defense of one who was so quick to throw me to the wolves.

Now I say—let *them* go to the wolves.

In the grand jury room, there is no harmless information. So to those who must support them, support them as one would support a ticking bomb—with great, delicate care, out of fear for what they might do. Support them as babies, whose hands must be held until the passing of the storm. Support them for fear that they, too, will join that club of their dear friend, entering that small, reviled choir of those who “didn’t tell them anything they didn’t already know, I swear.”

I hope to see us capitalize on their jailing to make the very firm message that snitches and their collaborators will not find themselves applauded in activist publications, but rather scorned for their betrayal. Not for revenge, but for survival. For there will be more damage done by informants and their support teams, more fallen liberators in their wake—and you may be among them.

—PETER YOUNG



BY FAITH WALKER

*Fauna*: n. Animal life.

*Cabala*: n. An esoteric, secret matter or mysterious art.

The large, membranous wings flapping low across the night sky throughout the Old World tropics belong to fruit bats (*Megachiropterans*) called flying foxes. Unlike micro bats (*Microchiropterans*), these mammals have large, light-sensitive eyes, wingspans of up to six feet, and a diet of nectar, pollen and fruit.

By night, these plant pluckers plunder fruit, grasping a branch with one foot and manipulating the fleshy fruit with a combination of the other foot and dexterous thumbs. Fruit is squeezed between palate and tongue, enabling the bats to eject pulp and swallow juice. These giant juicers can consume the equivalent of their body weight each night, and in so doing are quite the shitters: It takes under an hour for said juice to exit, gracing the land below with its particular fermenting odor.

By day, these flamboyant creatures roost communally in what are known as “camps,” hanging from branches like giant grapes. Wings alternately create a bat-wrap refuge for sleep and from storms, or flail about during punch-ups and squabbles. It’s also during the daylight that trees become alive with sex and babies.

Upside-down flying fox sex typically involves a keen male, with an impressively long, erect and prehensile penis, approaching a not-so-keen female, who bats him away. Clobbered males are generally undeterred, and their long, juicing tongues come in handy.

After untold bouts of cunnilingus, a female may allow her suitor to envelop her in his wings and mount from behind, while gripping her neck fur in his teeth. The mating duo doesn’t usually do a repeat performance; he pursues another sexy batgirl, and she takes another beau, selecting the most badass bat sperm along the way.

Inevitably, some six months later, upside-down birth occurs. In a tricky maneuver, mums catch their fully furred and blinking babes with their wings as they fall. The single bat bub born to its mum that year latches onto a tit with its recurvate milk teeth and hangs on with sharp claws while being toted about in flight. And when it’s nearly dark, the air becomes thick with thousands—even millions—of swirling sexed-up, foxy fruit bats.





# Sucker's Bets for the New Century

## *The US After Katrina*



BY BILL MCKIBBEN

If the images of skyscrapers collapsed in heaps of ash were the end of one story, then the picture of the sodden New Orleans Superdome with its peeling roof marks the beginning of the next, the one that will dominate our politics in the coming decades: America befuddled about how to cope with a planet suddenly turned unstable and unpredictable.

Over and over, people have said that the scenes from the convention center, the highway overpasses and the other suddenly infamous Crescent City venues didn't "look like America," that they seemed instead to be straight from the Third World. That was almost literally accurate, for poor, black New Orleans (whose life had never previously been of any interest to the larger public) is not so different from other poor, black parts of the world—its infant mortality, life expectancy and educational achievement statistics mirroring scores of African and Latin American enclaves.

But it was accurate in another way, too. A decade ago, environmental researcher Norman Myers began trying to add up the number of humans at risk of losing their homes from global warming. He looked at all of the obvious places—coastal China, India, Bangladesh, the tiny island states of the Pacific and Indian Oceans, the Nile Delta, Mozambique—and predicted that by 2050, it was entirely possible that 150 million people would be "environmental refugees," forced from their homes by rising waters. That's more than the number of political refugees sent scurrying by the bloody century we've just endured.

Try to imagine, that is, the chaos that attends busing 15,000 people from one football stadium to another in the richest nation on Earth, and then multiply

it by four orders of magnitude and re-situate your thoughts in the poorest nations on Earth.

And then try to imagine doing it over and over again—probably without the buses.

Because so far, even as blogs and websites all over the Internet fill with accusations about the scandalous lack of planning that led to the collapse of the levees in New Orleans, almost no one has addressed the much larger problems: the scandalous lack of planning that has kept us from even beginning to address climate change and the sad fact that global warming means the future will be full of just this kind of horror.

Consider the first problem for just a minute. No single hurricane is "the result" of global warming. But a month before Hurricane Katrina hit, Massachusetts Institute of Technology hurricane specialist Kerry Emmanuel published a landmark paper in the British science magazine *Nature*, showing that tropical storms are now lasting half again as long and spinning winds 50 percent more powerful than just a few decades ago. The only plausible cause:



*These fishing boats came to rest on a highway south of New Orleans after a 33-foot storm surge accompanying Hurricane Katrina carried them hundreds of yards from their berths.*

Photo by Christian Asmund/Greenpeace

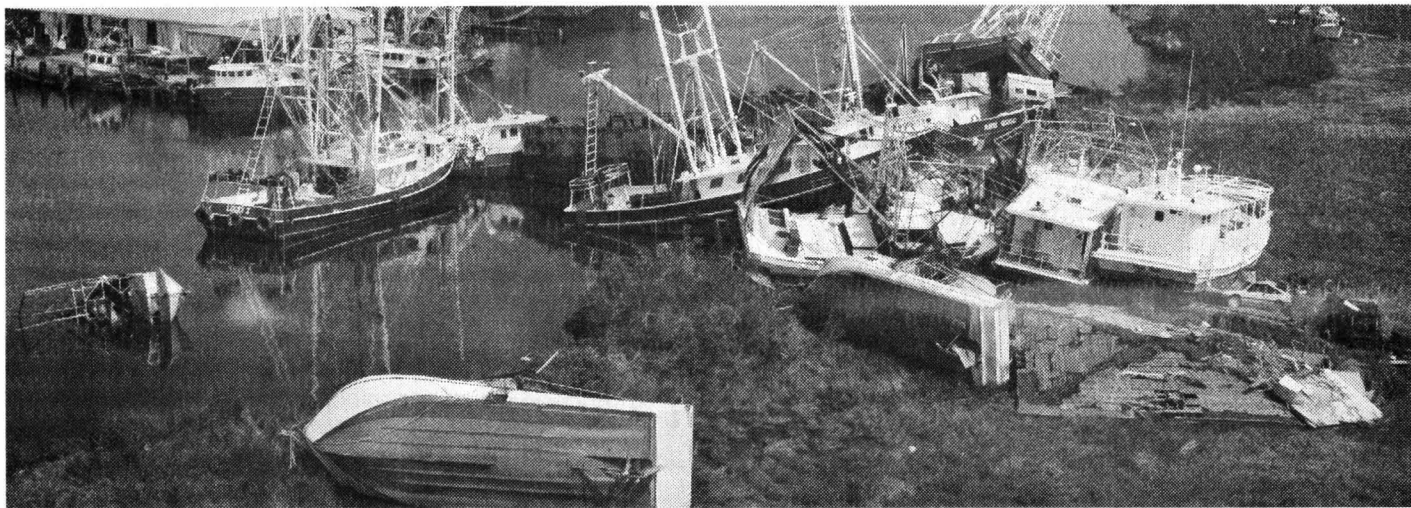


photo by Christian Asmund/Creospace

the ever-warmer tropical seas on which these storms thrive. Katrina, a Category One storm when it crossed Florida, roared to full life in the abnormally hot water of the Gulf of Mexico. It then punched its way into Louisiana and Mississippi—the latter now governed by Haley Barbour, who in an earlier incarnation as a Republican power broker and energy lobbyist, helped persuade President Bush to renege on his promise to treat carbon dioxide as a pollutant.

So far, the US has done exactly nothing to even try to slow the progress of climate change: We're emitting far more carbon than we were in 1988, when scientists issued their first prescient global-warming warnings. Even if, at that moment, we'd started doing all that we could to overhaul our energy economy, we'd probably still be stuck with the one degree Fahrenheit increase in global average temperature that's already driving our current disruptions. Now scientists predict that without truly dramatic change in the very near future, we're likely to see the planet's mercury rise five degrees before this century is out. That is, five times more than we've seen so far.

Which leads us to the second problem: For the 10,000 years of human civilization, we've relied on the planet's basic physical stability. Sure, there have been hurricanes and droughts and volcanoes and tsunamis—but averaged out across the Earth, it's been a remarkably stable run. If your grandparents inhabited a particular island, chances were that you could, too. If you could grow corn in your field, you could pretty much count on your grandkids being able to do likewise. Those are now sucker's bets—that's what those predictions about environmental refugees really mean.

Here's another way of saying it: In the last century, we've seen change in human societies speed up to an almost unimaginable level, one that has stressed every part

of our civilization. In this century, we're going to see the natural world change at the same kind of rate. That's what happens when you increase the amount of heat trapped in the atmosphere. That extra energy expresses itself in every way you can imagine: more wind, more evaporation, more rain, more melt, more... more... more.

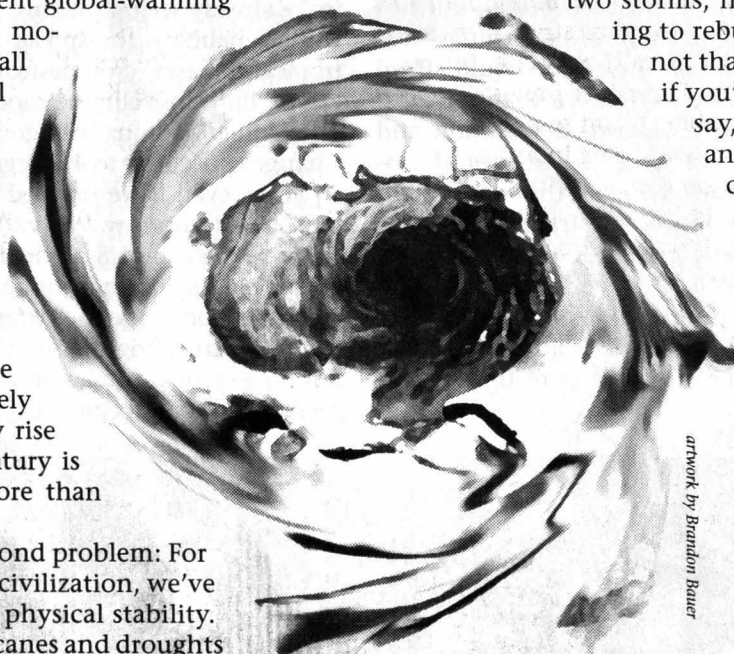
And there is no reason to think we can cope. Take New Orleans as an example. It is currently *pro forma* for politicians to announce that the city will be rebuilt, and doubtless it will be. Once. But if hurricanes like Katrina go from once-in-a-century storms to once-in-a-decade-or-

two storms, how many times are you going to rebuild? Even in the US, there's not that kind of money—especially if you're also having to cope with, say, the effects of more frequent and severe heat waves on agriculture, the effects from the spread of mosquito-borne diseases on human health, and so on *ad infinitum*—not to mention the costs of converting our energy system to something less suicidal than fossil fuel, a task that becomes more expensive with every year that passes.

Our rulers have insisted by both word and deed that the laws of physics and chemistry do not apply to us. That delusion will now start to vanish. Katrina marks Year

One of our new calendar, the start of an age in which the physical world has flipped from sure and secure to volatile and unhinged. New Orleans doesn't look like the America we've lived in. But it very much resembles the planet we will inhabit for the rest of our lives.

Bill McKibben is the author of many books on the environment and related topics. His first, *The End of Nature*, was also the first book for a general audience on global warming. His most recent book is *Wandering Home: A Long Walk Across America's Most Hopeful Landscape*.



artwork by Brandon Bauer



# Storming the Future

## Radical Climate Solutions for the 21st Century

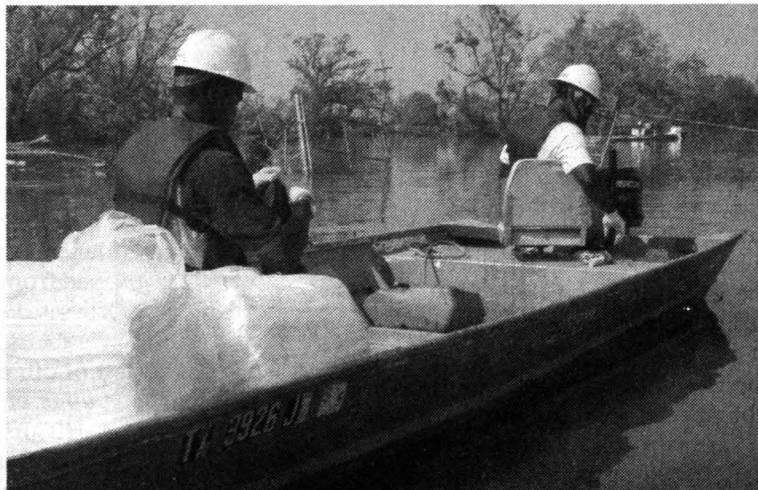


BY DAN FIRGER AND NILE MALLOY

If the world really needed a warning sign on global warming, it couldn't have come much clearer than Hurricane Katrina. The superheated storm swamped a major American city, caused hundreds of billions of dollars in economic damage, and perhaps most alarming—but not surprising for those who pay attention to such things—exposed the deep divisions between those who could afford to escape and those left behind to fend for themselves. If anyone was still unsure that ecological devastation and economic injustice go hand-in-hand, the images of desperate and poor New Orleanians dying on their roofs amid filthy floodwaters should set the record straight.

Storms, floods, droughts and epidemics are all-too-frequent these days, and scientists predict that with each passing year, they'll get more severe. While the wealthy will always find ways to move to higher ground, it's the poor who will pay the price for our failure to curb climate change.

The best thing that could come from this disaster would be a radical restructuring of the climate movement to focus the world's attention on the real and rising costs of inaction—from species extinction and forest destruction to the wrecked communities in New Orleans and the islands of the South Pacific. Now is the time to propose radical solutions to rewire the world with clean, sustainable energy before it's too late.



*Environmental safety workers towel off the surface of the floodwaters, in an attempt to remove oil and other floating contaminants.*

We need to be very clear about the implications of runaway climate chaos. The Earth's average surface temperature is one degree Fahrenheit warmer than it was last century. Katrina grew in strength from a tropical storm to a Category Five hurricane after passing over warmer-than-usual waters in the Gulf of Mexico. With one degree of warming, we're already seeing melting polar ice, a worldwide shift in wildlife habitats, the spread of West Nile Virus and other tropical diseases, crop-destroying droughts and killer heat waves. But most climate models don't stop at one degree. The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change expects up to 4.5 degrees of warming over the next 50 years, even if we stopped pumping carbon into the atmosphere tomorrow. With 20 million new cars on the road every year in the US alone and dozens of new, coal-fired power plants coming online, we're likely to see between 2.7 and seven degrees of warming before 2100. And that's when the truly frightening changes will become the rule, not the exception. Imagine a dozen Katrinas' worth of refugees fleeing coastal cities year after year, with nowhere to go and nothing left but the clothes on their backs.

Of course, human impacts on the environment will be the least of our concerns in a world dominated by this sort of large-scale social disruption, which is precisely the problem. If we can't figure out how to tread lightly now, when we've barely begun to see real climate chaos, how can we expect humanity to rise to the challenge as resources get scarcer, weather gets fiercer, and society slips

photo by Christian Asimund/Oreopace

into widespread instability as the planet's life-support systems unravel?

We have a narrow window of opportunity—rapidly closing—in which we can work to bring about an ecological U-turn that will redefine how global civilization relates to the Earth's climate, water, soil, forests and energy systems. Instead of spending hundreds of billions of dollars treating symptoms of the problem, we should be looking to the roots of our planetary imbalance and fixing what's wrong while we still can. Climate scientists warn that in order to prevent catastrophic climate change, we must keep atmospheric carbon dioxide concentrations below 400 parts per million (ppm). At 380 ppm today, we're adding carbon at a rate of two ppm each year. We've got less than a decade.

In that time, let's work to create a separation of oil and state. Let's shift tax incentives away from the offshore platforms in the Gulf of Mexico and the poisonous refineries of Cancer Alley, and toward wind farms, biofuels and cheap, easy-to-install photovoltaics for low-income communities. Instead of this year's \$287 billion transportation bill, which does next to nothing for public transit, let's put in place massive subsidies that will pay to move people out of the exurban wasteland and back within city limits. The same goes for the farm bill: imagine hundreds of billions of dollars flowing out of the pockets of Cargill and Archer Daniels Midland and into local organic farming cooperatives and community supported agriculture programs in every US city.

But shifting federal spending is just the beginning. Let's rebuild our inner cities to be models of sustainable community—filled with bike paths, vegetable gardens and roofs topped with solar panels. Let's allow the residents of New Orleans to rebuild their homes on their own terms, with plenty of federal money to ensure safe, healthy and green neighborhoods that will be livable for the long term. Instead of handouts to Halliburton and a corporate-friendly "free enterprise zone" that will drive the poor into even deeper poverty, the New Orleans reconstruction can be the first real example of sustainable development principles put into practice on a regional scale.

Globally, a worldwide public works program focusing on renewable energy, organic agriculture and ecosystem renewal would create an unprecedented economic boom—one that restores natural systems rather than destroying them. Much like Franklin Roosevelt's depression-era Works Progress Administration, this program would create millions of new jobs and improve the quality of life for potentially billions of people in the Global South. Clean energy and sustainable agriculture aren't a panacea for all the world's ills, but more than any other "development" scheme currently being debated, these investments would allow communities to take control of their own destinies, choosing appropriate energy and food systems that meet their local needs and escaping from the vicious cycles of debt and dependency that come along with economic "liberalization" and "free trade" zones.

Climate change is the most daunting threat that humanity has ever faced. It presents us with a huge array of overwhelming ecological and economic hazards, but also plenty of opportunities to radically restructure our civilization and create a different, better world. Let's rise to the challenge.

*Dan Firger and Nile Malloy coordinate Rainforest Action Network's (RAN) Global Finance and Zero Emissions Campaigns. RAN addresses the twin threats of climate chaos and oil dependence through campaigns targeting Ford Motor Company and banking giant Wells Fargo. For more information, contact RAN, 221 Pine St, Ste 500, San Francisco, CA 94104; (415) 398-4404; [www.ran.org](http://www.ran.org).*



artwork by Brandon Bauer



# Shooting Down Free Market Fairy Tales

## *and Building Movements for Climate Justice*



BY HARRY HELIOS

"We know that the white man has put a price on all that is alive.... He trades with his own blood, and he wants us to do the same with our sacred territory, with the blood of the Earth, which they call petroleum.... In former times, the dark path of plunder, genocide and injustice against our people was lit by a candle in the name of God and His Majesty. Now it is lit by oil in the name of progress and money.... The white man has declared war on everything, except his own inner poverty. He has declared war on time, and he has even declared war on himself.... We are children of the Earth; help us defend her."

—BERITO KUBARA, U'WA INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY, COLOMBIA

"Putting a price on the environment will not save it."

—SHARON BEDER, *THE ENVIRONMENT GOES TO MARKET*

Could it be possible that the market-based, so-called solutions to the impending climate crisis are the real threat to our long-term hopes for a sustainable, socially just future? If bright sides are your thing—and I heartily recommend them as means of maintaining hope in the darkness—here's one to look at: The wake-up call is beginning to reverberate through the well lit hallways of the West. Let's face it, the call was heard a long while back by the

people living with their heartbeats intertwined with that of the land, sea or sky, by which I mean people like the Inuit of Alaska or the U'wa of Colombia. They've known for longer than most of us that something is deeply out of joint in the planet.

Here's a generalization about the nature of resistance to climate chaos and its elite strike force, the oil industry: In the Global South, where oil companies are at their most despicably rapacious, there is sporadic but spirited resistance, allied to an understanding that climate change is the symptom of a wider malaise, based on inequalities of power and a deepening disconnection from the natural world. In the Global North, we are seeing widespread adulation of the business-friendly farrago that is the Kyoto Protocol, an explosion of green capitalism, serious amounts of non-governmental organization (NGO) energy going into lobbying, and a small but determined wing working to bring a tougher, anti-capitalist analysis to its actions and communications.

It's not dishonorable to want to think that the Kyoto Protocol is a shining beacon of salvation instead of a shabby scam, and that George Bush is the Wicked Witch of the West keeping us from reaching it, but this is still a very dangerous fairy tale to be drugging ourselves with at seven minutes to midnight.

I live in London, one of the world's most frenzied media hubs. Do I get to hear, read or see stories in the corporate media about southern-based resistance to the oil monster, or do I get glossy supplements telling me how celebrities I haven't heard of are saving the world by recycling and "making the album carbon neutral," and "Hey! You could win an eco-car!?" The answer is, of course, obvious, and it shows how the (neo)liberal intelligentsia here is stifling dissent by implying that climatic salvation will be achieved via green consumerism and some as-yet-unspecified "government action."

The voices of those who see no future for climate or justice under capitalism—those who take direct action to prevent new roads and airports from being built and to revoke the oil industry's "social license to operate"—are rarely heard above this shrink-wrapped racket. That's why they work closer to the ground, connecting



photo courtesy Harry Helios

struggles, talking to school kids, anti-capitalists who still think that climate change is only an environmental issue (and not about inequalities of power), the grassroots base of unions and NGOs, communities affected by climate change and oil devastation, artists and any other crazies they can get to listen (they also need to keep listening themselves!).

It could be that this trend is beginning to creep across the Atlantic, into the hearts and minds of many of those troubled, wealthy American souls who see and fear the future, but who are reluctant to let go of that short-haul weekend on the coast or that comfortably macho Jeep Cherokee. Enter the perfect solution:

hand over your dollars (and your guilt) to a carbon-offsetting company and carry on as "normal." There's an explosion in the market, and the products that will triumph in that market are those best designed to anesthetize carbon guilt.

And this, ladies and gentlemen of the jury (for those of us who haven't moved beyond judging the willful blindness of our fellow men and women), is part of what is now dressed up as "activism": the replacement of inspirational collective action by the lonely-as-hell use of our personal power as individual consumers—and that alone—to change the world. But what do we lose if our definition of ourselves climaxes in the contents of our shopping baskets? And how the hell will it get us 60 to 90 percent cuts in carbon dioxide emissions before the day after tomorrow?

Now here's a pesky limey question for you: Where is the direct action to prevent drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge? I can find any number of requests to fax my senator or representative, and there are some beautiful photographs and inspirational indigenous Gwich'in quotes, but whither the monkeywrenching? Elsewhere in the US (and worldwide), fenceline communities—working class, usually black communities living alongside highly polluting oil infrastructure—are campaigning hard for justice and clean air, but climate change is often low down on their list of priorities.

And while I'm at it, what is up with US resistance to Big Oil? We hear about the occasional SUV dealership going up in flames, and you could argue that an anti-capitalist or anti-war action is eventually going to lead to reduced carbon emissions (unless it involves setting things on fire!) by joining the dots between the issues, but where's the concerted oil-industry dismantlement program? If it's happening, I'd love to hear about it...

Which brings us to the uplifting material: People are risking their lives in places like Ecuador, the Niger Delta, West Papua and Pakistan to stand in the path of the oil industry. In Brazil, the dark truth about monocultural eucalyptus "carbon sinks" is being exposed as the "forest deserts" are reclaimed. The Ogoni of the Niger Delta have now been joined by the "Bogoni" of County Mayo, Ireland, in saying no to the petro-imperialism of Shell; five local Irish residents were jailed for more than three months for "contempt of court."

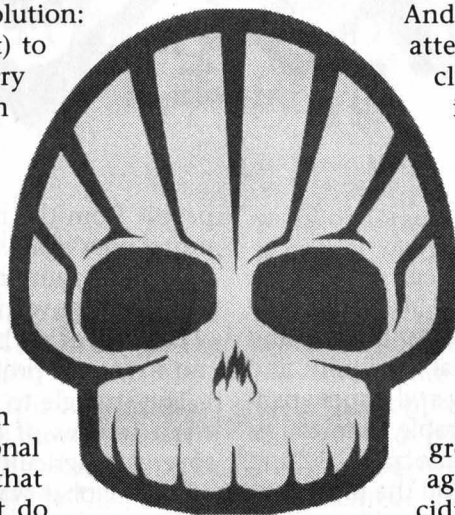
In Bolivia, Perú and Iraq, successful campaigns to prevent the privatization of fossil-fuel reserves are mobilizing social movements. Interesting alliances are being forged between these groups and climate activists with a strong social-justice analysis, as the climate activists realize that while oil and gas reserves in the hands of the people may still end up as carbon emissions, to deny people the right to self-determination would be an insidious form of eco-colonialism. Meanwhile, groups in Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey are refusing to let BP get away with its Baku-Ceyhan pipeline.

And on top of all this are the visionary attempts to unite the many struggles for climate justice, the most established being the Oilwatch network of southern-based groups, which has just issued a declamatory call for a "global campaign against a civilization based on oil." There's also the Durban Declaration on Carbon Trading and Rising Tide, a network for climate-justice direct action, with groups in the UK, Australia and New Zealand and a strong link to Peoples' Global Action. Rising Tide was one of the groups promoting a global day of action against climate change on July 8, coinciding with the last day of the G8 Summit (see *EF!* September-October 2005).

Beneath the empty rattle of the establishment's hypocritical posturing on climate change, a healthy roar of indignation is starting to be heard. Time is short, and the roar is still far from fierce enough to get where we need to go, but the seeds are sown and the inspiration is there to draw upon. Let's get out there and start building a post-oil world of peace, freedom and climate justice!

For more information, contact London Rising Tide, 62 Fieldgate St, London E1 1ES, UK; [risingtide.org.uk](http://risingtide.org.uk). Or visit [www.sinkswatch.org](http://www.sinkswatch.org); [www.carbontradewatch.org](http://www.carbontradewatch.org); [www.agp.org](http://www.agp.org).

*Harry Helios has an abiding love of alliteration and pseudonymity. He also works and plays with London Rising Tide, Art Not Oil, London Action Resource Centre and Peoples' Global Action.*



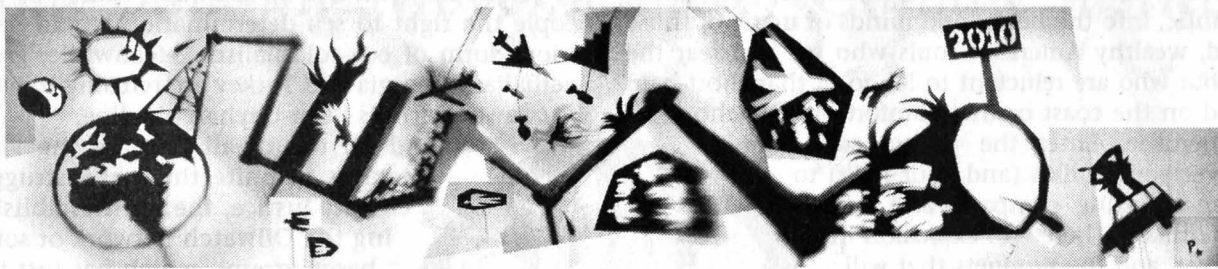
artwork by Stig



artwork by Nick Turner, [www.artnotoil.org.uk](http://www.artnotoil.org.uk)



# INVITATION to Build a New Civilization



artwork by Philippe Ames

BY OILWATCH INTERNATIONAL

Never before has the relationship between oil and the networks of power that control the world been so clearly understood. Behind the worst wars of the last century and the current. Behind the waste of industrial, economic and financial resources. Behind the instability and impoverishment of many nations. Behind innumerable state coups, dictatorships and manipulations of democracy. Behind the age-old exploitation of workers. Behind the most dangerous chemical industries. Behind the systematic extinction of indigenous peoples. Behind the contamination of the world's fresh water, the water of the seven seas and the air of our cities. Behind the accumulation of enormous amounts of chemical and plastic wastes. Behind climate change that includes cyclones, floods and hurricanes that are ever more extreme. Behind the appearance of numerous degenerative illnesses and therefore, behind the extinction of life on the planet...

Is Oil.

The 20th century was the century of mass poisoning of life all over the planet. This poisoning is the product not only of the wastes caused by the extraction of oil, spills on land and sea, and acid rain, it is also the consequence of agrochemicals, persistent pollutants, fuels, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, pharmaceuticals, hospital wastes and other components produced from oil. These are being accumulated on the planet... and they are killing the Land.

We have suffered the worst threats to the sovereignty of our nations due to wars and intrigues caused by oil. The large empires define their economic and military power in relation to the possibilities of obtaining their own black gold or obtaining secure access to it in other regions.

The 20th century created, from its industrial oil bases, a culture founded on a pattern of addictive material and energy consumption that has crippled hundreds of millions of people, while confronting and exterminating thousands of traditional cultures, separating them from their healthy and ecological customs. Only a very few have managed to survive, in a way that is ever more one of isolation, impoverishment and defenselessness.

While this occurs, we have accepted each of these aggressions separately. Or worse still, we have fought amongst ourselves: inhabitants of one country against another,

people from the north against those from the south, the urban poor against indigenous and peasant people, those ill from consumption against pacifists, those who propose against those who criticize....

Looking at each struggle from a distance, it is difficult not to see the profound connections between them.

The struggle to stay healthy and eat well, the fight for clean sources of energy, the fight for a sustainable and sovereign agriculture, the fight for decontamination and against global warming, the fight against transnational companies that expropriate our natural resources, the fight for peace in the world... these depend to a great extent on our ability to jointly resist the oil industry and the civilization it sustains.

Meanwhile, it seems evident that the transition into a new civilization requires the creation of scientific, cultural and environmental alternative technologies—as well as new economic, political and cultural mechanisms that will allow the reconstruction of peace and equality among peoples, recover our health, restore our environment, renegotiate international debt, compensate for the pillaging of the countries of the south and assure justice everywhere.

For us, a clear path is shown by the fight of the peasant, fishing and indigenous communities that face a frontline battle against globalization and neoliberalism—defending their right to live on their lands with autonomy and without physical, cultural or environmental aggressions, even those that are considered “symbols of progress.” But we need to listen to each other, so that we may think of solutions that take into account, in a global form, the problems of us all.

Which are the organizations and networks that could start a positive collaboration in the fight against the oil civilization? Which are the most important local and global movements that we cannot ignore in our efforts? Which are the new initiatives that we could and should invent?

Oilwatch is inviting sympathetic networks to initiate a joint dialogue of our struggles and launch a global campaign against the civilization based on oil. We invite you to send opinions, considerations and ideas that may consolidate this concept, so that we can build a way together.

*Oilwatch was born from the need to develop global strategies and support for the communities affected by oil operations. For more information, visit [www.oilwatch.org.ec](http://www.oilwatch.org.ec).*

# THE WAR OF 100 Years

## Latin America's second independence or bust

BY CHRISTIAN GUERRERO

In Latin America, a war is brewing. Very soon, a worldwide resource grab led by the US will shake up this part of the world, just as it has in the Middle East, to supply the modernized consumer markets (rich countries) with cheap energy and labor for the next century to come. Enemies are being created, lines are being drawn, and the sentiments of the masses are being played on to ensure that there will be large revolutionary armies that will fight the US-led invasion. The allies, if they weren't already consolidated, are being bought for cheap, with merely the promise of being spared in this epic saga of the "War of 100 Years."

This phrase and premise are taken from a number of proclamations by the Venezuelan government and its charismatic president, Hugo Chávez Frías. As the story goes, the Bush administration is attempting to assassinate Chávez, in the hopes of replacing him with a US-friendly representative of the Venezuelan elite. If this plan succeeds, Venezuela is prepared to immediately cut off all shipments of oil to the US. Currently, Venezuela is the world's fifth-largest exporter of "black gold," supplying the US alone with 1.3 million barrels a day. With this checkmate move, George

W. Bush would have no other choice but to knock over the chess board and invade Venezuela, bringing about the prophesied war to prevent the economic collapse of the US and the world's financial systems. And since Latin America is a region full of inspiring rebellions and strong social movements, which have been made to understand that they all have a common enemy, the people of this region will rise up in a war against the US to defend their fatherlands, their cultures, their indigenous heritage and their resources—for the next 100 years to come. But there may be something else going on behind the scenes of this too-inevitable tale.

In the last decades, *América Latina* has virtually exploded onto the stage of global politics, as if awakening from 500

It's important for us to recognize how the masters of war will create and use each other as enemies to justify leading us toward the end of the story already written—the war for the remaining essential resources on Earth.

years of forgetfulness and marginalization. All over the greater Latin continent, rebellion and resistance movements are standing up to their oppressors and the culture of political corruption, taking back their power long denied. From the resource

years for natural gas and water in Bolivia to the political deterioration in Ecuador and the massive uprisings in Argentina after its economic collapse, the pressure-

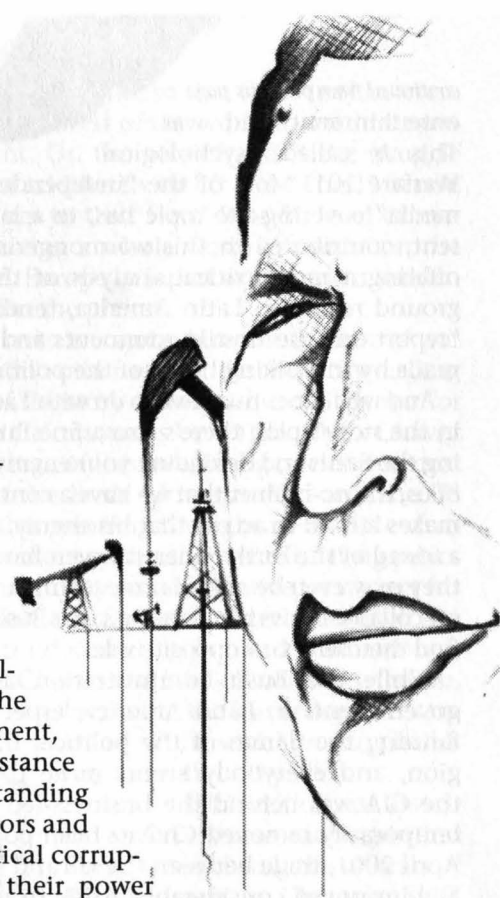
cooker whistle of social politics is screaming, and the pot is red hot—and by the looks of things from the outside, it seems like the lid is about to blow off.

For its part, the US government is constantly tightening its grip on the region through a three-fold submission-hold—political, economic and military. And then there are the sketchy international financial institution types, such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the other regional development banks that claim to be fighting poverty but, more

often than not, are finding ways to squeeze timely debt payments out of impoverished countries.

If this isn't enough drama for the region, we can always tune in to the daily diplomatic soap opera and find out what Condoleezza said about Fidel, or what Hugo said about George, and who's sleeping with whom—the simplified protagonist-antagonist duality of the revolutionaries vs. the conservatives. We get to feel the bravado of David standing up to Goliath, and we get to wave our flag-colored pompons, helping to beat the war-drums of resistance. In this way, we all get drawn into the polarized battle of ideas; we all get to choose our favorite characters and episodes. But this is not just a TV reality show; this is the fine line between

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entertainment and war.

This is called Psychological Warfare 101. Most of the “independent media” covering the topic has, to a large extent, contributed to this warmongering by not offering a more critical analysis of the on-the-ground reality in Latin America, tending to just “report on” the hostile comments and retaliations made by the talking heads of the political show.

And what does this have to do with Earth First!? Well, in the story’s plot, there’s also a fine line between defending the Earth and defending your enemy’s enemy. For many of us, the no-brainer that we have a common enemy in Bush makes it hard to accept that his enemy, Chávez, may not be a friend of the Earth either; it’s even harder to speculate that they may even be on the same team. But when the ecological collapse draws a line in the sand, Bush and Chávez won’t find themselves on opposite sides.

While the Bush administration accuses left-leaning governments in Latin America, especially Venezuela, of fanning the flames of the political instability in the region, and everybody seems more than convinced that the CIA was behind the business-led military coup that temporarily removed Chávez from power for 48 hours in April 2001, trade between the US and Venezuela has actually improved considerably. Aside from an increased flow in manufacturing and textiles, the last few years have also seen Chávez hand over major concessions of heavy crude and natural gas from the Orinoco Belt and the large offshore reserves of the Plataforma Deltana, respectively, to Shell, Chevron and other major US and European oil and energy companies.

Self-proclaimed leftist elected governments across Latin America, using the current “democratic openings” that their nations find themselves in, have recreated development plans and trade agreements with the same underlying neoliberal goals as their more right-wing neighbors like Colombia and Chile. Since Chávez’s presidency began in 1998, unpopular industrial mega-projects—previously defeated by broad, national alliances—have been recycled, renamed and given a new opportunity within the newly created context of the “Bolivarian socialist revolution.” Other so-called progressive, leftist governments—represented by populist leaders who have come from “our” ranks—have also replicated this pattern in their countries. While we turned our attention away from the struggles in these nations, believing that wild places and peoples were safe in the hands of these progressive leaders, record levels of deforestation, mining and oil exploitation have occurred—still in the name of Westernized progress, but now with the added rhetoric of revolutionary change.

To pick the most alarming example, while much has been written on Plan Puebla Panamá and the long-term master plan behind this regional development project, little attention has been given to the true mother lode of integration initiatives: the South American Regional Infrastructure Integration Initiative (IIRSA). Financed largely by the aforementioned iffy regional development banks and requiring continued investments and commitments from every country on the continent, IIRSA would tie together all the major industrial infrastructure across South

America—heavy cargo transportation routes, water resource diversions, dams, industrial ports, hydrocarbon pipelines and long-distance energy grids and stations—all facilitating the massive exploitation and exportation of the continent’s vast natural resources (see *EF!* July-August 2005).

Using the legend of Simón Bolívar, the “Liberator” of the Andean countries, and his aspirations for a unified Latin America of sovereign republics, the script-writers of the Bolivarian Movement—who are more often Colombian guerrilla leaders than Venezuelan government officials—have plotted a new historical trajectory for the whole region, and have marketed it as Latin America’s second independence. They have advertised regional energy-sector mergers such as Pertocaribe, Petrosuramérica and Carbosuramérica—joint ventures between state oil and mining companies and private Latin American firms—as the culmination of Bolívar’s dream: South America taking care of itself, sharing what it has between the countries in the region.

There are, however, a few inconsistencies to this “regional integration” story. One is the relationship of governments with the US. For example, Colombia—the largest recipient of US military aid in the hemisphere—has made substantial progress in the projects outlined by IIRSA. It would be easy enough to call the projects in Colombia expansions of US imperialism, since they involve heavy investment in environmentally and socially destructive infrastructure for the sole purpose of extracting cheap raw materials (especially energy resources) from the most biologically diverse region in the world. But when we assess the motives behind the



artwork by Eric Drooker

“regional cooperation” initiatives that are being developed within the IIRSA framework by the Venezuelan “Bolivarian” government, one must apply the same criteria to these development projects—continued investment in destructive industries for the majority benefit of northern consumers. In other words, IIRSA can’t be US expansionism in one country and revolutionary integration in the other.

As the Zapatistas say in their recently released Sixth Declaration from the Lacandon Jungle, “The neoliberal globalization of capitalism is based on exploitation, plunder, contempt and repression to those who resist it—in other words, the same as before, but only now globalized.” This is important for Earth First!ers to keep in mind when we hear about the need to blindly support romantic struggles throughout Latin America. There will be no stone left unturned in capital’s search for profit, and every place on Earth is a sacrifice zone.

This “globalization” of the war on the Earth also has implicated our resistance, and we risk becoming its unwitting tools. Our movements and struggles have extended across national borders and continents. We are now defending the Earth on an international front; we are truly everywhere. And because of this reality, we in the Earth First! movement have aligned ourselves in solidarity with struggles that aren’t necessarily Earth-centered, but are a part of the greater social struggle to end tyranny. However, there is a real cost to our Earth-centered movement when we identify with these wide-ranging social struggles around the world. We are aligning ourselves with objectives that may not be our own.

While it’s obvious that we must end the destruction of the Earth—primarily caused by the disproportionate level of material wealth consumed by industrialized countries—it’s not so clear where most of us stand on the continued techno-industrialization of the “under-developed” countries. While preserving a healthy environment may seem characteristic of the overarching political trend of progressive movements around the world, the leaders of Latin American, leftist political movements are not all necessarily convinced of putting the Earth first. In fact, what seem to be growing calls for the end to US and European expansionism in the region are really code words for: “We want the *gringos* to stop stealing the biggest piece of the pie, so that we may have it ourselves.” To the majority of leftists in the “developed” world who want to build solidarity with the social struggles of the Global South, this demand is not only justified, but has been a long time coming.

But there’s a grave flaw in this reductionism of thinking that it’s only the *gringos* who perpetuate inequality. The South American elites have just as much intention of mining the Earth of all its resources for a profit as their northern counterparts. And the Latin American upper, middle and lower classes aren’t all completely ready to forego 21st-century, automation and comfort. For us “radical ecologists,” the dilemma is two-fold. On the one hand is the struggle to reduce the amount of natural resources

consumed by the “First” World, so that there may be more natural resources for the rest of the world to use in its unhurried development. On the other hand is the struggle of most moderates and liberals to lift the “Third” World out of poverty and up to the “First” World’s level of material wealth. Yet having a whole world consume on the same level as the US, Europe or Japan would mean sudden death for most life on the planet.

It’s important for us to recognize how the masters of war will create and use each other as enemies to justify leading us toward the end of the story already written—the war for the remaining essential resources on Earth. Hugo Chávez has taken full advantage of this role, being one of the most outspoken critics of the Bush administration and the US government. Championing the fight to lift his corner

of the world out of abject poverty, offering petrodollars to any social initiative he can get his name and face on. With these politically conditioned gifts and declarations, Chávez and his Bolivarian revolution, are becoming the leadership and vanguard of all the social pressure building up south of the US.

But for Chávez’s closest associates and investors—the biggest and most favored being the all-stars of Big Oil, such as Chevron, Shell and ExxonMobil—this arrangement couldn’t get any better. It’s a virtual green light to accelerate the industrial development and exploitation of the largest reserves of crude oil, natural gas, coal and other minerals in the hemisphere—and sacrifice any forest, river, sea or living community that lives above them. Anybody who raises an objection or stands in the way is, by default, a counter-revolutionary and a Bush supporter.

There will be no war in Latin America, other than the ones already being fought. The broad sentiment for social change and justice expressed by *la gente de América Latina* is valid, and we should support it. But when Chávez offers subsidized heating oil and gasoline to the US poor, we should understand the political strings attached—he’s buying our loyalty with 10 to 20 percent “cheaper” oil. When Chávez calls Bush “Mr. Danger,” we should have our laugh and agree that the US government is dangerous to the world. However, what we must remember is that all governments—leftist or conservative, socialist or fascist—work together to keep the machines of the global death system alive. Some, like the US and its allies, work with the obvious intention of entrenching the world deeper into their hegemony. Others work with the stated claim of reforming the system’s shortcomings with “popular democratic participation”—but all of them are committed to their goal of industrial and economic growth, which means the continued destruction and deterioration of the Earth and all that is wild. Our revolution will not be funded by oil.

*Christian Guerrero is a thorn-in-the-side whistleblower of leftist sell-outs who believe that we’re buying into their “capitalism with a human face”-compromised resistance.*





# The World Looks Different from Down Here

## An EF!er's View from the Border

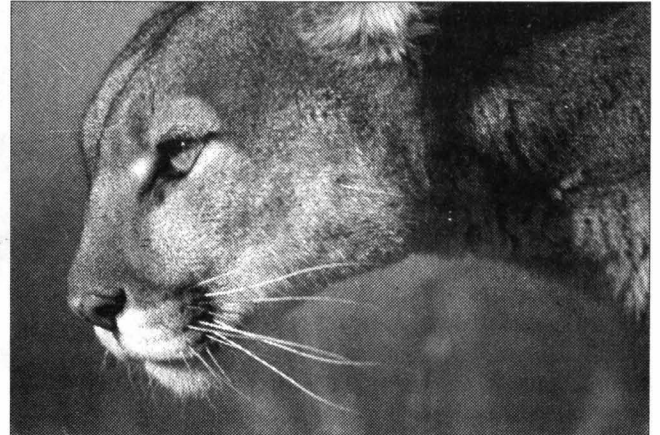
BY BEN PACHANO

**T**HE WORLD LOOKS DIFFERENT FROM DOWN HERE, IN THE land where North America becomes Latin America.

Nearly five years ago, the *Earth First! Journal* relocated to Tucson, Arizona, from Eugene, Oregon. The new collective declared that the movement needed a shot in the arm and that Tucson was just the place to provide it. Tucson, they said, would give the *Journal* a better "frontline perspective" on "globalization and ethnic diversity." The move would help EF! broaden its struggle to embrace more indigenous, environmental justice and working class participation. To some, the claim seemed downright egotistical—what makes these desert rats think that they have more to teach us than anyone else?

Living in Tucson over the past year and a half, I've come to realize that it's not the *Journal* that has anything to teach. It's not Tucson, either, or even the city's diverse community of resistance—it's the Border itself. If you listen, the Border will speak to you, and its message is one that certain segments of *Earth First!* need to hear. Badly.

**H**ERE IN THE SONORAN DESERT, THE BORDER CUTS A physical and psychological scar across the landscape. It's obvious in some places—in the Berlin-Wall-style barrier that divides the sister cities of Nogales, Arizona, and Nogales, Sonora; in the Border Patrol SUVs that cruise the desert and man the checkpoints; in the piles of discarded water bottles and abandoned backpacks, dehydrated bodies and beaten dreams. In other places, you see its influence by looking just a little harder—it's in the dark-skinned laborers building luxury and tract homes; in the strident political rhetoric over border vigilantes and anti-immigrant ballot



propositions; in the faces of saguaros and O'odham, who remind us that they were a part of this land long before an Atlantic crossing was even a gleam in the eye of that incompetent Italian.

In the Borderlands, there's always a war staring you in the face. On one side, the paramilitary force called the Border Patrol stands arrayed with its helicopters, Hummers and ATVs; on the other side, more than 3,000 desperately poor migrants dead since 1994; in the middle, the fragile landscape of the Sonoran Desert.

So how is this different than the wars in inner cities, old-growth forests or Appalachian mountains? Because on the Border you can see with startling clarity that the divisions between ecological, social and indigenous struggles are an illusion, just one more tactic used by the powerful to divide our energy and split our focus. You see that EF!ers should not be "incorporating" social justice or "adding" anti-racism to our organizing; if those things are not already inextricably connected to our actions in defense of the Earth, then our ecology is too damn shallow.

**T**HE WORLD LOOKS DIFFERENT FROM WHERE I STAND IN history, a descendent of the Huari-conquered-by-the-Incas-conquered-by-the-Spaniards. All my life, I have been acutely conscious that this continent called America is the land of my ancestors, a land rich with a history and beauty all its own. After all, it was my ancestors who domesticated the peanut and the potato, who farmed the same piece of land for thousands of years in an ecology that was profoundly American.

Before the catastrophe of 1492, America's indigenous people roamed the continent with relative ease. And it is one continent, connected in culture and ecology from

south to north: from the pottery that spread north and south out of Colombia to the corn that blossomed in the highlands above the Yucatán to become a symbiotic provider for peoples from New England to Tierra del Fuego; from the Alaskan camels that migrated south and became the llamas of the Andes to the South American puma who is also the cougar of North America. Even during the days of the Inca and Aztec empires, travelers, pilgrims and traders still roamed freely across the continent's length.

When the Europeans arrived, the rules of the game changed. With "Mexico" and "the US" on the map, borders needed to be drawn and defended. When the US conquered half of Mexico in 1848 to fulfill its White Anglo-Saxon destiny, the lines were abruptly redrawn.

So now in the desert near Tucson, the historical reality of a united America clashes with the colonial delusions of America's United States. Leave aside the obvious dilemma of trans-Border residents like the O'odham, jaguar, Apache and pronghorn antelope for the moment, and consider what lines on a map mean for the continent itself. The Maya who now die in the desert every Summer are cultural and biological cousins, via the Toltec, to the Hopi of northern Arizona. The "Mexicans" crossing the Border in defiance of US law are the descendants of people who have roamed this continent for thousands of years. Next time you hear the word "American," think about that.

**S**O WHO IS DYING TO CROSS THIS IMAGINARY LINE IN THE desert, and why? In the simplest terms, it's Latin@s who can't make enough money to survive at home. Ever since European invaders destroyed the subsistence cultures of America, "workers" have migrated in search of a way to provide for their families. This kind of migration is as old as the US, but by all indications, the influx across the southern border has skyrocketed in recent years—one estimate suggests that it has tripled since 1994.

In 1994, of course, the European death culture that crossed the seas in 1492 opened a new front in its ongoing war to destroy the last of America's indigenous and wild. The front was Mexico, and the weapon was the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

By rewriting various Mexican trade laws, NAFTA opened the agricultural lands of Mexico to assault by US agribusiness. Cheap subsidized corn and other agricultural products

were (are) "dumped" on the Mexican market at a price below the cost of production. Family farmers were (are) bankrupted and forced off their lands in search of jobs that do not exist—not surprising, since the entire point of NAFTA was to exploit Mexico's "competitive" labor market to man the export-oriented *maquiladoras*. In other words, the system would break down if there were enough jobs for everyone—then the corporations would have to pay them too much.

So every year, hundreds of thousands of displaced rural workers descend on the saturated job markets of Mexico's cities. Those who can't find work have to keep moving north. Others find jobs by working for below the market wage, forcing city residents out of their jobs, sending the urban population also moving north. There are people dying in the desert with college degrees, just as there are people who were only recently forced off the land that their ancestors had farmed for thousands of years.

Joining the Mexicans are an increasing number of Central Americans, victims of economic and political systems that have never fundamentally changed from the Spanish colonial governments; victims of US-sponsored "dirty wars" that in the 1980s forced people off their farms for the benefit of agribusiness.

There's a word that we use to describe when wealthy foreign powers rob people of their land and culture, reducing them to the status of servants: colonialism. It's the frontlines of the war on the Earth.

The Earth cannot be exploited if people will die to defend it, and time and again, the only ones seemingly willing to die for the Earth are the ones who depend on it for their cultural and physical survival. Earth-based cultures are this planet's first line of defense, and genocide has *always* been a precursor to ecocide. Expect to see an increase in logging, mining, megadams and biopiracy in the lands that NAFTA has emptied; in fact, they are already in the works. And where these projects are being resisted, it is almost always the small farmers and indigenous communities taking the risks and shutting them down.

**I**F YOU DON'T LIVE ON THE BORDER, YOU MAY THINK THIS has little or nothing to do with you. Maybe you think that I'm just another partisan, convinced that my issue is more important than yours. That's not the case. I'm not asking EF! to drop everything to work on Border justice; I'm asking EF! to listen to the lessons of this scarred and violent land.

I'm asking you to realize that this scar reaches far beyond the southern desert, into every community in the US. Your food is grown by the people forced into this country by the destruction of indigenous and semi-indigenous subsistence farming. Meanwhile, the national debate over "illegal immigration" is increasingly dominated by groups such as the Minuteman Project, which uses racist and xenophobic rhetoric to stir up fear and hatred of the migrant and to build support for an increasingly militarized Border. Both of these ends serve US colonialism in Latin America.

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*Minuteman vigilantes and the Border Patrol stake out a stretch of the Arizona-Sonora Border.*

*photo by Adam Welch*



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On my way to the Round River Rendezvous this year, I drove past fields full of Latino laborers. Yet when I got to the gathering, there was a tremendous reluctance among the attendees to discuss race; several people suggested that race is only an important issue for those who live in “diverse” areas, like the South. I’ll give these people the benefit of the doubt and assume that they don’t understand the ways in which racial ideology has historically been used in the service of colonialism and ecocide. But we can’t afford this ignorance anymore. The Minutemen are probably recruiting in your neighborhood; will EFlers be there to challenge them and their dangerous rhetoric, as we have in Arizona?

There’s also a wider lesson to be learned from this divided land, one that goes beyond the plight of Latin America and its people. Ironically, when you stare at the Border long enough, it actually erases a division in your mind—the line between “environmental” and “human.”

Where is the division between social, environmental and economic justice when you talk about defending the Maya homeland? Where is it when you talk about demilitarizing the Border and saving lives? Where is it when you oppose the racist fear-mongering that the powerful use to justify genocide and ecocide around the world?

To divide these into separate issues, even mentally, seems to betray a dangerous and anthropocentric delusion: that humans somehow exist separate from nature; that the social structures we build are not determined by our culture’s relationship with the Earth; that the Earth’s health is not dependent upon what kinds of societies we build.

Yet this anthropocentrism is, at the same time, human-denigrating; as if human struggles for social justice are nothing but a necessary distraction from our true, ecological calling. “We wouldn’t be good people if we didn’t care about social issues,” many EFlers seem to say, “but don’t worry, we still devote most of our attention to the Earth.” It’s time to toss aside these elaborate justifications and accept, once and for all, that humans are special—and that human cultures are the most powerful tool in our Earth-defending toolbox.



A wall made from pieces of military landing strips divides Arizona and Sonora.

photo by Andrew O'Brien

To divide social and environmental justice into separate issues, even mentally, seems to betray a dangerous and anthropocentric delusion.

In every creation story that I’m aware of, including those from cultures as biocentric as they come, humans are inevitably set apart from other animals—they are given special insights, powers and responsibilities. And that’s fine. The wolves probably tell similar stories about themselves. But we are not wolves; it’s not our job to worry about their stories. It is *our* species that has placed all of life in danger. So who is going to stop the ecocide and build a healthier world if not strong communities of humans with a profound connection to their bioregions?

But we can never build these communities if we lock ourselves into the dead end of single-issueism—whether environmentalism, anti-racism, peace or even a vast collection of single issues tied together in our minds solely by a common oppressor. Alliances based around a common enemy have a tendency to disintegrate when one partner wins a certain degree of privilege, and single issues and special interests do not inspire or unite. Only *social relationships*—and the moral obligations that follow when you let yourself truly care about someone—have that capacity. When was a revolution ever fought for a special interest? Revolutions are fought and won for a *way of life*.

Fortunately, EF! is not an environmental movement, but a deep ecology movement. And deep ecology is the truest of social movements, because it encompasses all of our social worlds—the worlds of families and lovers, plants and animals, predators and prey. Deep ecology demands love and respect in every relationship between every living being. So as true deep ecologists, we will inevitably find ourselves working on causes that some view as “social” or perhaps even “human triviality.”

But if we are grounded in an understanding of the way that all of our destinies are connected, if we are always building authentic communities of Earth-based resistance, then we are in no danger of sliding into anthropocentrism. In fact, we are just rediscovering what so many Americans before us have known—the secret of being fully human.

*Ben Pachano is a Chuk’shon EFler. Defending mountain lions and hounding Minutemen—it’s all in a day’s work!*

A **locked-down, precedent-setting, dam-cracking wolf** to the **Direct Action Camp in eastern Iceland**, which has pledged an all-out resistance to the construction of the Karahnjúkar hydroelectric megadam. Destroying a large portion of Iceland's highland wilderness, the dam would provide power for an aluminum smelter to be built by Alcoa, a multinational company that has a long history of violating environmental, human and workers' rights.

In classic Earth First! style, a group of protesters snuck onto the construction site earlier this year and unfurled a large banner with a black, painted crack along the dam's wall. In another action on July 19, a group of 20 dam resisters hiked into the construction area, and four activists locked down to a company pickup truck and a huge Caterpillar construction vehicle, thereby blocking two access roads. Thirteen activists were arrested but later released without charge. It was the first such action in Iceland's history—the police even had to come up with a word for "lockdown."

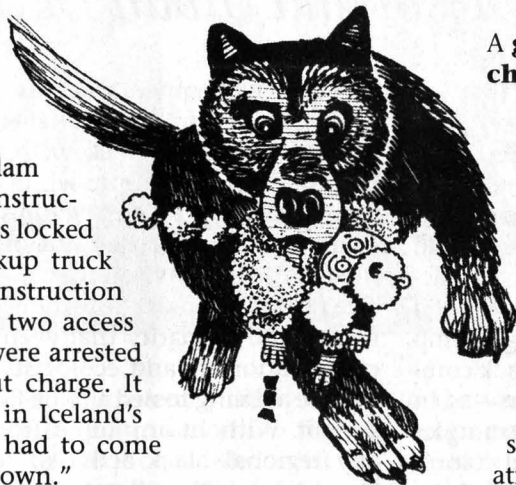
A **class-struggling, bicycle-riding wolf** to the **"common people" of Chizhou, China**, who took to the streets in an eight-hour riot on August 9, after witnessing a businessman in his luxury sedan hit a bicyclist, causing him to fall to the ground. An argument immediately ensued between the bike rider and the owner of the car, provoking the businessman to order his bodyguard to beat up the already injured rider. The riot that followed was described as a popular rebellion, and it led to the overturning and burning of police vehicles and the businessman's car. By the end of the evening, 10,000 Chizhou residents had filled the streets. One local resident said, "When anger boils up in your heart so long, it has to burst."

A **border-prowling, anti-racist-howling, Mexican gray wolf** to the **Buenas Noches Brigade** for driving away the California chapter of the Minutemen, a racist, paramilitary group advocating increased militarization of the US-Mexico border. The Minutemen have terrorized border residents with armed patrols of the area, violently apprehending whoever they think is an illegal immigrant.

A border fence that resembles the Berlin Wall, bright nocturnal floodlights, and aerial and off-road patrols are some examples of the military buildup on the border, affecting not only the people in the region, but also the natural surroundings. On July 28, with the objective of hunt-sabbing the Minute-kkklan's California desert outpost, the Buenas Noches Brigade, an affinity group of immigrant and

human rights activists from the San Diego/Tijuana area and part of the Gente Unida Coalition, confronted the Minutemen patrols with loud music, drumming, dancing and readings of Chicano poetry, making it impossible for the vigilantes to catch migrants and causing them to give-up and go home.

## Wolves and Poodles



A **gas-guzzling, fume-inhaling, directionally challenged poodle** to the **Rotary Club of Chatham, Ontario**, for deciding that the best way

to raise money for a new "eco-center" in the proposed French Fort Cove development was to raffle off a brand-new Hummer in September! Calling it a "Hum-dinger of a prize," the Rotary Club expressed no regrets about the ecological impacts of its prize choice.

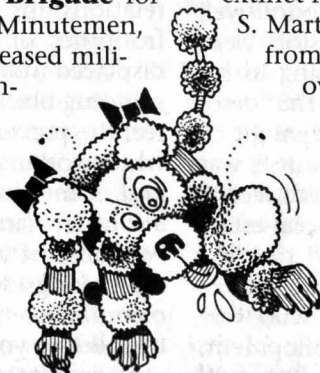
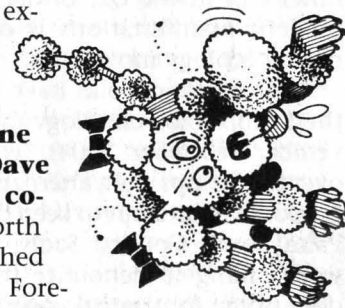
A **baby-you-can-drive-my-car-culture poodle** to **Paul McCartney** for announcing that his next US tour, this Fall, will be sponsored by the Lexus automobile company. "Lexus and I share the same philosophy and approach to creating the best work possible," McCartney said. The Lexus sponsorship, which includes multiple market-

ing opportunities throughout the tour, represents the first time the ex-Beatle has ever partnered with a commercial brand.

A **re-introduced cousin of the giant Pleistocene poodle** to **EF! co-founder Dave Foreman and the other co-authors** of "Re-wilding North America," an article published in the August issue of *Nature*. Foreman and friends propose introducing African cheetahs, elephants and lions into the North American wilderness in order to replace their now-extinct relatives. As University of Arizona Professor Paul S. Martin explains, many large mammals disappeared from the continent 13,000 years ago as a result of over-hunting, not climate change.

These armchair enviros somehow forget that we're having a hard enough time restoring modern megafauna to ecologies that are 500 years old! They also imply that indigenous populations destroyed an otherwise pristine ecology and that the intervening 12,500 years of biological and cultural evolution did nothing to remedy this situation.

The authors suggest that the more dramatic re-introductions should occur within wildlife parks or on private lands such as billionaire media-mogul Ted Turner's Ladder Ranch, where the *Nature* article was drafted. Can anybody say "American safari?"





# Monkeywrenching the Gentry

## *Environmental(ist) Racism and Urban Development*

BY PANAGIOTI TSOLKAS

In a nutshell, environmental racism occurs when white privilege and supremacy play a role in deciding the fate of communities of color regarding issues like development, pollution and physical displacement. Examples would be an interstate plowing through a neighborhood to accommodate white, middle-class commuters—like I-95 did through Overtown in Miami, Florida—or a garbage dump being sited in the backyard of a long-standing black community, causing sickness in children and seniors—as in the Osbourne community of Lake Worth. The examples could continue for pages, starting with the initial colonization of this hemisphere, following the footsteps of the Trail of Tears and the transatlantic slave trade into every inner city in the US. Understanding this history and its modern manifestations is of crucial importance to the radical ecology movement.

By now, lots of folks have heard about the fight against the Scripps biotechnology facility in Florida (see *EF!* November-December 2004). Throughout the early debates over the Scripps plan, alternative locations were persistently proposed in attempt to keep the facility out of undeveloped Palm Beach County. Sadly, very few outspoken enviros were willing to denounce the biotech work that Scripps does (some for strategic reasons, others seemingly sold on the legitimacy of this mad research). Instead, they focused only on where the facility would be located. Thus, one of the alternate sites backed by the regional environmental activist community—which had built quite a groundswell of support by this point—was Riviera Beach. The story went that Scripps President Richard Lerner was cruising in his yacht on the intercoastal waterway when he saw the “desolate-looking” Port of Riviera and thought that it might be a good spot for his biotech palace. The site, of course, was in the middle of a black community; the proposal reeked of gentrification. Scripps advocates, including real-estate developers and environmentalists alike, claimed that the research park would solve all of the city’s social and economic problems. Yet even Riviera Beach officials, who were expected to jump at the opportunity for redevelopment, criticized the plan. The fast-track process that Scripps was on allowed for little-to-no say from the communities that would be affected and, eventually, massively displaced to make way for new infrastructure and housing to accommodate Scripps employees and their families.

White environmental activists and their lawyers were offering to call off all legal challenges in exchange for what they considered a quick victory. It was an all-too-familiar stab in the back from white eco-activists to communities of color. In the end, Scripps refused to budge from its prime land, next to the J.W. Corbett Wildlife Management Area, allowing environmental alliances to remain intact. The debate offered a disturbing glance into the lack of integrity and solidarity that even the most hardcore white conservationists and ecologists show when they have a chance at being tossed a bone from the political/industrial system. Without any input from black residents or even any regional black activists, “our” victory would have been only another ill-gotten gain.

The Scripps debate in Palm Beach County is just one blatant example of a process that occurs all of the time in urban areas, usually unchallenged. Corporate interests decide the fate of neighborhoods, declaring themselves the saviors of these “blighted” areas. This urban re-colonization is merely the modern continuation of the “manifest destiny” that has swept the continent (and the planet) for the past several hundred years. In fact, the sometimes subtle shift of economic class that gave birth to the clumsy term “gentrification” has since given way to what resembles more of a scorched-Earth policy, where whole city blocks are evicted and leveled flat. It’s undoubtedly an issue of environmental justice, and it has, fortunately, been making its way into *EF!* circles.

Resisting gentrification is an incredible chance to build relationships with the diverse network of activists on the frontlines of this yuppie invasion—exiled immigrants, displaced indigenous people and small farmers, and long-standing black neighborhoods. These are often the first to feel the pressure, along with fixed-income senior citizens, white working-class folks, local businesses, artisans, artists and, somewhere in there, the radicals and activists who are often hanging from the fringes of the middle-class. For those of you who feel like you missed the chance to fight alongside the original North American resistance to colonization, if you’re from a city then it’s probably coming back to your hometown.

As romantic as the struggle against gentrification may sound to some of us, there are some pretty solid obstacles for white, middle-class activists to overcome. For one thing, the past five centuries of racial discrimination, kidnapping, slavery, forced relocation, indentured servitude,



artwork by Jimmy Bryant

rape, imprisonment, colonial occupation, military invasions, Jim Crow laws, police brutality, and white flight-caused urban ghettos—not to mention a whole list of global CIA coups—has led to an active, legitimate distrust of “white people” by the rest of the world’s population.

In recent bouts here in coastal South Florida, efforts to keep public, undeveloped land out of the hands of developers have found anti-racist eco-radicals walking a strange line between solidarity with indigenous immigrants facing gentrification—a triple relocation for many Guatemalan/Mayans who first lost land after the US-sponsored civil war and later fled their country because of an inability to subsist off the low prices of corn—and collaboration with sketchy, white, middle- and upper-class activists who are using their resources to fight big luxury developments for unrelated reasons. How much do we associate with people who are, for example, insulting and threatening toward immigrants and indigenous people, or who make racial insults toward public officials and are, in some cases, playing the same real-estate speculation games as the local elite?

If you think this question is tough, how about a challenge closer to home: To what extent are we, the hip, young, eccentric, paler-skinned radicals, part of that same gentrification process? Do we invite middle-class investment into low-income neighborhoods just by our presence? Are we like the canary in the mine, signaling to white, liberal yuppies that it’s safe to make that step back into the “scary” towns and cities that their (or *our*) parents abandoned to white flight a generation or two ago? Yeah, a lot of us are.

So where do we go from here? Clearly, there are no easy answers. EF!, as a network and a direct-action movement, is evolving to further embrace the struggles for wildness on an urban front, and a current of anti-racist sentiment seems to be developing. We should continue to fight, not just against the roads that are reaching out like arteries from the heart of the urban, industrial nightmare, but also closer

to the source of the nightmare’s tainted stream of blood. Bringing radical ecology, green anarchy and militant eco-action into the places where a lot of us actually live can be a more honest and direct approach to confronting the civilized greed and domination that is killing the planet.

This also means that we will be engaging in a battle where, very often, the stage has already been set for attacking racism head-on. It may be a humbling experience for many who are more accustomed to First-World wilderness campaigns to work in solidarity with urban folks and not always feel exalted as the hippie (or redneck) eco-savior. Instead, we might feel the fulfillment of being part of a community that, while it may not be versed in the principles of radical ecology or green anarchy *per se*, has experiences of resistance spanning a much wider spectrum than that of most middle-class, white activists—from Watts and Attica to Wounded Knee, Oka and Chiapas. If we’re going to succeed in overcoming the massive system of industrialism—and we have to—it’s going to mean fighting side-by-side with the folks who have had to bear the bulk of the system’s burden for centuries. And that means, first, a real commitment to fighting racism and white supremacy in our networks and affiliations, as well as in the broader society at large. There are some pretty impressive examples to look to and build from: Katúah EF!’s anti-KKK actions, More Gardens! in New York City, Victory Gardens in the Northeast and solidarity efforts in the Southwest around border issues. But there needs to be more on this list.

Come on, Earth First!. I think we can do this.

*Inspired by john johnson, panagiotti tries to remember to keep his name lowercase because he doesn’t like capitalism either, and he uses his Greek name because his family isn’t from England. Not that there’s anything wrong with being from England—panagiotti tries not to discriminate against anyone’s identity, even people who happen to be descendents or residents of the nastiest of empires.*





photo by Gwen

# raisin' hell to save a piece of heaven

BY SKYLER SIMMONS

This Summer, in response to the overwhelming devastation of our bioregion by mountaintop removal (MTR) coal mining, Katúah Earth First! (KEF!) embarked on an ambitious and intensive three months of outreach, direct action and community organizing to stop this sickening industry dead in its tracks (see *EF!* July-August 2005). Thirty-five arrests, thousands of dollars and an ungodly number of meeting-hours later, we decided to take a critical look at the ups, downs and all-arounds of Mountain Justice Summer (MJS). Hopefully, other groups and campaigns can learn from our mistakes and successes.

Our main goals for MJS were: to escalate resistance to MTR from a regional struggle to a national one; to raise awareness of the devastation of Appalachia by MTR; to empower, support and unify coalfield residents and groups; and, of course, to end all MTR and surface mining. We split our time between the four states currently affected by MTR: Kentucky, Virginia,

Tennessee and West Virginia, with the last two getting the most attention.

Many of us in KEF! got involved in the fight against MTR because of the overwhelming destruction it wreaks on our mountains, forests and rivers. But after working side by side with coalfield residents, we realized that MTR is as much an issue of human rights and economic justice as one of ecodefense. Our decision to put an equal emphasis on the human impacts of MTR played a major part in the successes of this Summer. Not only were we fighting to end MTR, we also demanded that

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...fighting MTR is not a choice  
but a matter of survival.

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the coal companies pay reparations to the communities they had looted during the past century. As a result of this position, we were taken more seriously by locals.

A central component of MJS was our listening projects. We would go door-to-door in communities affected by MTR and ask people about their

experiences. As the name implies, we were there to listen, not to preach or raise money.

The results of these listening projects varied widely. One day, you might not get past the first household because people were so eager to share their stories or take you four-wheeling all day, touring mine sites. Other days, you might be greeted by a slammed door or a gun in your face.

The listening projects helped us to identify the pressing issues in each area, as well as to link previously isolated individuals and communities who wanted to fight MTR. On the downside, we did not always pursue these new contacts, potentially losing valuable allies and our own credibility.

The lack of follow-up was partially a result of a larger weakness of the Summer: our scheduling. We had a preset schedule of which states we would be in throughout the Summer (a week in Virginia, a month in West Virginia, a couple of weeks in Kentucky and so on). Since we were obligated to be in our various host states when they had

projects and protests scheduled, we sometimes had to leave an area just when the ball got rolling.

For example, while doing a listening project in southwest Virginia, we discovered significant opposition to MTR within the coalfields there. However, we already had a big protest scheduled in Richmond a few days later, and West Virginia had a full plate for us immediately after. Thus, we ended up leaving an area that had a lot of potential before we really got to establish relationships with the locals. This left some of the locals feeling abandoned after they had put a lot of energy into hosting us.

I'm not sure if there was a way around this problem. We wanted to spend time in all of the states, and the time we spent in each one was up to the local organizers. Thus West Virginia and Tennessee received the most attention because locals there had the most resources to host MJS, while in Virginia there wasn't even a local group to work with. A main goal of ours for the future is to give much-needed attention and energy to the areas that were neglected this Summer.

MJS probably had the greatest impact in West Virginia. We were inspired and honored to work with the residents of the Coal River Valley and surrounding areas, where fighting MTR is not a choice but a matter of survival.

While there are other big dogs in the neighborhood, Massey Energy is one of the largest coal companies in West Virginia. It is definitely the most hated, due to its violent, anti-union policies, complete disregard for coalfield residents and horrific environmental practices. Coal River Mountain Watch had developed a list of five clear demands ranging from an end to MTR to a new elementary school (Massey's operations had poisoned the current one). Grandmothers were arrested while trying to present these demands to Massey officials, and a retired coal miner did a hunger strike on the steps of the state capitol. The media ate it up, and Massey spent millions on ads trying to discredit us.

This focused strategy was lacking in other states. In Tennessee, we would protest at the Office of Surface Mining one day, go to the governor's office the next and fuck with National Coal Company the day after that.

While all of these entities deserved our wrath, there is something to be said for hammering away at a focused target. In West Virginia, this strategy paid off with a tangible victory: We stopped Massey from building a second coal silo next to an elementary school. While it was only a small battle in the overall war against MTR, it was definitely a result of our persistence and focus.

When we first started MJS, a lot of us in KEF! thought it was going to be a Summer in the woods—occupying mines, harassing shareholders and blocking roads. While we did our share of that, MJS was much more about laying the groundwork for these types of actions through the far-less-glamorous work of community organizing, outreach and building connections. This was frustrating at times, but the work paid off when our direct actions had community support and were carried out by the people who are personally affected by MTR.

Looking back at our goals for MJS, where are we now? Well, we didn't stop MTR, but we never expected that to happen by the end of the Summer. Did we magnify the struggle from local to national and garner worldwide attention? Yes and no. Dedicated folks from around the country came to southern Appalachia to join the fight, and many others have promised to help out with solidarity actions in their hometowns. We occasionally received national and international attention, but by no means is MTR on the minds of every Jane and Joe in the country—yet. We did, however, create lasting relationships and a far stronger, united front against MTR. Local groups have had new energy injected into them, knowing that they are no longer alone, and they are now armed with new ideas on how to fight.

We are going to continue the fight against MTR in the coalfields and on the streets. We're always looking for more dedicated folks to help out. See ya' in the mountains!

For more information, contact Three Rivers Earth First!, POB 16309, Knoxville, TN 37996; [www.mountainjusticesummer.org](http://www.mountainjusticesummer.org).

*Skyler Simmons fantasizes about throwing CEO's of coal companies into sludge ponds when he's not busy chopping wood and digging gardens.*

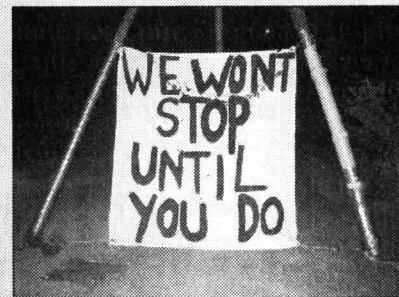
# Reclaiming Appalachia

## Mining Halted!

BY CALICO

The early morning sky sparkled on August 15, and Zeb Mountain was quiet, awaiting the rumble of dynamite that echoes daily through Elk Valley, Tennessee.

Before workers arrived, Katúah EF!ers (KEF!) debilitated a car and quickly erected a tripod behind it at the front gate of the mountain-top removal mine site. Two people locked down to the car, one through the wheel well and one through the passenger door. A banner was hung from the tripod that read: "We Won't Stop Until You Do."



*No getting past this.*

At approximately 5 a.m., a truck came barreling up the mountain with the intention of running over anything and anyone in its path. It stopped four feet away from the blockade, striking a woman who had moved to stop the truck from killing eight or more people. When the police arrived to assess the situation, they declared that it was private property, and the coal goons could do what they wanted to remove us. National Coal employees and police assaulted protesters and even shook one of the poles on the tripod, causing the person in lockdown to fall 30 feet.

A total of 10 protesters were arrested. KEF! has filed battery charges against a National Coal employee and complaints against the Campbell County police.



# The Humane Society

## Crosses the Line



BY THE NORTH AMERICAN ANIMAL LIBERATION PRESS OFFICE

Denouncing both the ELF and ALF, Michael Markarian, who works with the Humane Society of the US, stated: "We applaud the FBI and law enforcement authorities for trying to crack down and root out these criminals."

The animal advocacy movement is richly diverse, encompassing three major tendencies: animal welfare, animal rights and animal liberation. While all animal welfare and most animal rights groups insist on working within the legal boundaries of society, animal liberationists argue that the state is irrevocably corrupt and that legal approaches alone will never win justice for the animals.

Whereas animal liberationists have always urged a pluralist approach and shown appreciation for all tactics including those of welfare groups, the converse, unfortunately, has not been the case. Numerous welfare and rights groups have criticized the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) for actions they think hurt the

image of animal advocacy and alienate potential sympathizers. Many mainstream organizations have even pulled out of conferences including direct-action speakers. Such divisive actions have less to do with principle than with the economic demands of membership and a fear of being tainted with guilt by association. The more an organization has to lose, the more it strives to separate itself from militant aspects of the movement. For the Humane Society of the US (HSUS), a small empire is at stake.

In recent years, HSUS—the largest animal advocacy group in the country—has expressed increasingly open and vocal criticism of direct action and of groups such as the ALF. Yet in an August *Newsday* article entitled

"Feds Turn Up the Heat on 'Ecoterrorists,'" HSUS crossed a line by demonstrating far more solidarity with the police state than with the animal rights cause itself. Denouncing the Earth Liberation Front (ELF) and the ALF, Michael Markarian, executive vice president of external affairs for HSUS, stated: "We applaud the FBI and law enforcement authorities for trying to crack down and root out these criminals."

Fully aware of the unreliability of media sources, we contacted Markarian to confirm that he was accurately quoted. He replied with this message:

"In this case, my quote was accurate. The reporter asked me specifically about arson, and I told her in no uncertain terms that HSUS opposes such actions, and we believe that law enforcement agencies have a duty to stop people from engaging in this conduct, no matter what cause they claim to represent. As you know, HSUS has no quarrel with peaceful civil disobedience, but we have been very vocal in opposing activities such as property destruction,

threats of violence, harassment and arson in the name of animal protection. We ask people to adhere to a code of conduct in how they treat animals, and we should be prepared to adhere to a civil code of conduct ourselves.

"We have a tough enough challenge in asking people to accept the idea that animals should be included in our moral calculus. It increases our degree of difficulty when our movement asks people to accept illegal tactics. Finally, I'll add that I believe these actions hand a major strategic opportunity to our opponents. We cede the moral high ground to vivisectionists, factory farmers and others when we resort to these tactics. If people in our movement didn't engage in these tactics, it would not be surprising to have agent provocateurs conduct similar actions, as a means of undermining the credibility of the organizations and leaders of the movement."

HSUS is trying to get the feds off its back, but only to turn them loose on others, as it "applauds" the actions of the police state and cheers the good guys in the "war on terrorism." What HSUS doesn't acknowledge is the important victories for animals that have been achieved through illegal direct action. What it doesn't see is that it needs the "radicals" and "extremists" as a foil in order to position itself as "mainstream" and "respectable." What it doesn't grasp is that what happens to any one aspect of the movement happens to all of it and that once the corporate-state complex goes after the underground, the same machinery will grind away

at the aboveground if it begins to grow effective to any degree.

We solicited a response to HSUS's views from Kevin Jonas, the founder of Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty (SHAC) USA, a prominent spokesperson for direct action, and someone who has been shoved around more than a bit by law enforcement agencies and officials:

"It has always been my policy that it's not a good idea to air the movement's dirty laundry in public. Disputes, dramas and squabbles should be reconciled internally and not enjoyed by our opposition and exploited as a divide-and-conquer tactic by the FBI. To this end, I have tasted blood on more than one occasion from biting my tongue.

"Believe me, I get it. I understand that the more 'reputable' national welfare organizations feel they must keep their distance from the 'radical' efforts. Their pursuits are policy and potlucks in the hopes of setting not only a legislative agenda, but also in attempting to create a more compassionate culture. In a post-9/11, security-crazed, constitutionally challenged time, where animal-abuse lobbyists have adopted the Karl Rove playbook in attack ads, it can almost be forgivable that such large, right-of-center, mainstream organizations would insulate themselves from the organically grown, uncontrollable, nothing-to-lose, all-volunteer grassroots. Whether or not this distancing is a good idea or if the aims and objectives of such organizations are worthy of the

*continued on next page*



## BARE BONES

### 2.7 Million Animals Exterminated in 2004

Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER) and Sinapu released a report on September 7, stating that the federal government killed more than 2.7 million "nuisance" animals in 2004—a million more than the previous year.

More than 2.3 million starlings were eliminated, along with 22,204 crows, ravens and blackbirds, and 10,806 geese and swans. Predator deaths included 397 black bears, 359 cougars and 75,674 coyotes.

"Wildlife Services killed more than five animals per minute," said Wendy Keefover-Ring of Sinapu. "The toll on ecosystems wrought by this one agency is jaw dropping." More than 90 percent of the animals were killed by poison, often resulting in the widespread deaths of non-targeted species.

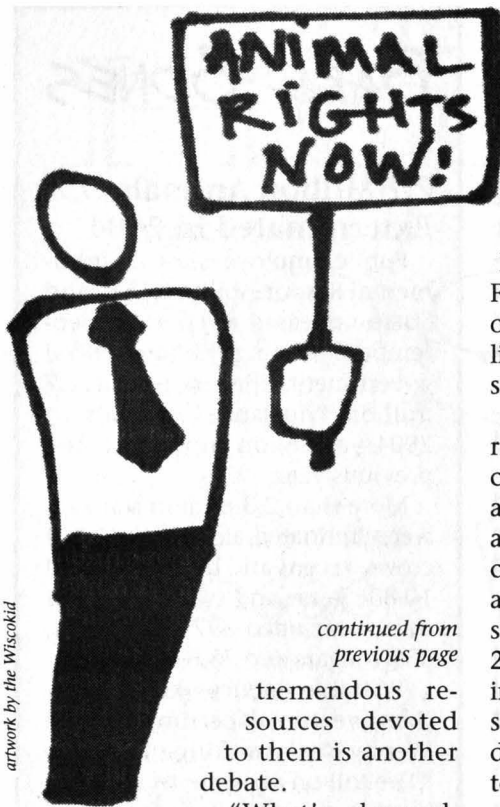
According to PEER, "The public has no idea that a significant portion of the federal wildlife management budget is actually devoted to extermination."

### Wolf Restoration Ordered

On August 19, a federal judge ordered the Bush administration to step up efforts to restore the gray wolf to Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and New York. Judge J. Garvan Murtha found that the Department of the Interior had violated federal law in 2003 when it ruled that no further efforts to restore the wolf were required.

The ruling sought to combine the upper Midwest region, where restoration has been successful, with the Northeast, in order to pretend that wolf populations were adequate across the entire 21-state region. Murtha wrote that the US Fish and Wildlife Service "simply cannot... 'lump together' a core population with a low to non-existent population outside the core area."





*continued from  
previous page*

tremendous resources devoted to them is another debate.

“What’s changed, though, is that it is not just distance that these monolithic organizations are hoping to create, but tactical hegemony. By organizing boycotts of what were national movement conferences, by forbidding their many hundreds of employees from even attending certain demonstrations, by slandering grassroots efforts to their few donors and condemning actions in the press, they seek to help the corporate state redefine what are acceptable forms of activism.

“As if those fighting for animals didn’t already have enough enemies, these actions pick a fight amongst colleagues and divide the movement. Organizations such as HSUS have begun parroting the eighth-grade rhetoric of George W. Bush, with insinuations that you are with them (their politics of the polite), or against them. HSUS’s acquisition of smaller organizations and corporate mergers with other large national groups speaks to this attempt at hegemony and the triumph of a welfarist agenda at the expense of a rights/liberation position.

“The actions of the factory farms and vivisection labs are far more egregious than anything HSUS does, and they warrant all of the precious little time we have—but recent statements by HSUS have given me cause to wonder where its allegiances truly lie. When Markarian applauded the FBI for ‘trying to crack down and root out these criminals,’ this was both politically distasteful and very, very personally troubling.

“The ‘criminals’ Markarian is referring to are the unknown number of courageous activists risking their lives and liberty to free tortured animals and damage the mechanisms that cause their suffering. These ‘criminals’ also include activists like myself and six others who are to stand trial in 2006—not for taking anything, breaking anything or even trespassing, but simply for having the goal of shutting down Huntingdon Life Sciences, a notorious animal-testing lab.

“In the eyes of HSUS, I am a criminal because I am young, passionate, take risks and am unabashed in my criticism of those who would ever dare raise a scalpel to the throat of a beagle puppy. I am a proud animal rights activist and apparently do not belong to the same movement that HSUS is seeking to homogenize.

“When Markarian and HSUS applauded the FBI, they took the right

**“In the eyes of HSUS, I am a criminal because I am young, passionate, take risks and am unabashed in my criticism of those who would ever dare raise a scalpel to the throat of a beagle puppy,”** responds SHAC USA Founder Kevin Jonas.

to disagreement a step too far. They are applauding the agency that drew four pistols on my dog and threatened to kill him, the agency that spent six months listening to my most personal and intimate phone conversations with family and friends, the agency that threatened to subpoena my dying grandfather to a grand jury investigating his grandson, the agency that ransacked my home and stole everything from CD collections to family photo albums. They are cheerleading the agency that is today trying to send me to jail for 23 years

for only my speech-related activity within a legal protest campaign.

“When Markarian and HSUS clap for the FBI, they are supporting the same agency that tried to ruin Martin Luther King, Jr., that framed and even murdered anti-war activists of the ‘70s and that covered up the car bombing of prominent environmental activist Judi Bari. HSUS is standing behind a government force that is trying to do the same thing to the animal protection movement that it has tried (and succeeded) to do to virtually every other social justice struggle in recent US history.

“It is a new level of naïveté and treachery to think that we can find allies amongst the army of the oppressor. It is a position that does not meet the test of history or ethics. It is a position of inconsistency, for HSUS to not support direct action for animals because it is illegal and considered violent by some, while applauding the FBI, which has a long and documented history of criminal fraud and murder. This position is almost as outlandish as the belief that we as a movement can tackle the world’s single greatest oppression and prejudice—the violent exploitation of animals—by simply being polite and patient, when no human-centered social justice struggle has ever succeeded using such tepid tactics.

“I am tired of biting my tongue. I don’t want to be quiet anymore while the executives at HSUS—who take six-figure salaries and some still even eat the animals that we are fighting for—condemn the risk-

takers and courageous few that gave this movement its birth and its continued hope. This is a debate and dialogue that needs to take place, but sadly, you will only find one side willing to sit at the table of reconciliation. HSUS and others seek to silence this voice of dissent and retreat behind the same tired platitudes used by animal abusers evading confrontation.

“We humans are quarrelsome animals and will never agree about everything, but certain common ground and respect can be reached if we can stop the vilification. As a start, this

is the challenge I give to Markarian, Wayne Pacelle and all those who represent HSUS: The next time you have the opportunity to comment on militant direct-action tactics in a news publication, condemn the lab employees or feedlot operators whom we are united against, and spare those who support the tough tactics that this movement needs to achieve its goals."

If HSUS is right that this movement can win justice for animals (or really, according to its stated goals, improve the welfare of the animal slaves) through education and legislation alone, then why are more animals being tortured to death today than 20 years ago? Why is the mainstream movement barely able to do anything more than increase the size of cages and bring about "humane slaughter?" Why is it helping corporations polish their public image and mitigate consumer guilt over eating murdered animals?

There are lessons to be learned from the recent history of the environmental movement. As Mark Dowie describes in his book *Losing Ground*, the big, mainstream US environmental groups that emerged in the 1970s—the so-called "Gang of Ten"—clamored for respectability and political influence as they sold out, compromised, pandered to power and even thwarted grassroots radicals, while growing into bloated bureaucracies that craved business students more than acute activists. The same pattern has emerged in the animal advocacy movement, and it is a worrying trend.

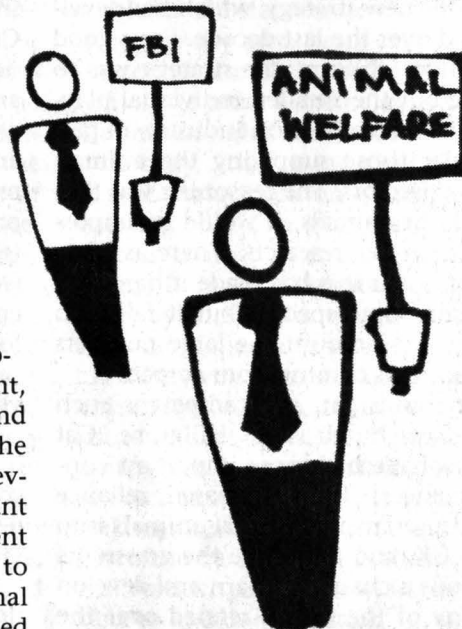
But just as Paul Watson broke with the conservatism of Greenpeace to create the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society and confront the bastards who kill animals with impunity on the high seas, just as the founders of Earth First! renounced the futility of mainstream environmental tactics and organizational corruption in order to spawn an important, militant, direct-action approach, and just as the ELF emerged to take the defense of the Earth to the next level, so there will always be a militant animal rights/liberation movement emerging in appropriate response to the increasing enormity of animal suffering that is tragically paralleled

by the ineffectiveness of mainstream approaches.

Opposition to direct action is the last refuge of speciesism. The ALF, SHAC and other direct-action groups are employing the tough tactics necessary to help animals, and they are effective where other approaches fail. Ask any animal "advocate" who opposes the use of high-pressure and illegal tactics on behalf of animals if they also oppose the historical use of sabotage and even violence to free human beings in wars of independence and liberation, and you will expose the latent speciesist view that animals do not merit liberation "by any means necessary."

The broad animal advocacy movement needs each and every effective tactic that helps the animals. It is time to turn the tables on mainstream criticism of direct action and to ask instead whether it is not, in fact, mainstream approaches that do more harm than good, as they cozy up with corporations, defend the murderous and violent police state, and trumpet the message that exploiting animals is acceptable so long as you do it "humanely."

We're in this fight for animals together. The underground and direct-action movement doesn't expect solidarity from aboveground and mainstream groups like HSUS—but it does hope, at the very least, that the noble and uncompromising cause of abolitionism will not be vilified and betrayed by those courting favor with corporations and the state.



## BARE BONES

### University Bids to Silence Anti-Vivisectionists

This August, in an attempted contract-violating land grab, the University of Wisconsin-Madison offered one million dollars for a property that had already been sold to the Primate Freedom Project for its National Primate Research Exhibition Hall. Animal rights groups claim that the university's offer to pay so much for a property worth only \$150,000 is an attempt to silence the critics of primate vivisection.

The property in question lies directly between the Harlow Primate Laboratory and the Wisconsin National Primate Research Center, two of the most notorious primate research facilities in the country. The exhibition hall will highlight the historical and current abuses of monkeys and apes in publicly funded experimentation.

### Maxxam Wins Cash, Fires Workers

Charles Hurwitz, chairman and chief executive of Maxxam/Pacific Lumber (PL), will receive \$72.3 million after a judge ruled in August that federal banking officials had filed baseless legal actions against Hurwitz on behalf of California environmentalists.

The judge agreed with Hurwitz that a 1995 probe into a savings and loan failure was a politically motivated effort to force Hurwitz to turn over critical portions of the Headwaters Forest in Humboldt County.

At the same time, Scotia Pacific, PL's timber-holding subsidiary, announced that it would fire a third of its workforce, including science staff responsible for ensuring compliance with environmental laws. Although the company only narrowly avoided bankruptcy in July, a massive amount of its money is still being transferred to Maxxam.



# The Rise and Rise of the



photos courtesy SHAC UK

# Anti-Vivisectionists

BY MAX GASTONE

For the anti-vivisection movement, the last five years have been ones of tremendous change while full of spectacular successes. Some, like the victorious battle to shut down the Newchurch guinea-pig farm, are obvious. The campaign demonstrated a powerful commitment from the activists who saw through a tough, six-year struggle with constantly hard-hitting actions that were often as outrageous as they were innovative. Less tangible is the effect that the movement has had on the vivisectors themselves, yet which is summed up by the reason one scientist gave for avoiding vivisection: "I am trying to lunatic-proof my life as much as possible."

Perhaps more significantly, the grassroots anti-vivisection movement has matured. It now has a sense of purpose and focus unparalleled in its history. The learning curve has been steep, but campaigners have finally developed strategies to actually bring about the end of vivisection. There's still talk of decades, but instead of nebulous goals, there are now specific plans as to how this will be achieved.

These days in the UK, it is common to hear the "animal rights mob" denounced as terrorists by politicians, newspapers and other commentators—especially when it comes to vivisection. This attitude is not based on specific actions or tactics, but on a revolution in how campaigns select their targets.

Newchurch is the latest vindication of this new strategy, which has developed over the last decade. For a good number of years, the strategy was to take out the smaller, individual players in the vivisection industry, in particular those supplying the animals to vivisectors. The reasoning was that without animals, it would be impossible to do research. There is little doubt that this has made it harder to obtain some species, but it failed to take into account the large numbers of animals coming from abroad.

In hindsight, the campaigns such as Newchurch and Hillgrove Cat Farm have had more important consequences: They increased reliance on the transportation of animals into the UK, and they gave the grassroots groups a chance to learn and develop many of the tactics refined over the

last five years. These campaigns created a focus on the infrastructure of the targeted businesses, rather than generalized protest. Organizers aimed at taking out key parts of the vivisection enterprise, often putting pressure directly on the staff—the logic being that without workers, there is no business.

A major shift came with the launching of the Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty (SHAC) campaign. Huntingdon Life Sciences (HLS) was the largest animal research contractor in Europe, worth half a billion dollars in 1992, and a significant player in the animal research industry. Long a target of protesters, HLS was rocked by a 1996 television exposé, which left it in a weakened state. In 1999, campaigners fresh from the victory at Hillgrove formed SHAC, and HLS became the number one target of grassroots anti-vivisectionists.

The campaign continues today, but it has become larger than just one company. It has developed and refined new strategies that have left the entire vivisection industry floundering.

The insight of the new anti-vivisection strategy was that any company

depends on a variety of other companies in order to survive. SHAC started by using capitalism against itself; shareholders and market makers were targeted and brought to their knees. This was done to hit at the heart of HLS's finances, as its ability to raise money and take orders was closely linked to the value of its stock. The share price duly crashed, and HLS was driven first off the London stock market and then off the New York Stock Exchange. Animal rights gained a fearsome reputation in financial centers, and vivisectionists were hit by a wave of demoralization.

While animal research companies and those supplying the animals had become prepared to deal with direct protest by animal rights activists, there are many other companies not in that position. Such companies do not profit enough from animal research to justify the new security costs and hassle they began to incur. The movement switched en masse to knocking out suppliers wherever they could find them.

Many companies resisted, but a key component of the animal rights movement is its tenacity. Once a target was identified, campaigners simply refused to let up.

When companies did resist, it gave the movement a chance to flex its muscles and demonstrate its full power. Thus one of the world's largest insurance companies, Marsh & McLennan, put up a nine-month fight with the backing of the pharmaceutical industry. Eventually, it surrendered. As a result, the next target, the equally mammoth accounting firm Deloitte & Touche, lasted only 10 days. Indeed, the bigger the company, the easier it appeared to knock it out.

The tactics of personalization begun in the earlier campaigns were simultaneously taken on by underground elements of the movement. Every company is a pyramid of command with decision-makers at the top. Actions by the Animal Liberation Front increasingly focused on these people, regularly vandalizing their cars and homes with clear messages.

This has cumulated in a rarefied climate in the UK, with laws being passed simply to curb animal rights activists and the mainstream press embarking on a campaign to demonize grassroots anti-vivisection campaigns. Fortunately, this demonization has worked against the vivisection industry, as those most affected by fear are the two groups the industry needs most: suppliers and the next generation of researchers. Instead of cutting off the animal rights mandate, the climate of fear has given activists another powerful weapon. This has given a few protesters far more impact outside an office or home than they would otherwise have.

In 2004, Daniel Vasella, chairman of the multinational pharmaceutical corporation Novartis, referred to the UK as the most hostile place in the world to do animal research. Meanwhile, a Japanese consortium withheld a 1.8-billion-dollar research project from the UK because of the government's inability to stop the

**Many companies resisted, but a key component of the animal rights movement is its tenacity. Once a target was identified, campaigners simply refused to let up. When companies did resist, it gave the movement a chance to flex its muscles and demonstrate its full power.**

animal rights movement. Elsewhere, scientists are complaining about the problems of attracting new students—as people shy away from an industry where they are likely to end up as targets of the more extreme elements of the animal rights movement.

Globally, the movement stands in a powerful position—but it is not standing still. The next stage in this process is now in motion with the Allied Primate Coalition and the Gateway to Hell campaign. Activists have developed a long-term strategy to make vivisection so expensive that universities will no longer be able to afford it; coupled with falling student numbers, it is hoped that this will focus vivisectionists' minds onto genuinely seeking alternatives to animals. Only when the backbone of academic animal research is broken will it be possible to outlaw vivisection.

To achieve this, the price of the animals must be pushed even higher. Currently, Gateway to Hell campaigners are focusing on the island of Mauritius, the second largest exporter of primates to labs in the West (see *EF!* May-June 2005). Its national airline, a soft target, has already stopped transporting primates. The focus of the campaign is not the island itself, but its most important industry: tourism (which provides a large number of attractive targets globally). Campaigners are concentrating on travel agents, encouraging them to stop selling vacations to the Indian Ocean island until it revokes all licenses to export primates.

Similar boycotts are being organized against other airlines that fly animals to labs around the world. Several years ago, one German university highlighted such targets as one of the most vulnerable parts of the vivisection supply industry. Given the experience of the movement to date, these are just the sort of targets it excels at taking out.

The successes of this global campaign against vivisection suppliers will hurt not only HLS, Oxford University and other current vivisection targets, but it will impact a large swathe of laboratories in Europe and North America.

The goals of the animal rights movement are ambitious, but through quick thinking and relentless campaigning, it now has a clear vision. By maintaining their integrity and applying themselves in a united way, anti-vivisectionists are becoming a powerful global force, able to take on companies and countries regardless of the oppression thrown their way.

For more information, contact Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty USA, POB 22398, Philadelphia, PA 19110; (609) 936-8422; [info@insidehls.com](mailto:info@insidehls.com); [www.shacamerica.net](http://www.shacamerica.net).

Also visit [www.gatewaytohell.net](http://www.gatewaytohell.net); [www.directaction.info](http://www.directaction.info); [www.shac.net](http://www.shac.net).

*Max Gastone has been active in a number of animal rights and other grassroots campaigns in the UK for more than a decade.*



# Darley Oaks Guinea Pig Farm

## Another Animal Torturer Closes Down

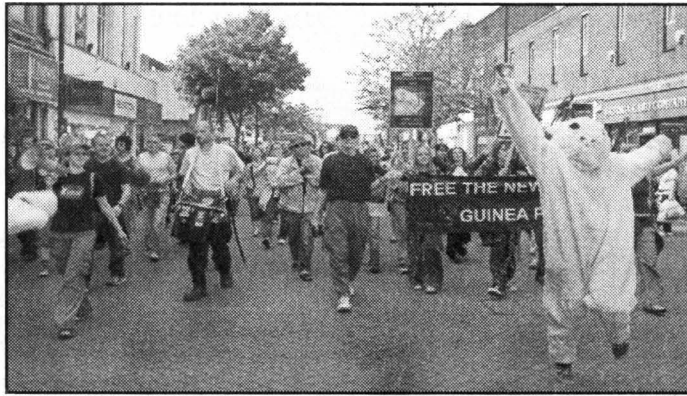


photo by Gary Austin

Following six years of sustained pressure, animal liberation activists in the UK scored a huge victory on August 23, when the Darley Oaks guinea pig farm in Newchurch declared that it will close by the end of the year.

For 40 years, David Hall & Partners have bred guinea pigs and sold them to vivisectors, who subject the animals to painful and deadly tests. The Hall family will now shift its focus to growing crops instead.

On September 4, 200 people gathered for a victory celebration. Accompanied by a lone drummer, the crowd marched

silently down the street, out of respect for the thousands of murdered animals. At a designated point, however, the crowd exploded into cheers of celebration and danced through the streets for the rest of the afternoon.

"This victory is a dramatic blow to an industry that can and will be defeated by kind-hearted activists," according to Save the Newchurch Guinea Pigs (SNGP). "Members of the public are no longer willing to stand by and let vivisectors horrifically maim and kill... a whole host of intelligent species to manufacture make-up, oven cleaners,

shampoos and damaging medicants."

Darley Oaks is only the latest in a series of animal breeders to be shut down by activist campaigns in the UK. Like those before it, the campaign to shut down Darley Oaks mixed aboveground protest with creative underground direct action—targeting all employees of the farm, members of the Hall family and their associates. This sustained pressure drove employees and contractors from the company, and it resulted in the Hall family being banned from golf clubs and even pubs before they finally caved in.

Underground tactics used included property destruction, threatening letters and hanged effigies left on doorsteps. In a move that was never claimed as a part of the campaign and was disavowed by SNGP, the body of Gladys Hammond—mother-in-law of one of the farm's owners—was removed from its grave in October 2004. Upon announcing the closure of the farm, members of the Hall family said that they hoped their decision would lead to the return of Hammond's body.

For more information, visit [www.liberation-now.org](http://www.liberation-now.org).

# Frontlines

## Greenpeace Ramps Up Anti-Coal Campaign

On August 29, nine Greenpeace climbers dropped a banner from a cooling tower at a state-owned, coal-fired power plant in Canakkale, Turkey. The action was part of Greenpeace's "Mediterranean Energy Tour," designed to raise awareness about unsustainable fossil fuel use in the area and to urge governments to switch to renewable power sources.

Activists in Rotterdam, Netherlands, applied similar tactics on September 8, when the Greenpeace ship *Argus* blocked cranes at Europe's largest coal import harbor. They also unfurled a banner reading, "Coal Fuels Climate Change," and occupied coal loaders.

"This port currently imports 24.7 million tons of coal each year, and every ton returns to us as climate change," said Sven Teske of Greenpeace International.

## ALF Liberates Brazilian Zoo Animals

The Redençao Park Zoo in Porto Alegre, Brazil, was raided by the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) on September 11. The ALF painted slogans and broke into cages,

freeing two birds and 10 monkeys. Left behind was a manifesto explaining the reasons for the action.

The liberation was reported widely in the local media, effectively spreading the message that "the ALF is alive in Brazil."

## Oregon Treesitters Shot At

While forest defenders are no strangers to repression, treesitters at the Sten Timber Sale in central Oregon have recently been subjected to some particularly disturbing acts of violence. On August 28, someone fired a .45-caliber pistol into the air near the treesitters, and on September 10, a man shot tri-tipped hunting arrows directly at them, puncturing a water container and cutting a treesitter's hand. Although protesters have evidence of both assaults, including shell casings, license plate numbers and the water jug with an arrow through it, authorities have done almost nothing to investigate.

US Forest Service contract climbers evicted two out of three treesits in the timber sale on September 14, but

# New Twists in Battle Over HLS Stock Trading

On September 8, the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) announced that it would postpone trading shares of Life Sciences Research, also known as Huntingdon Life Sciences (HLS). The NYSE gave no reason for the decision, which followed weeks of emails and phone calls to NYSE executives, protests against traders in HLS shares and action by the Animal Liberation Front (ALF).

Brian Cass, managing director of HLS, had flown in from the UK and was standing on the trading floor when the decision was announced. The *Telegraph* reported that Catherine Kinney, president of the NYSE, pulled HLS executives aside and informed them that several members of the New York financial community had warned the NYSE that animal rights activists could threaten the security of the exchange.

"We are astonished that the NYSE would knuckle under to a load of English hippies," groused one disappointed investor.

The exchange's initial decision to trade HLS stock had been announced only three weeks before. In addition to the predictable flurry of protest sparked by a Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty (SHAC) action alert, two actions by the ALF in two days added to the pressure on the NYSE. On August 23 and 24, two separate New York yacht clubs frequented by executives of Carr Securities were covered in spray paint. An ALF communiqué read, "Let this be a message to any other company that chooses to court HLS in its entrance into the NYSE... *don't touch HLS!*"

While animal rights activists celebrated their victories and went to work to make the NYSE's decision permanent, the forces of animal exploitation prepared their own response. The Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works, which in May held hearings into the ALF and Earth Liberation Front, announced a hearing into SHAC for October. Kinney and John Thain, chief executive

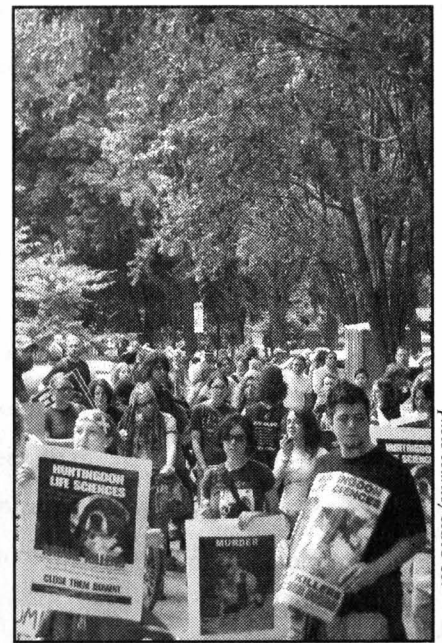


photo courtesy SHAC UK

of the NYSE, are expected to testify about their decision to drop HLS.

In a letter to Kinney and Thain, Senator James Inhofe of Oklahoma demanded an explanation: "It seems to me unimaginable that this country's worldwide symbol of the integrity of capital markets... would capitulate to threats, or even the mere threat of threats, from a single-issue, extremist group."

For more information, visit [www.shacamerica.net](http://www.shacamerica.net).

one of the trees was reoccupied the same night. Despite the occupation, logging in the area is ongoing.

## British Car-Monger Pied

British newspaper columnist Jeremy Clarkson was pied by the Biotic Baking Brigade while receiving an honorary degree from Oxford Brookes University on September 12. As Clarkson posed in his cap and gown during the post-event press conference, a woman hit him directly in the face with a custard pie that she had concealed in a rolled-up newspaper.

Clarkson, an automotive writer, has come under fire for environmentally destructive stunts, such as driving an SUV through a fragile peat bog. Shortly before the pieing, Clarkson said, "I *do* have a disregard for the environment. I think the world can look after itself, and we should enjoy it as best we can."

## ELF Trashes Maine Landfill

The Earth Liberation Front (ELF) caused more than \$30,000 dollars in damage to the West Old Town Landfill in Old Town, Maine, on September 11. Heavy machinery and automobiles were damaged, locks were glued shut, and a water hose was inserted into the basement of the landfill's main office building,

flooding it. In addition, slogans such as "We Don't Want Your Trash," along with the acronyms "ELF" and "GA," were spray-painted at the site.

The landfill is owned by the state and operated by Casella Waste Systems under a deal between those two entities and paper giant Georgia-Pacific (GP).

The dump's connection to GP and its location near the sources of Old Town's drinking water have made it a target of monkeywrenching in the past.

## Kiwis Castigate King Coal

Three activists with the Save Happy Valley Campaign locked down to train tracks on August 13, preventing Solid Energy's coal trains from reaching a port on New Zealand's west coast.

Two activists locked directly to the tracks, while the third hung suspended from a tree, 90 feet up, with his support rope connected to the tracks. Police had to remove concrete sections of the track to extract the protesters, who blocked three trains for just under four hours. All three activists now face a \$200,000 lawsuit from Solid Energy, in addition to charges of trespass and willful damage.

In May, Solid Energy was granted permission to proceed with an open-pit coal mine in Happy Valley.



# Armed with Visions

## The Other Side

*Take my soul, but the struggle  
continues*

—Ken Saro-Wiwa

In right hand lane  
Heading South on Route 64  
Saw late model blue Mitsubishi  
truck swerve to  
shoulder around what thought  
was wheel.

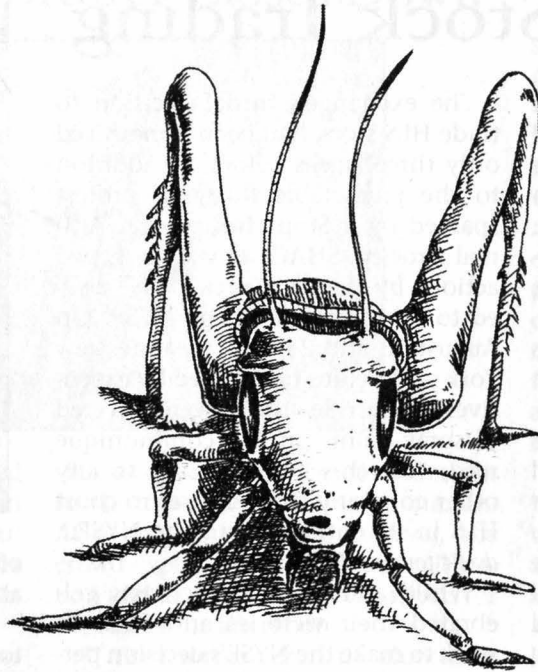
I also swerved but saw it  
was large tortoise  
trying to get across  
6 lanes of interstate.

I saw the neck stretch out  
walking then stopping  
and going in shell  
as my truck approached

My prayers, my fears, my uncertainties,  
and my admiration  
symbol of longevity & this land  
going headlong towards danger  
technology rampant death, destruction  
will we make it.

—Turtle

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## Abbey

Ed Abbey you're trouble  
go to heaven, they need you  
not easy, not pretty  
a problem, a pity  
I forget sometimes  
just how much you loved  
these four corners  
and just how  
right you made it  
to scream at machines  
or quietly by night  
to act in ways  
in or out of the laws of man  
but ever so close  
to the heart of the matter

—John Fago

## The Sacred Hoop

I am the dinosaur  
And I am  
The buffalo.  
I am  
The plants and the trees  
and the flowers.  
The dust of my ancestors  
Is in my bones  
The Earthblood flows  
Through me.  
The Earth gives.  
The Earth receives.  
I grow out of the dust  
Of all the bodies  
Of my ancestors.  
They nourish me  
And give me life.  
In the Great Circle  
They are  
All my relations.

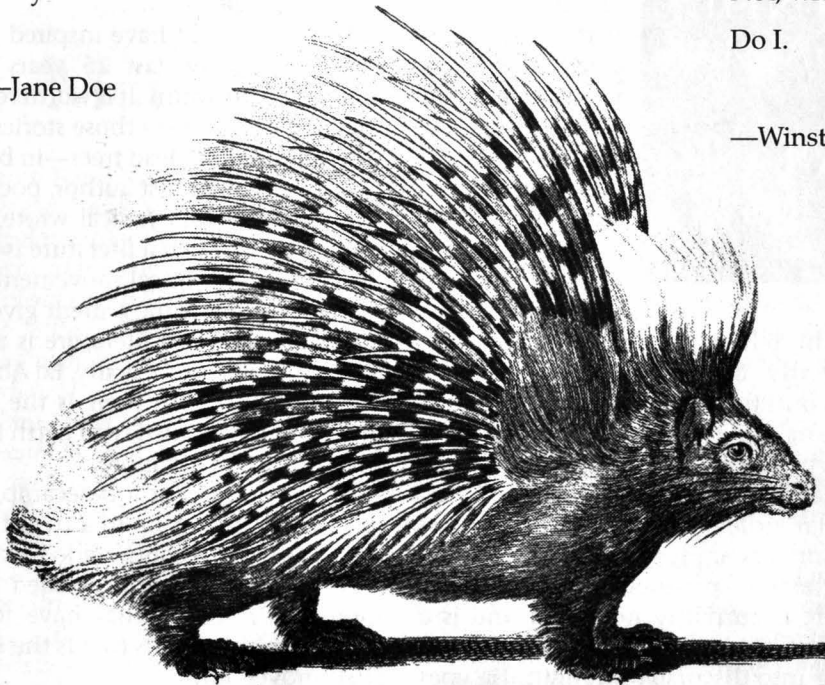
—Mary de La Valette

# Clear as Cut Glass

## For You

I climbed the highest mountains and crossed  
the raging rivers,  
I slept in the rain on the cold hard ground.  
I forgot my friends, my family, my name.  
I traveled by night alone through the bush,  
and slept in the day,  
and waited and watched.  
I burned their bridges and smashed their machines.  
Ran through the night but they hunted me down.  
Carried my silence deep in my heart.  
I gave up my freedom and years of my life.  
Now I dream in this cell of the day I'm released  
When I come home to the wilderness,  
the whispering trees, the singing creeks,  
the grizzly cubs and the lone wolf.  
My conscience is clear, my soul is free  
and I'll be there again—  
For you.

—Jane Doe



*& Just as Dangerous*

## On Eating Blackberries

Once far enough from the house,  
from the confines of civilized language,  
I forget who I'm supposed to be,  
and become who I am.

Words flow like food, like water, like blood.  
The plants speak to me.

I become an animal,  
Blackberries in my maw.

All of a sudden

My fears

Of breaking human law

To defend this sacred land

Dissolve,

Playing no part in this flow.

The bees, the birds, the bears know no human laws,

Nor do trees, nor berry bushes,

Nor, when one with bee, bird, berry bush and tree,

Do I.

—Winston the Pooh

## Ecology

*for Paul Winston*

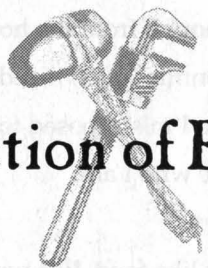
it takes a long  
time  
long time  
to understand  
what it means  
when you step  
on that caterpillar

—Ed Engle



# Beyond *The Monkey Wrench Gang*

## The Fiction of Earth First!



BY JAMES JOHN BELL

I was mailed a box containing a programmable coffee machine that I never ordered. I later received a bill and promptly called the manufacturer. I finally got through to the company after speaking a series of words like “bill” and “problem” to some robo-operator software program. However, the voice that answered was another robot, offering me yet another list of options. In my rage, I recalled a science fiction story by Philip K. Dick, where the characters faced a similar problem. I spoke clearly into my phone and said, “Pizzled.” After the robot asked me to repeat myself, a human operator finally picked up.

“What does ‘pizzled’ signify?” the machine asked. “Can you define it in terms of alternate semantic symbols?”

“Pizzled,” he stated, “means the condition of a product that is manufactured when no need exists. It indicates the rejection of objects on the grounds that they are no longer wanted.”

—“AUTOFAC,” PHILIP K. DICK, 1955

I’ve since learned that robo-operator programs are set to immediately queue to a human upon hearing a number of key words, like “cancel” or “bomb”—ah, the power of employing the right words at the right time. The power of language to impact reality is one of the underlying currents in some of the best literature, especially science fiction and fantasy. This same literature has gone on to inspire some of the world-changing political movements of our day. It is no coincidence that powerful stories and movements go hand in hand.

In her book *Ceremony*, Native American author Leslie Marmon Silko uses the theme of incantational words to explain the invasion of the white man. A circle of witches are performing black magic, and the head witch intones: “What I have is a story, go ahead and laugh if you want to, but as I tell the story, it will begin to happen.”

There are many stories that underlie the systems that shape our world. In a very real sense, many of the most powerful stories are invisible, even dismissed by most people as being inconsequential. For example, focus on the jokes told in the US. Sadly, there are many more misogynist than feminist anecdotes and many more racist than

anti-racist jokes in circulation. These are just a small part of the many unacknowledged stories that define what is normal and explain the status quo. In so doing, they define our sense of what kind of a world is possible.

The telling of any story functions covertly by suppressing alternative or contrary plotments of the same events. To tell a previously “untold story” is an act that can be extraordinarily disruptive to the existing social order. Narrative scholar Ross Chambers argues that such storytelling acts to produce authority where there is currently no power and is a means of converting historical weakness into discursive strength. He goes on to say that “as such, it appears as a major weapon against alienation, an instrument of self-assertion and an ‘oppositional practice’ of significance.” Thus, the new story begins to

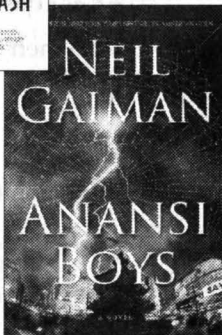
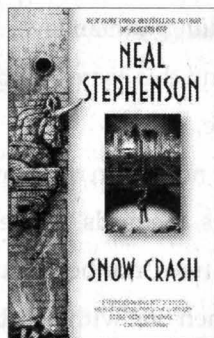
erode the old and triggers the telling of other stories of the same kind. This aggregation of similar stories creates a highly charged consciousness of solidarity among teller and listener.

A new story doesn’t need or rely on literature to spread. It spreads in public places, as well as through our daily actions and political resistance. Such stories have informed, and are informing, the radical environmental movement. They’re the stories that we share. They’re our language, which has spread to the depths of popular culture, appearing in places like *The Simpsons* and *The X-Files*. They’re stories embedded and written in the nonhuman language of the wild landscapes that remain protected due to our actions—places with names like Headwaters Forest, Cove/Mallard and Warner Creek.

The stories that have inspired Earth First! during the last 25 years have come in many forms. It is worth reflecting for a moment on those stories that first appeared on dead trees—in books. Grace Paley, feminist author, poet laureate and anti-war radical wrote, “No one writes alone. If a literature is coming, there’s a political movement too, know it or not. A movement gives literature power, and literature is a fuel to the movement.” Clearly, Ed Abbey’s *The Monkey Wrench Gang* is the book most often associated with Earth First!, yet there are many more.

When working at a basecamp, giving a workshop or up in a treesit, you get handed or recommended many a book. Below are quotes pulled from some of the books that have found me through the wilds that is the Earth First! movement.

“I’m telling you this because the people of your culture are in much the same situation. Like the people of Nazi Germany, they are the captives of a story.”



I sat there blinking for a while. "I know of no such story," I told him at last.

"You mean you've never heard of it?"

"That's right."

Ishmael nodded. "That's because there's no need to hear of it. There's no need to name it or discuss it. Every one of you knows it by heart by the time you're six or seven.... And you hear it incessantly, because every medium of propaganda, every medium of education pours it out incessantly.... It's like the humming of a distant motor that never stops, it becomes a sound that's no longer heard at all."

—ISHMAEL, DANIEL QUINN, 1992

A man answers an ad in a local newspaper from a teacher looking for serious pupils, only to find himself alone in an abandoned office

with a full-grown gorilla named Ishmael. A creature of immense wisdom, Ishmael has a story to tell that extends over the lifespan of the Earth.

"Tomorrow we are going to track the most violent storm in recorded history," he said. "It will break tomorrow, probably by noon, and it will kill thousands, probably tens of thousands of people. If it persists beyond a few hours, it may kill millions."

—HEAVY WEATHER, BRUCE STERLING, 1994

Earth's climate has been drastically changed by the greenhouse effect. Tornadoes of almost unimaginable force roam the open spaces of Texas; on their trail is a ragtag band of computer experts and atmospheric scientists who live to hack heavy weather.

*They won't stop killing the whales. They make dog and cat food out of them, face creams, lipstick. They kill the whales to feed the dogs, so the dogs can shit on the pavement, and the people can walk in it. A kind of natural cycle.*

—TURTLE DIARY, RUSSELL HOBAN, 1975

A lonely, embittered man and a woman separately find something

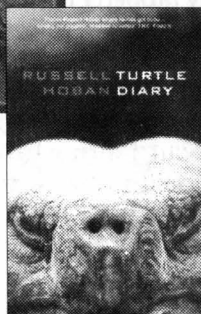
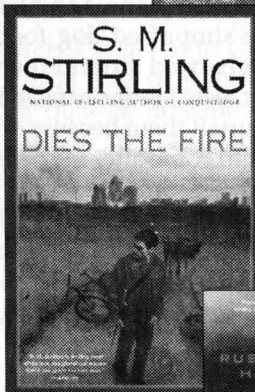
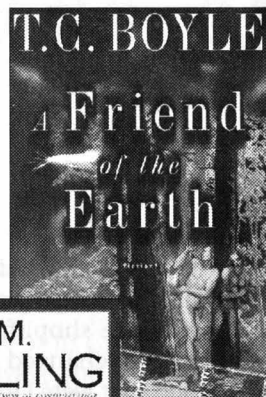
very stirring about the sea turtles at the London Zoo. They form an odd camaraderie as they plot to return the turtles to the ocean.

"But take that very first step!" He laughs wildly. "Take that first step, perform an act of resistance of even the smallest kind, and suddenly your perception changes. Reality changes. You see it can be done. It might take time, but...." He laughs again. "Yeah! You bet it can be done! Let's go celebrate your first act." He hits the dashboard, hard. "Here's to resistance!"

—THE GOLD COAST, KIM STANLEY ROBINSON, 1988

The books in Robinson's Three Californias trilogy (*The Wild Shore*, *The Gold Coast* and *Pacific Edge*) tell of three futures: a post-nuclear struggle for survival and rebirth; a developer's dream gone mad; and a world that has rediscovered harmony with nature, yet must fight to preserve its idyllic way of life from the resurgent forces of greed and exploitation.

James John Bell is a co-founder of the smartMeme Strategy and Training Project ([www.smartmeme.com](http://www.smartmeme.com)) and the editor of *LastWizards.com*. He is a Northwest writer and occasional contributor to the *Earth First! Journal*.



## More Anarchist and Environmental Fiction

*Anansi Boys*, Neil Gaiman, 2005  
*Dies the Fire*, S.M. Stirling, 2004  
*Singularity Sky*, Charles Stross, 2003  
*Spectacular Happiness*, Peter D. Kramer, 2001  
*A Friend of the Earth*, T.C. Boyle, 2000  
*The Telling*, Ursula K. Le Guin, 2000  
*Sick Puppy*, Carl Hiassen, 2000  
*Perdido Street Station*, China Miéville, 2000  
*Flyboy Action Figure Comes with Gasmask*, Jim Munroe, 1999  
*Greenhouse Summer*, Norman Spinrad, 1999  
*Antarctica*, Kim Stanley Robinson, 1998  
*The Beach*, Alex Garland, 1997  
*The Family Tree*, Sheri S. Tepper, 1997  
*Anarchist Farm*, Jane Doe, 1996  
*The Girl Who Owned a City*, O.T. Nelson, 1995  
*Gaia's Toys*, Rebecca Ore, 1995  
*Zodiac*, Neal Stephenson, 1995  
*City Death*, Stephen Booth, 1993  
*The Elementals*, Morgan Llywelyn, 1993  
*The Fifth Sacred Thing*, Starhawk, 1993  
*Snow Crash*, Neal Stephenson, 1992

*Synners*, Pat Cadigan, 1991  
*Hermetech*, Storm Constantine, 1991  
*He, She and It*, Marge Piercy, 1991  
*Jurassic Park*, Michael Crichton, 1990  
*Earth*, David Brin, 1990  
*Radio Free Albemuth*, Philip K. Dick, 1985  
*Eclipse: A Song Called Youth*, John Shirley, 1985  
*Quest for the Faradawn*, Richard Ford, 1982  
*Camp Concentration*, Thomas M. Disch, 1980  
*Kampus*, James E. Gunn, 1977  
*Trouble on Triton*, Samuel R. Delany, 1976  
*Ecotopia*, Ernest Callenbach, 1975  
*The Dispossessed*, Ursula K. Le Guin, 1974  
*The Sheep Look Up*, John Brunner, 1972  
*Red Moon and Black Mountain*, Joy Chant, 1970  
*Setting Free the Bears*, John Irving, 1969  
*Agent of Chaos*, Norman Spinrad, 1967  
*The Drought*, J.G. Ballard, 1965  
*We*, Eugene Zamiatin, 1924  
*The Secret Agent*, Joseph Conrad, 1906  
*Frankenstein*, Mary Shelley, 1831



# BRINGING DOWN endgame

BY DERRICK JENSEN

ARTWORK BY BREAKFAST

**I** THINK IT WOULD BE VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR EVEN the most dogmatic pacifist to make a moral argument against immediately taking down every cell-phone tower in the world. Cell phones are, of course, annoying as hell. That might be a good enough reason to take down the towers, but there are even better reasons. There is, of course, the very real possibility that tower transmissions cause cancers and other problems, to humans and nonhumans alike. Even ignoring this, however, there's the fact that towers—cell phone, radio and television—act as mass killing machines for migratory songbirds: five to 50 million per year.

**T**HE QUESTION BECOMES, HOW DO YOU TAKE OUT A cell-phone tower? I need to say up front that I'm a total novice at this sort of thing. I am, to slip into the language of the mean streets, a goody two-shoes. My whole life, I've rarely done anything illegal, not out of an equation on my part of morality and obedience (or subservience) to laws—at least I hope not—but instead partly because many illegal activities, such as using drugs, repulse or scare me, while others, such as insider trading, simply do not hold my interest. Even with those that do hold my interest—e.g., taking out dams, hacking and destroying (or otherwise liberating) corporate property—I'm not only almost completely ignorant of how to do them, but I am also fairly nervous about getting caught.

Don't get me wrong: I've raised a little hell in my time. Sometimes I go crazy and turn right on red without coming to a complete stop, and I routinely drive four or sometimes even nine miles over the speed limit. A few anarchist friends set up

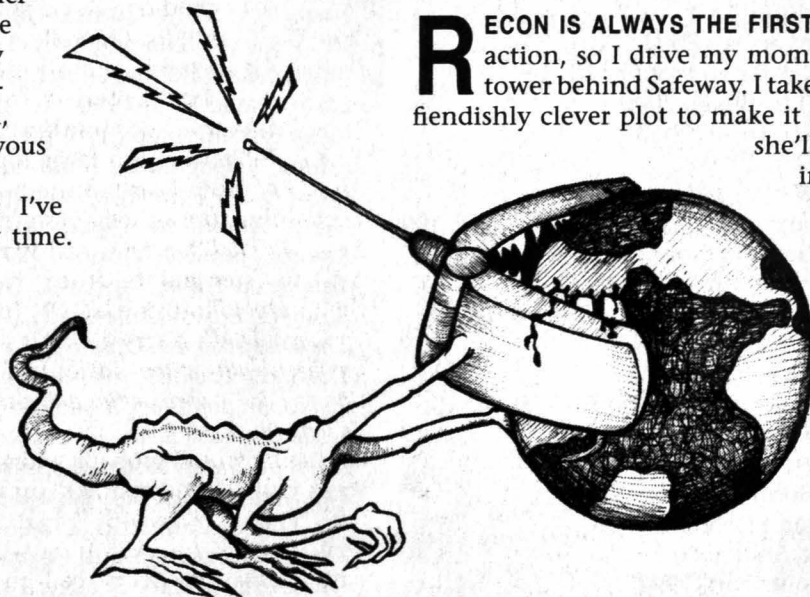
a talk where I'd share the stage with a couple of former Black Panthers. One of them did time for robbing a bank, the other for hijacking a plane. I thought a moment, then confessed, "I once shoplifted dog food from Wal-Mart." High fives were exchanged around the table.

I have to add that were I more attracted to illegal activities, I would probably curtail them because of what I write. If law enforcement wants to come after me because of what I write, I'll take them on, and if someday I have the courage to quit writing and take out dams (note the plural, *dams*: I don't agree with the Plowshares tactic of turning yourself in if you destroy property belonging to the occupiers), they can try to catch me. But in the meantime, I'm not going to give them any cheap opportunities.

All of which is to say I'm a coward. I'm going to write about how I would take down a cell-phone tower here in town, but I'm not going to do it. If I were going to do it, I wouldn't be so stupid as to write about it, or even talk about it with anyone I didn't know and trust literally with my life. And all of *that* is to say that you FBI agents reading this (and the ones tracking my strokes on the keyboard) can go ahead and lose your erections. This isn't a confession. And even if your CIA buddies decide to play smackyface with me, there isn't much I can confess (unless you count the survey stakes I've removed, but I've already written about that, and besides, removing survey stakes is a fundamental human duty).

**R**ECON IS ALWAYS THE FIRST STEP IN ANY MILITARY action, so I drive my mom's car to the cell-phone tower behind Safeway. I take her car not out of some fiendishly clever plot to make it so if anything happens

she'll get sent up the river instead of me, but because my car has been sitting on blocks in her driveway for more than a year now (I never knew, by the way, that moss would grow along the weather-stripping around the rear window).



# CIVILIZATION...

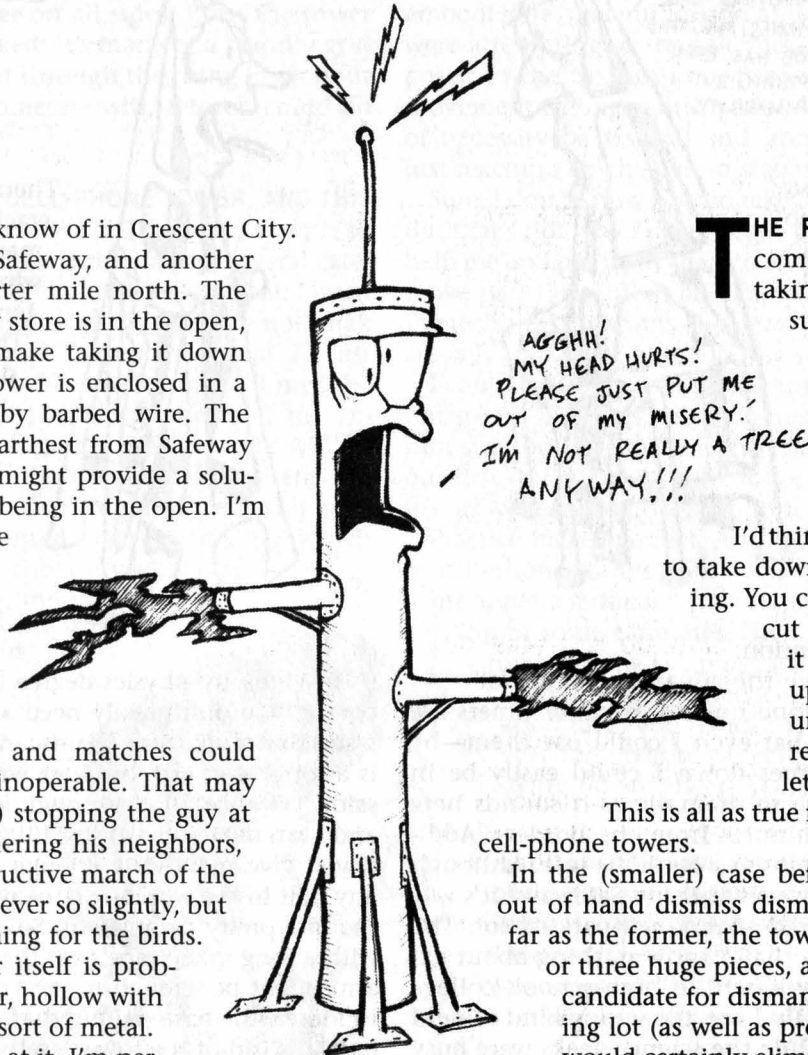
## ...AND CELL-PHONE TOWERS

There are two towers I know of in Crescent City. There's the one behind Safeway, and another off in the woods a quarter mile north. The one closest to the grocery store is in the open, which would obviously make taking it down more problematic. The tower is enclosed in a chain-link fence topped by barbed wire. The two sides of this fence farthest from Safeway face thick woods, which might provide a solution to the problem of it being in the open. I'm certain the fence could be cut easily and quickly.

The problem is that I wouldn't know what to do next. There are a couple of sheds inside, and I'd imagine that some gasoline and matches could render the whole thing inoperable. That may be great for (temporarily) stopping the guy at the restaurant from bothering his neighbors, and would slow the destructive march of the economic system, if only ever so slightly, but it wouldn't do a damn thing for the birds. Unfortunately, the tower itself is probably three feet in diameter, hollow with a two-inch shell of some sort of metal.

I sit in my car and look at it. I'm nervous, as though even *thinking* about how I would do this is enough to draw cops to me (the same is true now as I write this). Of course, if I *were* going to bring this down, I would never have driven here for this reconnaissance. At least not during the middle of the afternoon. I would have parked far away and walked. And there's no way I would have done it in this town, either. Crescent City is too small, and I'm too well known.

I don't know what to do. I'm a writer. I have no more idea how to take down this tower than I would know how to write a computer virus, or than I would know how to perform brain or heart surgery. Worse, I'm spatially and mechanically inept—probably a couple of standard deviations from the norm—with a heavy dose of absent-mindedness thrown in for good measure (and it seems that absent-mindedness would be a tremendous curse to *anyone* contemplating anything deemed illegal by those in power).



**T**HE POINT IS THAT WHEN IT comes time for us to start taking out dams, I'm not sure I'm the one you want holding the explosives.

That said, here's what I'm thinking as I look at the cell-phone tower. Basic principles. There are, I'd think, maybe six major ways to take down anything that's standing. You can dismantle it. You can cut it down. You can pull it down. You can blow it up. You can undermine it until it collapses. You can remove its supports and let it fall down on its own.

This is all as true for civilization as it is for cell-phone towers.

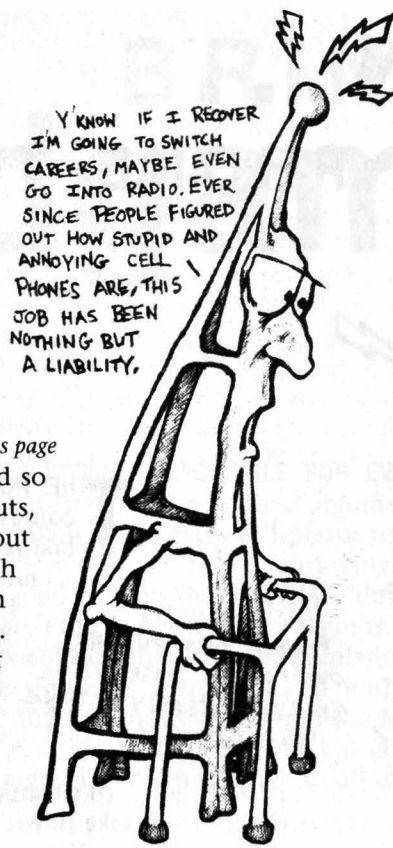
In the (smaller) case before us, I think we can out of hand dismiss dismantling and digging. So far as the former, the tower is constructed of two or three huge pieces, and so is obviously not a candidate for dismantling. And the big parking lot (as well as presumably deep footings) would certainly eliminate digging.

Pulling it down can be dismissed just as easily, unless you've got some big earthmoving equipment and a hefty cable to attach fairly high up on the tower. I don't think my mom's car has the horsepower to move it (and I know mine sure as hell doesn't). I keep picturing that scene from *The Gods Must Be Crazy* where they attach one end of a cable to a tree and the other to a jeep, and end up winching their vehicle into the air. *Oh, hello, officer. What am I doing up here? That's a very good question. My cell-phone reception has been really crappy lately, and I thought I'd get better reception if I got closer to the antenna. And say, would you mind helping me down?*

Cutting would probably work, so long as we're clear that we're not talking about hacksaws. In that case, I may as well ask my friends the *Aplodontia* to come gnaw it down. This tower is *big*. A grinder wouldn't work either in this case. There are lots of cell-phone and other towers out

*continued on next page*





continued from previous page  
in the mountains, and so long as you had lookouts, grinders might work out there, but that much noise here in town seems contraindicated. Oh, hello, officer. What am I doing here? That's a very good question.... But an acetylene torch might do the trick, although once again, here in town there's a good chance it would draw some attention.

Explosives would have the advantage of it not mattering whether anyone notices, because timers are easy enough to make that even I could use them—by the time the tower comes down I could easily be in another state (not quite so dramatic as it sounds here since I live about 20 minutes from the border). Additionally, in this case explosives would be safe. Although I've been saying this tower is "behind Safeway," it's way behind Safeway, in an old abandoned parking lot. The problem, once again, is that I know nothing about explosives. I was certainly a nerd in high school, college and beyond, but evidently I was the wrong kind of nerd for the task at hand. While the science geeks were busy seeing what bizarre ways they could combine chemicals to blow things up and dropping M-80s down toilets in (usually unsuccessful) attempts to get school canceled (though being geeks, I was never quite sure why they wanted to cancel school), my friends and I were reading books and playing Dungeons and Dragons (and a hell of a lot of good that does me now: If only a +3 Dwarven Warhammer could bring down civilization, I'd be in great shape).

Ah, the pity of a misspent youth.

This leads us to removing the tower's supports and letting it fall on its own. That may be the easiest, and something even I could handle. The other tower, in the woods to the north, has about 20 guy wires. Everything I've read suggests that these wires are even more deadly to birds than the towers themselves. Some places, you can pick up dead birds by the handful beneath the wires.



Their necks are broken, skulls cracked, wings torn, beaks mangled. But I also know what happens when high-tension wires are severed: Those opposed to their own decapitation ought to be far away. Which leads us back to explosives.

But there's good news in all of this. I see giant bolts surrounding the base of the tower behind Safeway. I'd imagine they're very tight, but for one of the few times in

my life, my physics degree might come in handy. Of course, you don't really need a physics degree to understand that if you want to unscrew a tight bolt, all you need is a long lever arm on your wrench. Just as Archimedes said, "Give me a long enough lever and a place to stand, and I can move the world," I'll go on record as saying that if you give me a long enough lever arm, I can unscrew any bolt in the world—oh, okay, maybe just a lot of bolts that are pretty damn tight. So a huge pipefitter's wrench with a long metal pipe over the end to extend your lever arm might be enough to get you the torque you'd need to loosen the base (failing that, you could always cut the bolts instead of the tower itself: Remember, always attack the weakest point!). Then walk away and wait for the next windstorm to do the trick.

Emboldened by the realization that this just might be doable, I make my way through the dense forest to the northern tower. I quickly find a path, which opens into a large meadow. The only problem is that this is the wrong meadow: no tower. So it's back into the woods, this time on a game trail. Note that I didn't say *big* game. Sometimes I crawl on my belly. I cross a mucky streambed and see prints of (very small) deer. Often I stop to pull Himalayan blackberry thorns from my shirt. A few times from my arms, hands, fingers, face. I realize that somehow a thorn has lodged in my heavy denim pants at the—how do I say this delicately?—very top of the inseam. With every step it scrapes against my, well, let's just say *extremely* high on my thigh. Finally the path opens out again, and I'm there.

The first thing I do is thank the gods for making turnbuckles (actually, that's the second thing I do after taking the thorn out from my pants). Loosening the wires, and even undoing them, would be simplicity itself. There's a lot of them, but security would be no problem here: Forest surrounds this tower on all sides. Even the tower itself could be easily attacked: It's made of a spindly grid of metal tubing. I could cut through the thing in an hour or two with a hacksaw. Someone with a torch could do it in minutes.

**I'M SITTING AGAIN BY A CELL-PHONE TOWER, AND THIS** time I'm thinking: *I could do this*. There are, as with so many activities we may find intimidating, several categories of barriers to action. There's the intellectual: I must convince myself that it's necessary. There's the emotional: I must *feel* that it's necessary. There's the moral: I must know that it's right. There's the consequential: I must be willing and prepared to deal with the effects of my actions. Related to this, there's the fearful: I must be willing to cross barriers of fear—both tangible, real, present-day fears and conditioned fears that feel just as real and present but are not (e.g., if I wanted to go waterskiing, which I don't, I would have to face not only whatever fears I might have of speeding behind a boat, but my visceral repulsion to waterskiing based on beatings associated with it when I was a child. There is no longer any danger of my father hitting anyone if I were to go waterskiing, but it still *feels* like there is. How many of our other fears have been inculcated into us by our families or the culture at large?). There's the technical: I must figure out how best to proceed. There are undoubtedly others that I can't think of.

For someone to act—and this is a generic process, applying as much to asking

someone out as to weeding a garden as to writing a book as to removing cell-phone towers as to dismantling the entire infrastructure that supports this deathly system of slavery—each of these barriers to action must be overcome, or sometimes simply bypassed in moments of great embodiedness, identification and feeling (e.g., if someone were attempting to strangle me—with bare hands, as opposed to the toxification of my total environment—my movement through these various barriers to action would of necessity be visceral and immediate—no pondering, just reaching for the pen to stab into his eye).

Sure, I don't know how to take down a cell-phone tower. But that's not why I don't act. A purpose of this book is to help me and perhaps others to examine and, if appropriate, move past these other barriers to then leave us only with the technical questions of *how to*, because so often *how to* is actually the easiest question, the smallest barrier.

I could take out a cell-phone tower. So could you. We're not stupid (I'm presuming no members of the current administration have made it this far in the book). And while our first few attempts may not be pretty, we would learn, just as we learn to do any technical task.

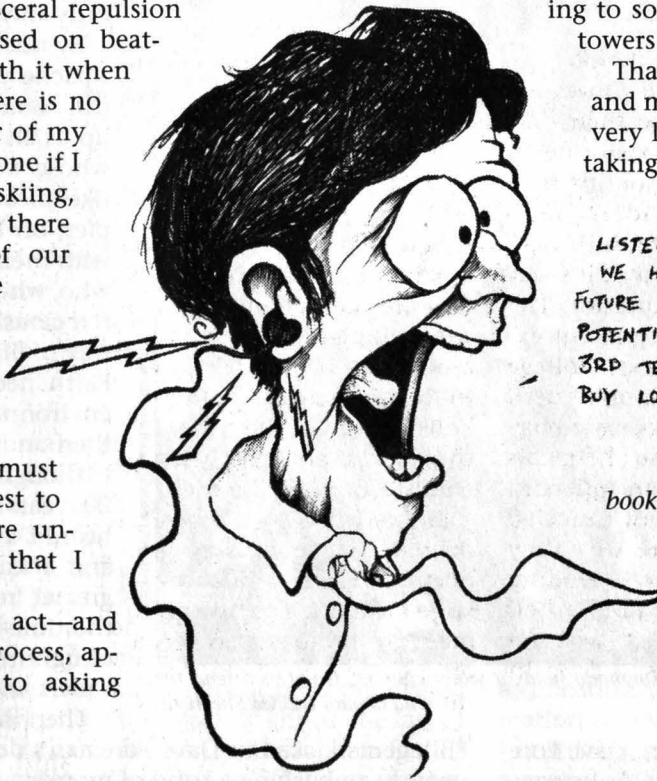
Practice makes perfect. And fortunately, there are a lot of cell-phone towers (I bet you never thought you'd see me append *fortunately* to a statement like that!). According to some estimates, there are 138,000 cell-phone towers in the US, plus radio and television towers.

That's a lot of practice. If we just put our hearts and minds and hands to it, it probably won't take very long before we get pretty good at it, so that taking down towers becomes something natural, like breathing, like taking long deep breaths of cool fresh air.

LISTEN... DONT TELL ME  
WE HAVE EXASPERATED OUR  
FUTURE ACCUMULATIVE RESOURCE  
POTENTIAL!!! WHAT ABOUT OUR  
3RD TERM DIVIDENDS!!! AGGHH!!!  
BUY LOW, SELL HIGH!!!!!!

Soon enough, we'll wonder what took us so long to get started.

Derrick Jensen is the author of many books, including *A Language Older Than Words* and *The Culture of Make Believe*. This excerpt is from his forthcoming book, *Endgame: The Collapse of Civilization and the Rebirth of Community*, which will be published by Seven Stories Press in Spring 2006.



**PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT. AND FORTUNATELY,  
THERE ARE A LOT OF CELL-PHONE TOWERS...**



# Howling Like a Wild Wolf

## OVERCOMING FEAR AND UNDERMINING THE INVADER

BY ROD CORONADO

It's hard to judge the radical environmental movement by the last 25 years, but if I had to, I'd say that I'm very disappointed. Twenty years ago, when I discovered the Earth First! movement, I thought that the generation of Earth warriors I shared this country with had a fighting chance. People from all walks of life in the center of the First World were coming together and strengthening an already strong love and affinity for the natural world, shaking off their consumerist upbringing and realizing their wild dreams with creative direct action that marked an allegiance with the Earth instead of the society responsible for her destruction. Monkeywrenching was the ultimate demonstration of our love for Mother Earth, and none among us questioned its historical or practical necessity, let alone its legitimacy. We were warriors, and our connection as a tribe meant the shared commitment to abandon the system that constantly betrayed the people and places we loved.

Monkeywrenching was not just another tool in the box, it was what separated EF! from the toothless, First World environmental movement. A fellow Arizonan, Dave Foreman, was our firebrand spokesperson, bringing listeners to tears with his stories of seeing the dying green fire in a wolf's eyes, telling us how the chainsaws also tore his flesh when they tore through an ancient redwood, before hoisting the sacramental monkeywrench to the sky and howling like a wild wolf himself. What else were we supposed to do once that fire was lit inside our hearts, but defend the wildness we loved by any and all means?

Back in the early days of EF!, Dave and the gang erected a monument in New Mexico to Victorio, a Mimbres Apache who drove out or killed invading miners in the late 1800s. After years of watching his people die on the dreaded reservations, Victorio had enough of being pushed around by the system. He knew there was no other way to live than with the Earth, not against her like the Invaders were forcing his people to do. So rather than die a slow death on the malaria-infested reservation, Victorio and a small band broke free to live the only way they knew how.

By identifying with the Apache wars of the American Southwest, EF! held up as an example a people whose worldview centered, like most indigenous peoples, on living in harmony with their environment and who, when attacked, fought ferociously to defend their way of life. That is what the Earth needed from the US environmental movement, then and now. That's what I thought was beginning 20 years ago when I first heard Dave Foreman speak, and I knew there was no greater responsibility than the time-honored tradition of fighting against one's Invaders and oppressors.

Then in 1990, in Arizona,

FBI agents kicked in Dave Foreman's door, while simultaneously ambushing a band of monkeywrenchers in action toppling powerlines. It was the first time that EF! experienced the legal consequences of its low-intensity campaign of what Foreman called "ecotage"—acts of economic sabotage against the forces destroying the Earth. Foreman—the editor/publisher of *Ecodefense: A Field Guide to Monkeywrenching*—received a suspended sentence and probation. The FBI's case against Foreman and EF! effectively ended



Rod Coronado holds a water cannon, ready to defend the wild aboard the Sea Shepherd.

photo courtesy Captain Paul Watson

Foreman's advocacy of ecotage. Gone were the days of Foreman pedaling *Ecodefense* after his lectures and signing copies for wild, awakened "ecoteur" recruits (he refused to sign my copy in 2001). Most importantly to our growing struggle, the FBI had silenced our most outspoken representative while also demonstrating that "monkeywrencher" was just another name for "terrorist." But the ecological insurrection did not end as the Invader had hoped—like the living organism it represents, seeds took to the Earth and grew into something very familiar.

Like Victorio and his struggle against the Western worldview invasion, the actions of the Earth Liberation Front (ELF) and Animal Liberation Front (ALF) are enough of a threat to have been deemed by the FBI as the most active domestic terrorism groups in the US. Burning SUVs would be the same as attacking the horse-drawn wagons and supply lines of the pioneer Invader; torching luxury trophy homes, the same as burning down their forts. Today, the insurrection comes from within the fort's walls, and those still fighting have been forced to realize that when they abandon the privileges of the Invader, they join the ranks of all who have challenged him before. Bloodthirsty savage, ecoterrorist—it's all the same.

The Invader continues to instill fear with outrageous prison sentences: The American Indian Movement suffered Leonard Peltier as an example, just as we have with Jeffrey "Free" Luers. What both have shown is that what fear does not kill, it makes stronger—and those conscious enough to defend the Earth do so knowing that there is no turning back on this ancestral path to freedom, no matter how dear the personal price.

That's what disappoints me today—not the constant assault or the scale of destruction against our life support system, but the lack of action to stop it. When I used to go to Game and Fish Department public hearings 20 years ago, EFlers packed the house. If the meetings accomplished nothing else, they let us tell the bastards killing the last of the wild nations that they'd have to go through us first. It might have meant little to them, but to EF! it was another way to remind them, and ourselves, that our love and allegiance was to our Mother. Nowadays, I'm grateful to have more than myself representing our animal relations at the system's meetings. Wherever the desperately needed Earth warriors from this suicidal society have gone, they have thrown away a sacred responsibility in the hour of our planet's greatest need, and I think I know why.

The thing that prevents the multitudes of conscious and aware individuals in our culture from taking direct action to stop, or at the very least interfere with, what they know to be wrong is fear. Fear makes us withdraw, and instead of fulfilling our social, ecological and political responsibilities, we feel depressed or guilty for remaining a part of the problem. Without an ability to deal with fear, one may feel great empathy, but not enough to risk one's own place of comfort and privilege. Some reinforce their fear by discrediting those who do try to make a difference.

Fear is common in the broad, political left, and its paralyzing effect on direct action in the First World is what separates our resistance to ecological destruction from that of generations past, and from those in what the Invader calls the "Third World."

We here in the First World feel fear when we think of Free's 22-year prison sentence or of a violent death. Yet for so many across the world, oppression, tragedy and violence have become all they know. How do we defeat the fear and intimidation that robs us of our wild



Old-school EFlers conquer their fears with their favorite tools in hand.

photo courtesy EFl archives

nature, spirit and willingness to fight back? We confront it. We know how bad things are, and I'm not going to waste time rattling off the numbers and statistics. We know the unthinkable evil and cruelty that is being committed in places like Huntingdon Life Sciences and Guantanamo Bay in our own name and by our own citizens, yet we do so little to stop it—little that is truly effective.

Instead of accepting responsibility for our rogue government, the American left—including most environmentalists—has become *less* politically active, barely challenging the corruption that we know exists. We turn on our computers and become more aware of the suffering, oppression, war and destruction committed by US corporate armies. But rather than take to the streets, liberals worship messengers like Amy Goodman and Michael Moore.

When the Internet first became a primary form of communication for our resistance, many spoke of the information that would be shared—believing, as the American left still does, that if people are made aware of injustice, somehow it will stop. But the US is still torturing prisoners; the last wild buffalo are still being slaughtered; hundreds of thousands of young harp seals are still dying every Spring; the last wild wolves and indigenous people are under continued assault. Instead of the citizen action that one would expect from non-sympathizers and non-collaborators, we hide in our remaining privilege—hiking,

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river rafting, drinking, cashing our career environmentalist checks, paying the bills, growing ever more cynical, angry or depressed, but most of all ignoring the deep feeling in our hearts that still allows us to hear the Earth's cries.

Awareness without action is worthless. Most people who rise up to prevent the destruction of their lives and homes, like Victorio, didn't learn such responsibilities late in life, but were taught by families living in harmony with the life around them—something there's ever less of in our consumer-based society. That is what we must return to if any movement hoping to preserve life on this planet is to survive.

In the EF! campaign to defend Mt. Graham here in southern Arizona, an Apache elder told me that we must not forget why Mt. Graham was sacred, continue to practice that belief with prayer and teach our children to honor the mountain in the way our ancestors had. If we did that, he said, protecting Mt. Graham and all of Mother Earth would come naturally. Defending your home should be second nature, and helping others who are doing the same is still what the Earth and our movement needs most. What's needed is not just more monkeywrenching, but more of the human-to-human and animal-to-human living that keeps the Earth's spirit, and our own, alive.

In my own awakening from the fear that immobilized me while living underground as an FBI fugitive, the Earth Mother spoke to me, saying, "We are here, we have been here and always will be here, but there is nothing we can do to help you until you believe in us more than what you fear." Once freed from fear—and despite five federal grand juries investigating our ALF cell at the time—we were able to rise from hiding, organize and destroy the US government's Predator Research Facility in Utah.

We must always remember where our power comes from, and believe in it more than in the fear our enemies use. When we believe in the power of the Earth more than in our fear of prisons or death, we attain the level of warriorhood we need to survive the future. When we follow our hearts and instincts, and act to prevent the Earth's destruction and protect the innocent, we tell the Invader that the resistance is alive and strong. We say that the sisterhood and brotherhood with all life that has already survived so many generations of war will not be broken on our watch.

The price of such responsibility may result in us being hunted down like Victorio, the bison of Montana or the wolves of New Mexico and Arizona today. But if we allow fear to prevent us from doing what we know is fair and just, we disrespect our still-living and fighting wild sisters and brothers and those who are in prison, paying a higher price for freedom than most of us ever have. That is what hurts the most. Despite the number of people among us who are fully aware and able to describe the ecological turning point we have either already passed or are fast-approaching—global warming, habitat destruction, species extinction, human wars and corporate pollution—so few are standing up to fight it.

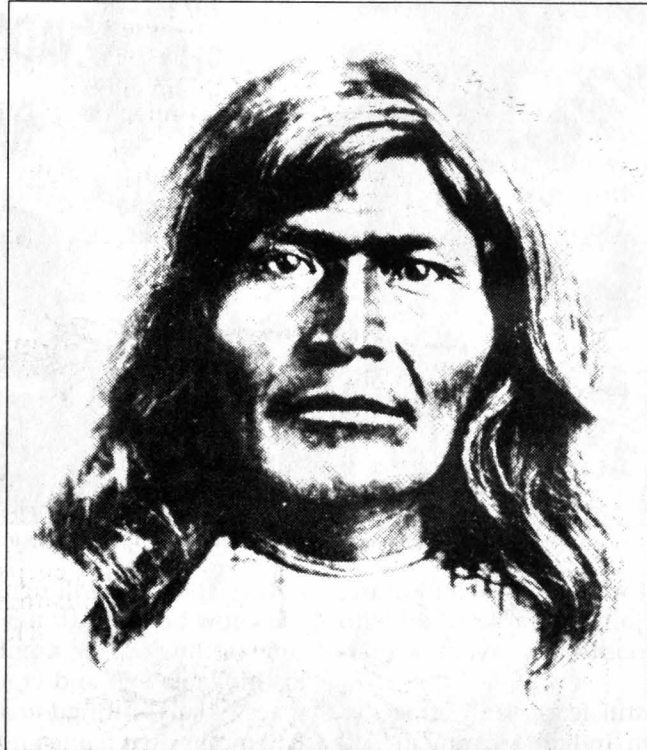
Still, I'm a fool, because my strong belief in the power of

the Earth gives me hope. And if grown-ups fail to answer the call now, we'd better start raising more of our own children and building the kind of community-support structures that a real resistance needs to survive. And I'm not just talking about knowing how to build a fire; we must support, house, teach and feed the refugees that our enemies are always creating. The Earth will support us, that is not a question. But the society dependent on her exploitation will one day collapse, and when it does, the only ones left standing will be those who never were dependent on it in the first place. All others will once again be subject to the Invader for their daily rations.

I'm still under federal

indictment for stopping a mountain lion hunt here in Arizona, and I'm facing another indictment for giving a lecture about monkeywrenching. But on November 1, I'll still be helping escort sandhill cranes safely past the hunters' guns, not far from where Victorio rode himself. And though we may only save a few birds, our hearts will remain free, and those killing our winged relations will know it. So to those still ready to ride and break free from the reservations of our minds and hearts, to build the kind of sustainable resistance our Earth needs, the tribe still awaits you. The family of all life on Earth awaits you, around the sacred fire with hero warriors of generations before. That's where you can still find me, hoisting a monkeywrench to the sky and howling like a wild wolf.

Rod Coronado is an organizer with Chuk'shon EF!, and he is looking for people to join him in the field this Fall and Winter in defense of the wild animal nations.



*Victorio, a Mimbres Apache warrior, held off miners in the 1800s.*

*photo courtesy Arizona Historical Society*

# Do We Know Where Our Deep Ecology Is?

BY JOHN JOHNSON

ARTWORK BY ABIGAIL SINGER

Way back in the 1970s, a few nature-oriented philosophers came up with a visionary framework for viewing the world. They called it deep ecology, or biocentrism. The premise is pretty simple: Humans are not the end all, be all of evolution, but merely a strand in the web of life, with no inherent right to wreck everything and spoil the grand evolutionary pageant for everyone else. Deep ecology says that all living beings and life-giving systems are equal and have an intrinsic value, beyond what value humans may ascribe. In other words, all life and life-giving systems have inherent worth and a right to exist for their own sake, regardless of what kind of money people think they can make off them. This new worldview remained relatively obscure throughout the '70s.

Enter Earth First!, which exploded onto the environmental activist scene in 1980. Vowing not to compromise, EF! promised to use nonviolent direct action to protect wilderness and wild nature—in North America and around the globe—in accordance with a biocentric outlook. With its radical analysis and equally radical actions, EF! scandalized the mainstream conservation movement and scared the piss out of the protectors of the US corporate-welfare state. As EF! chapters spread like wildfire, physical and ideological attacks inevitably followed. A surprising amount of this came from the left, which claimed a monopoly on advocating for the victims of capitalism. Many of the left's armchair quarterbacks resented a new worldview horning in, especially one claiming that humans might not be the

center of the universe after all. Despite these ideological attacks, and repression from the Long Arm of the Law, deep ecology spread.

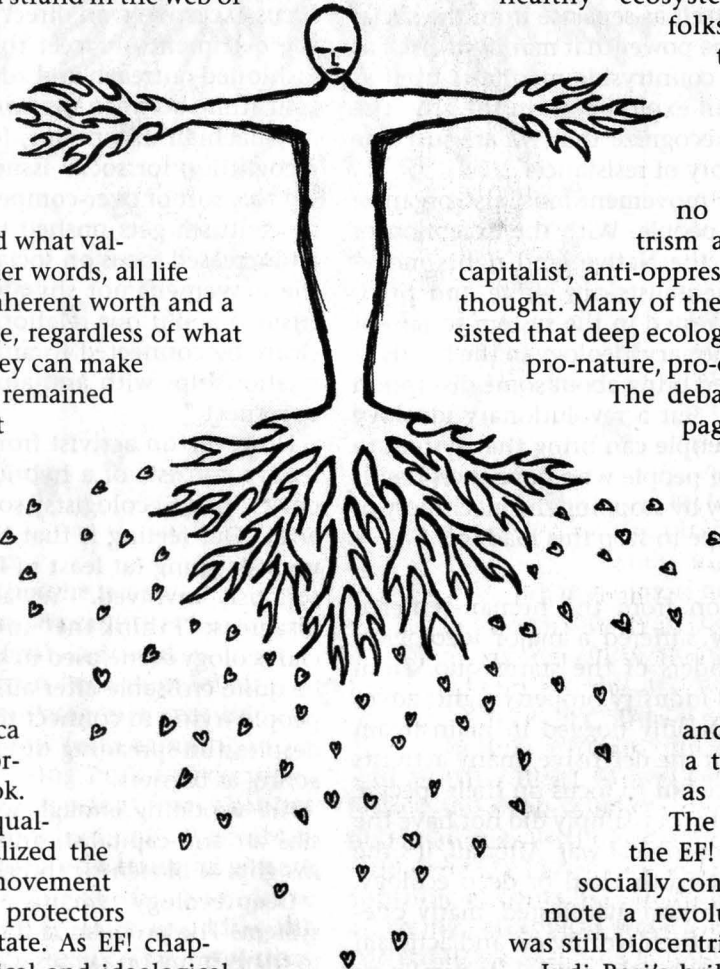
Now, it must be said that some of the early and most vocal proponents of deep ecology in and around EF! were not the most socially minded folks. They denigrated humans and the role that humans could play in a healthy ecosystem. Unfortunately, many folks took this misanthropic tendency to represent the entirety of the biocentric movement; some still do. There were some, however, who saw no conflict between biocentrism and other strains of anti-capitalist, anti-oppression and anti-hierarchical thought. Many of these folks joined EF! and insisted that deep ecology was not anti-human but pro-nature, pro-diversity and pro-freedom.

The debates that followed, in the pages of the *EF! Journal* and other publications (as well as around the campfire), contributed much to the evolution of biocentric worldviews.

However, the combination of government repression, ego battles and ideological conflict put a tremendous strain on EF! as a cohesive movement.

The 1990s saw the remains of the EF! movement become more socially conscious in an effort to promote a revolutionary worldview that was still biocentric, but not anti-human.

Judi Bari's brilliant essay, "Revolutionary Ecology," explains why deep ecology and biocentrism are an excellent framework for developing a coherent critique of the dominant industrial paradigm:



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"The fact that deep ecology is a revolutionary philosophy is one of the reasons EF! was targeted for disruption and annihilation by the FBI. The fact that we did not recognize it as revolutionary is one of the reasons we were so unprepared for the magnitude of the attack. If we are to continue, EF! and the entire ecology movement must adjust their tactics to the profound changes that are needed to bring society into balance with nature. One way that we can do this is to broaden our focus.

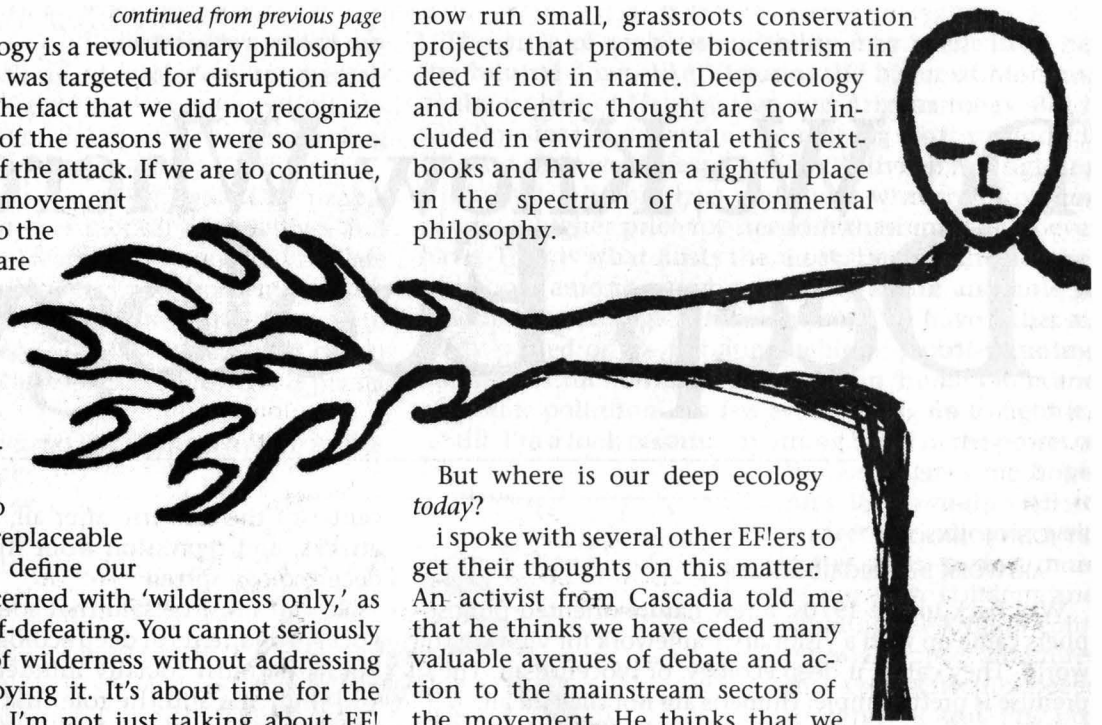
"Of course... it is entirely appropriate for an ecology movement to center on protecting irreplaceable wilderness areas. But to define our movement as being concerned with 'wilderness only,' as EF! did in the 1980s, is self-defeating. You cannot seriously address the destruction of wilderness without addressing the society that is destroying it. It's about time for the ecology movement (and I'm not just talking about EF! here) to stop considering itself as separate from the social justice movement. The same power that manifests itself as resource extraction in the countryside manifests itself as racism, classism and human exploitation in the city. The ecology movement must recognize that we are just one front in a long, proud history of resistance.

"A revolutionary ecology movement must also organize among poor and working people. With the exception of the toxics movement and the Native land rights movement, most US environmentalists are white and privileged. This group is too invested in the system to pose it much of a threat. A revolutionary ideology in the hands of privileged people can indeed bring about some disruption and change in the system. But a revolutionary ideology in the hands of working people can bring that system to a halt. For it is the working people who have their hands on the machinery. And only by stopping the machinery of destruction can we ever hope to stop this madness."

In addition to opposition from the human-centered left, EF! and deep ecology suffered a major ideological counter-offensive by defenders of the status quo. From Christian extremists to pro-industry property rights advocates, deep ecology was soundly flogged in mainstream arenas of debate. Always on the defensive, many activists felt that they had no choice but to focus on their specific campaigns to protect nature; they simply did not have the energy to engage in a philosophical war. After all, it's the Earth that comes first, not Earth First! or deep ecology. After the government repression manifested, many one-time EF!ers chose to express their worldview and activism in ways that were not so blatantly radical, tactically or philosophically.

Despite the ongoing attacks from the left and the right, and despite the fact that EF! is a much smaller movement than it once was, we have had a huge impact on conservation and radical politics. Many former EF!ers

now run small, grassroots conservation projects that promote biocentrism in deed if not in name. Deep ecology and biocentric thought are now included in environmental ethics textbooks and have taken a rightful place in the spectrum of environmental philosophy.



But where is our deep ecology today?

i spoke with several other EF!ers to get their thoughts on this matter. An activist from Cascadia told me that he thinks we have ceded many valuable avenues of debate and action to the mainstream sectors of the movement. He thinks that we focus excessively on direct action, to the detriment of street theater, writing, and good, old-fashioned outreach and education. Another activist, who splits time between the Sonoran Desert and the southern Appalachian mountains, feels that the historical lack of recognition for social issues on the biocentric scene has led to a sort of over-compensation by EF!ers, in that now biocentrism gets pushed to the background in favor of an increased focus on social issues. She recommends that the movement not shy away from either one: "Biocentrism is about our relationships with the Earth and can easily be connected to anti-oppression, as that is about relationships with and among people. It all boils down to respect."

However, an activist from Ireland reports that his collective consists of a hybrid mix of anarchists, eco-anarchists, deep ecologists, social ecologists and socialists, and, "Our feeling is that this is the direction the movement is going (at least in Ireland) among those who are seriously involved." Yet another activist, from Florida, disagrees: "I think the 'unbridgeable chasm' that the social ecology scene used to babble about has turned out to be quite crossable after all. I've been seeing many urban people trying to connect themselves deeply to the Earth, despite the spreading diseases of concrete and injustice acting as barriers."

Are we doing enough to answer Bari's call to synthesize an anti-capitalist, anti-patriarchal critique with the insights of biocentric thought? i hope so.

Deep ecology remains a viable worldview and belief system. The problem is that EF! and others have chosen to focus more on tactics, campaigns and actions than on proclaiming that a new paradigm is needed and that a different way of looking at the world is possible. An influx of movement-hoppers and social justice anarchists has further diluted this message. The radical ecology movement has been watered down.

Now, don't get me wrong—I think that cross-pollination with other movements is important. But we have a unique and important contribution to bring to the table, and we should be proud of that uniqueness rather than trying to downplay or hide it. Nature teaches us that there is strength in diversity and that some specialization is important to the functioning of healthy biotic communities. EF! and deep ecology have made lasting and important contributions to the overall critique of the modern, industrial commodification of life, and anarchist and social justice philosophies have added important insights to the radical environmental movement. But we must maintain our identity. Solidarity is not necessarily served by subsuming our worldviews and actions to those of others. We are all stronger when we say, loud and clear, that we want justice for wild nature, including humanity.

The radical ecology movement has also become increasingly young, urban centered and—judging from attendance at gatherings—overwhelmingly punk. Now, this is not a bad trend in and of itself. However, like the anarchist scene in general, i see the EF! scene becoming cliquish and insular. If you do not have a dirty pair of Carhartts with punk patches, 10 facial piercings and/or cool tattoos, then you must be an infiltrator. At the last Eastern Forest Defense Action Camp in Virginia, a straight-looking, veteran forest campaigner overheard folks whispering about whether he was a cop; he almost left. At the Wyoming Round River Rendezvous in 2001, a friend of mine was accused of being an “eco-yuppie” or cop because he had some new Patagonia gear on. At the rendezvous in Maine, i saw folks camping in the middle of a patch of blooming Pink Lady's Slippers. This rare orchid is losing important forest habitat across the eastern US. But a bunch of radical environmentalists were camped on them and trampling them on the way to get drunk at the rowdy fire. Now, i like punk rock, have a pair of dirty Carhartts, and i like the rowdy fire, but let's be realistic, y'all: The revolution will not be made wholly by Crass fans.

If we are going to survive the current round of repression, we have got to be a more tolerant and diverse bunch. Now, I'm not interested in replicating the long-lost glory days of EF!, but a lot of those folks developed some

amazing rhetorical, tactical and philosophical skills and insights that we would be remiss not to learn from and, where appropriate, revive.

Never mind your deep ecology, where's mine?

Of course i've been guilty of subsuming my deeply held biocentric beliefs in the interest of a campaign. During the lead up to Mountain Justice Summer (MJS), we discussed how we were going to be presenting the issue of protecting the Appalachian mountains and forests from the depredations of the coal industry. Time and time again, it came up that we would have greater appeal if we kept the focus on the impacts of mountaintop removal on the human residents of the mountains. Many folks even went so far as

to say things that devalued a biocentric approach to the issue and

that invalidate my right to defend the mountains because i am not a “member of the community.”

Well i am a member of the community. i may not live in the coal-fields, but the forests, rivers, critters, plants and mountains are my kin and life-support system. i have a vested interest in stopping their destruction.

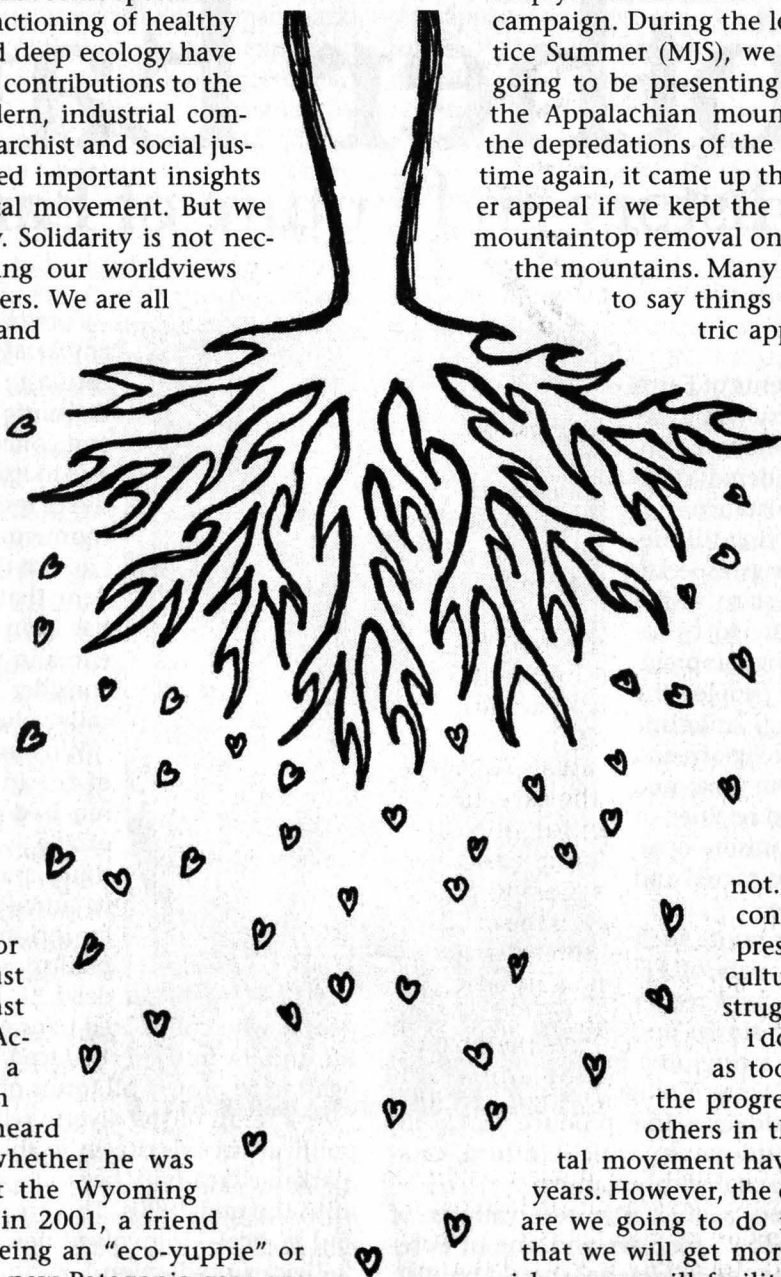
It doesn't matter if i'm from there or not. Despite the ideological conflicts, MJS managed to present the ecological and cultural dimensions of this struggle.

i don't want to come across as too harsh. i am proud of the progress that Earth First! and others in the radical environmental

movement have made over the last 25 years. However, the question remains: What are we going to do in the next 25? i hope that we will get more people out in nature.

i hope we will facilitate more people falling in love with the wild and recognizing its inherent worth. i hope we will continue to integrate social justice and deep ecology. i hope that we will see more permaculture, urban and rural. i hope that we will defend diversity in nature and culture. And i hope we will continue to contribute to the resistance by offering life-affirming, ecological worldviews as alternatives to the current death machine and its selfish, destructive dominant paradigm.

*john johnson is an activist affiliated with Katúah Earth First! and Mountain Justice Summer. He looks forward to discussing this topic with y'all around the campfire at the 2006 Round River Rendezvous in Southern Appalachia.*





# Resacralizing Mother Earth in the History and Future of Earth First!

BY BRON TAYLOR

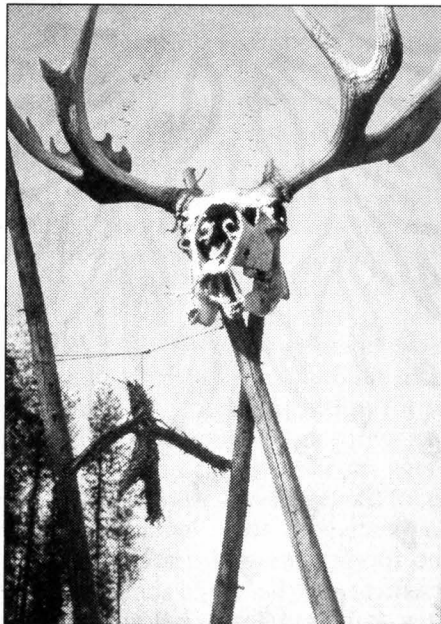
From the earliest moments of Earth First!, a central rallying cry was to resacralize and defend Mother Earth. Resacralization was considered a prerequisite to ecological resistance.

The assumption underlying this demand was that human beings, especially those raised in the Western world, no longer perceived nature to be sacred. Usually accompanying this premise was a belief that many people—the world's remnant foraging, animistic peoples; those steeped in religions and philosophies originating in Asia; and those in the West who had retained or were reconstructing Paganism—actually did consider nature as sacred and worthy of reverent defense.

No one did more to promote such a message in the early years of EF! than Dave Foreman. An avid reader

of environment-related histories and cultural analyses of all sorts, Foreman was drawing on a burgeoning body of scholarship that viewed Western religion and philosophy as fostering dualistic worldviews that produce purely instrumental attitudes toward nature, which, in turn, catapult such cultures toward ecological calamity.

Foreman insisted, even against the reservations of Howie Wolke, another EF! co-founder and one of Foreman's closest friends, that the *EF! Journal* should publish according to a pagan calendar and utilize pagan names on the masthead. Wolke worried that it would be politically counterproductive to be so overt about the spiritual perceptions motivating movement participants. In his reservation, Wolke was in good company, for many of the greatest environmentalists since Thoreau, including John Muir, Aldo Leopold and Rachel Carson, had similarly downplayed their nature-grounded spirituality in the fear that, in a predominantly Christian culture, expressing such spirituality might hinder the environmental causes they were promoting. Yet Foreman prevailed, and the masthead names stuck, as did the critique of Western civilization.



Voodoo doll at Idaho's Cove/Mallard road blockade.

photo by Bron Taylor

Foreman would later confess some embarrassment with his earlier enthusiasm in such areas, expressing discomfort with collective ritualizing and concern that it was becoming an end in itself, distracting activists from direct resistance to the forces of environmental destruction. Nevertheless, I do not think he would, then or now, deny that his own environmentalism has been fueled by profound experiences in wild nature that led him to consider nature sacred and intrinsically valuable.

Whatever the current sensibilities of the individual who was, without much doubt, the most charismatic of the early leaders of EF!, the critique and antidote that he helped to articulate drew others with similar intuitions, ethics and intellectual predispositions to the movement. Indeed, EF! became a magnet for diverse

people who considered nature sacred, felt kinship with all life and, from these, deduced a corresponding ethical obligation to protect all forms of life.

As a result of the diverse religious/spiritual and ethical/political streams drawn to the movement, a period of remarkable creativity began to unfold from the early 1980s until the mid-1990s. This creativity was not only political and tactical—it involved new forms of what I would call “religious production.” By this I mean that new ways of ritualizing and transforming consciousness were being invented afresh, or creatively adapted from existing practices residing largely at the margins of mainstream culture.

Four examples can be briefly mentioned:

(1) *EF! Roadshows*. Beginning in the early 1980s, various groups of activists toured the US and beyond, presenting the movement in choreographed presentations that generally involved the juxtaposition of photographs of intact (sacred) wilderness ecosystems with clearcut (desecrated) wildlands, and the singing of diverse forms of music. The presentations were designed to express the movement's political and ecological critiques, as well as the connection to nature that many of the musicians believed humans

still innately held deep inside. The roadshows reflected a belief that when confronted with a clearcut landscape, good-hearted people will intuitively recognize that this is wrong and must be stopped.

(2) *The Round River Rendezvous (RRR)*. At these annual wildlands gatherings, an amazing array of music, poetry, and sometimes carefully constructed ritualized spaces and pageants were created. Much of this artistic work expressed the intrinsic value of nature or sought to deepen such perceptions among activists. The RRR was understood by many as a place to strengthen tribal bonds and to spiritually empower activists for the environmental struggles to which they would soon return.

(3) *The Council of All Beings*. A ritual process invented primarily by the Australian Buddhist/deep ecologist John Seed and the American Buddhist/scholar Joanna Macy, the council has been conducted at a number of venues frequented by EF! activists. Like other movement ritualizing, it served to deepen the felt connections to nonhuman nature already arrived at through various paths by movement activists.

(4) *Direct Action Resistance*. Resistance campaigns themselves, or aspects of them, periodically assumed an overtly or implicitly religious character, through actions resembling rituals. I have seen activists pray to the Great Spirit for strength in the midst of a near-violent confrontation and place pagan religious iconography on blockaded logging roads, as well as placards proclaiming the place to be sacred. And no small number of activists report profound experiences of connection to the Earth and its lifeforms, for example, while buried in a logging road or perched in a tree.

Of course, like any other endeavor in the spiritual or religious domain, not everyone found the same experiences to be equally meaningful, powerful or inspiring. Sometimes the efforts to invent, promote or facilitate the movement's spiritual dimensions were met with good-natured kidding; at other times, with derision and ridicule. Without judging whether these reactions were justified, the result was that the movement, over time, did not provide fertile ground for the religious creativity that it had itself inspired.

If this is an accurate assessment, then this represents a missed opportunity.

One of the remarkable things about the early and middle years of the movement was the sense of many activists that they had found their "tribe." By this they meant, it seems to me, that they had found a group of people who held the same things most dear. This had to do with a shared sense of the sacredness and intrinsic value of life, as well as the conviction that we should resist its destruction with all the strength we can muster.

Many of the ritual forms that evolved during those years contributed to this sense of belonging, which arguably was a source of movement strength. Even when tensions arose over ideological, strategic, tactical or other differences—some of which even led to major movement schisms—the ritualizing often managed to mitigate or soften the tensions.

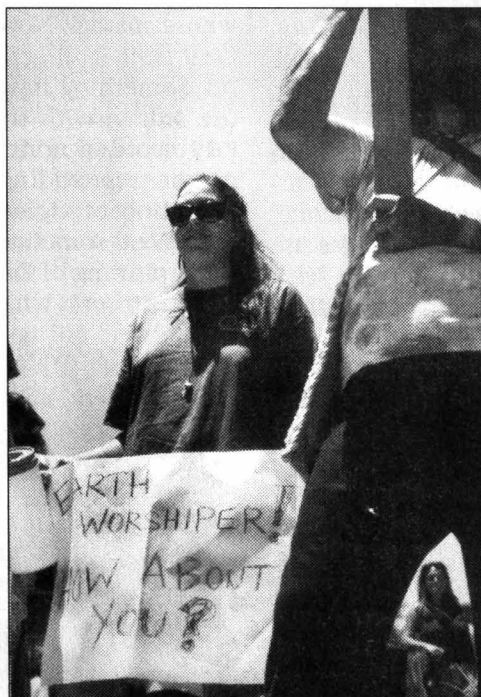
It appears to most long-time observers, however, that much of this kind of solidarity has been eroded. No one disputes that many long-term activists have drifted away, and not only in the wave that accompanied Dave Foreman's 1990 departure. Some of these activists are finding new ways, no longer under the EF! umbrella, to reconnect to each other and the Earth. Despite such efforts, it is difficult to avoid the impression that something valuable may have been lost from under the original EF! tent. Perhaps it is worth asking why this occurred, and whether anything could or should be done about it.

First of all, I think that a reason for the erosion of the movement's spirituality, with a corresponding decline in at least some of its social power, is the antipathy of most activists to organized religion and anything that reminds them of it. Some of the movement's spiritual experimentation evoked memories of the organized religions that most activists had fled. But the periodic ridicule of "woo woo" (which, when understood negatively, really means spirituality that does not lead to activism) may well have bred a reluctance among activists, who could otherwise have been spiritual leaders, to bring that part of themselves to the movement. And without a shared sense that movement spirituality was central, there was no plan to ensure the presence of those who would bring spirituality-evoking and solidarity-promoting music, workshops or rituals.

That there was no such plan is also related to the antipathy to leadership that came to characterize the movement as it assumed an increasingly anarchistic ethos. This may account, in part at least, for the loss of many of EF!'s most innately talented leaders, both political and spiritual. It was easier to exercise such gifts elsewhere than to put up with those who thought leadership itself was another form of hierarchy to be overturned.

If this is even partly true, then this is highly ironic for a movement that claims to find wisdom in nature and indigenous cultures. Nature is replete with hierarchy, and dominance-submission dynamics are found among many species. This is relevant when thinking about leadership. Indigenous cultures, for their part, are known for respecting their elders. Eldership is another kind of leadership, one that is often deeply related to what might be called spiritual wisdom. But how often has the EF! movement asked its own elders to offer their own spiritual practices at

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Mount Graham telescope protest at the University of Arizona.

photo by Bron Taylor



# Gimme that Ol' Time (Earth First!) Religion...

BY KAREN PICKETT

Imagine my surprise when I had PBS mumbling in the background as I made supper, and catching my attention came the words, "environmentalists... climate of hostility... but *why*," said the narrator, "is Keith Hammer public enemy number one?" Well right there, I spilled my miso and let my stir-fry smoke as I went into the other room to see why PBS was mentioning Keith, who cruised over some white water with me years ago, who once occasionally draped himself in the EF! banner and who, for many years now, has been the director of the Swan View Coalition in Montana's Flat-head Valley. So why is Keith public enemy number one, as defined by northern Montana's version of the wise use movement? When they finally cut to an interview with him, I realized that he threatens the dominant paradigm

because, EF! aside, he is an uncompromising biocentrist. That concept/philosophy/approach is the same dominant paradigm threat to dominion-style Christianity, capitalism and corporate power that first brought the heat on Earth First! years ago.

Hmmm... biocentrism. No compromise in defense of whose mama? Now, what are the tenets of Earth First!? Gee, isn't it direct action and nonviolence? In a word, no. Something has gotten lost in the shuffle of out with the old, in with the new. While we do have an unbroken record of nonviolence in our resistance to ecological mayhem (providing you don't include vandalism in your definition of violence), and while that record has been useful and sometimes important to point to, it is not the underpinning of Earth First!.

*Biocentrism* is what sets us apart—or at least, it used to.

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a RRR? More often, Native American elders are invited to provide a blessing or to lead some form of ritual or solidarity ceremony. The movement often acts as though it has no internal spiritual resources, or that they are not important.

One of the patriarchs of sociology, Max Weber, once suggested that there are three outcomes after a charismatic leader who has founded or revitalized a religious or social movement dies or departs. Either the movement dies out over time; the charisma is passed down through some designated hereditary line of succession; or it is passed on through a designated bureaucracy, such as a priestly class. Weber's analysis poses interesting questions for all new social and/or religious movements, including EF!.

In the past 25 years, the EF! movement has made many positive contributions (despite ongoing, more numerous setbacks) to its vision for a comprehensive re-harmonization of life on Earth. But to make even greater contributions, EF! needs to take its animating spirituality more seriously.

The EF! movement, whatever the names it goes under, will not die out. There will always be those who feel and

act like EF!ers. But it is worth asking how the spiritual energy that gave rise to the movement might more effectively draw people to itself, empower them and promulgate itself, from generation to generation.

With slogans like "Copulate Don't Populate!," passing leadership along hereditary lines seems ill advised—indeed, like a recipe for group extinction. So perhaps, as the movement looks at its next quarter century, it should begin to talk more publicly about things thus far heard only in small groups around campfires—about how to honor, respect, bring back and cultivate the movement's spiritual practices and leadership. This may be one way to reanimate a movement that many feel has become adrift and less powerful than it once was. Perhaps "Re-sacralize Mother Earth!" is a slogan that needs to be both resurrected and practiced anew.

*Bron Taylor teaches in the graduate program in Religion and Nature at the University of Florida. His books include Ecological Resistance Movements:*

*The Global Emergence of Radical and Popular Environmentalism and The Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature. For more information on his work and writings, visit [www.religionandnature.com](http://www.religionandnature.com).*



Have we evolved beyond our cheerleading for Aldo Leopold-style biocentrism and a concomitant focus on wilderness to a landscape where we are primarily fighting corporations on the globalization stage?

EF!'s initial focus had been on wilderness, not because we're privileged and like pretty things, but because wilderness is where the last remnant populations of many fellow species are making their last stands—species from shiny salamanders to scaly prehistoric fish to the predators big enough to eat us humans (which is part of what defines wilderness). Wilderness is where we remember that we are a species of animal—not “just another” species, but one of tens of thousands in a wondrous biological web. Wilderness is a reflection of the wildness within us. When we stop recognizing the paramount importance of saving wilderness, we lose something in ourselves and in our ability to fight, to resist, to love, to steam with passion.

Howie Wolke called wilderness the “seething cauldron of evolution.” It is important for the very fact that it is *not* a construct of our insane species. The journey of the salmon happens irrespective of human life, and without respect to others' needs or to what is going on above the surface of the water. That I could only achieve such focus in my own work! For me, it's not about the “wilderness” that has Sierra Clubbers bouncing down the trails with North Face, Adidas and Nalgene, but the wilderness that reflects our wildness. It's about the places that are still home to those species that couldn't care less whether *Homo sapiens* continues its journey on the blue-green sphere or not.

It's a valid argument that it is the privileged in society—either by race or chance economic circumstance or geography—who have the relative luxury of being able to campaign for wilderness. There is no doubt that we're never gonna make significant movement forward in our campaigns for change without some astute class analysis, leading us to change ourselves and our societal (and sub-cultural) constructs.

But that doesn't preclude the priority of wilderness, nor does it replace battles for the wild with corporate campaigns.

EF! has, in many ways, been absorbed into the anti-corporate globalization movement, and there is something that we bring to that table (or circle, as the case may be). We slide right into the direct-action scenarios with a high comfort level; we mesh with the pagan collective; we are part of the analysis that, by and large, takes a no-compromise stance. But the *higher value* item that we can bring to the table is the biocentric analysis—we can deepen the ecology.

Direct action—hell, everyone does direct action these days (you'll have to excuse me, as I live in the San Francisco Bay Area, and we have labor and anti-war demonstrators, human rights agitators, teachers, nurses and little old ladies out in the streets here). Looking at the evolution and growth of the progressive, anti-corporate globalization movement, it becomes clear that direct action is no longer the territory of Earth First!, Sea Shepherd or Greenpeace.

Sometimes, I wonder who the heck those people are, running around in the streets of Seattle/Miami/Cancún/New York/Québec with EF! t-shirts, why we don't have any local EF! newsletters when once there were a dozen at least, or why we don't have an EF! group in my bioregion.

Where *did* all the oldies (and goodies) go? The common excuse is that activism is for childless youngsters, before they start their family. But there are plenty of graying activists in some move-

ments (e.g., Pacifica radio and anti-war), while the punks in black sweatshirts at EF! gatherings are saying, “Hey, you elders should step back and give the younger people a chance to talk,” and, “What do older activists do, anyway, when you can no longer climb trees?” (I swear, this question was actually posed to me at the 2004 Round River Rendezvous). David Brower got more radical as he got older—right up until he departed this physical plane. Sounds like a plan to me.

Youth or graying maturity of participants aside, Earth First! has been the catalyst and last line of defense on many stages not because of a commitment to non-violence or even because of direct action, *but because it is a movement that puts the Earth first*. That is deep ecology/biocentrism transformed into a succinct slogan. From taking on the dams taming wild rivers and the roads invading wild lands, to the battles over fire ecology and extinction threats to

non-charismatic species, to the decidedly non-charismatic campaigns—like Cove/Mallard—that the anthropocentric 98 percent of the environmental movement abandoned because there wasn't a public interest (i.e., recreational) element, Earth First! was there. Because these species, those rocks, those rivers and the living, breathing Earth have at least as much right—on my misanthropic days (approximately 99 percent), I'd say they have *more* right—to be taking up atmospheric space as *Homo sapiens*.

But even if I can now qualify for the American Association of Retired Persons (much to my horror), let's hope that biocentrism is not becoming a relic. What does Earth First! mean to you?

*With no plans to “retire” from frontlines activism any time soon, KP plans to burn her AARP card on her next birthday.*



photo by Tiger



photo by Tiger



# A Quarter Century of Deviance

BY RIK SCARCE

When it really comes down to it, what makes Earth First! different? What makes it stand out? Why should anyone pay attention to it?

Maybe it's the movement's nonexistent leadership or its casual organization, in which activists pick up the load as needed. Perhaps it's the culture—the movement has its own music, art and clothing styles. The ecocentric ideology makes people take notice, as does EF!'s strategic approach to campaigns. Then there are the varied tactics, its grassroots existence and its location—not in the political power centers, but on the ground, where the planet needs it most.

There's one concept that covers all of those differences between the movement and mainstream American society: deviance.

By "deviance," I don't mean to imply that individual Earth Firsters, or the movement overall, are somehow abnormal. I'm not using "deviant" in a pejorative sense—there's no value judgment to it, only the observation that EF! as a movement, and the activists in it, violate social norms with what they do. They defy expected behaviors, and they flout accepted attitudes. Resistance, the heart of the movement, is what makes it deviant.

As a historian of the movement, I'm fascinated with how EF!'s deviance has been manifested over the last quarter century. With its endless supply of creative approaches to confronting the forces of environmental destruction, the movement rarely fails to surprise those of us who watch it from afar.

## Making It Easy for the Mainstream

Ecocentrism is what this movement is about, not narrow human concerns. It is still, however, a *social* movement. EF! may seek to preserve wild places and to defend the planet against a host of assaults, but its successes depend upon its ability to effect social change—change outside of the movement itself.

That observation was central to EF!'s founders' view of their role in the broader environmental movement. EF!, they hoped, would allow mainstream environmental organizations to be more successful. The founders figured that with EF! around, the "deviant" label—and here I do mean the word pejoratively, since that's the connotation that its users intended—would shift away from the Sierra Club, the Wilderness Society and the like. In turn, the theory went, those mainstream organizations would become more successful.

So, from its start, EF! was deliberately deviant. Only two things have changed about that outlook in a quarter century.

First, the movement's early strategic vision never worked. The mainstream failed to find the courage to demand what EF! hoped to help it claim—more wilderness, the creation of wildlife corridors, and the development of stronger endangered species, wetlands and anti-toxics laws.

In spite of this disappointment, the movement has always worked with the mainstream—the Headwaters Forest campaign stands as the foremost example of such collaboration. But Headwaters was not the

sort of victory EF! had in mind. Too little was saved at too high a cost. The movement has found, I think, that the distance between its deviance and the mainstream's conservatism amounts to a gaping chasm:

## Shifting Tactics

The second thing that has changed over the years is the form of deviance, which is constantly evolving. Initially, EF!'s tactics simply involved doing what the mainstream had never dared: norm-violating acts like placing a memorial plaque in a wilderness area or symbolically cracking Glen Canyon dam. Then there was the rhetoric: "No Compromise in Defense of Mother Earth." Of the hallowed names in US environmentalism, only John Muir had uttered anything like it, when he said that he might join the "beasts" should a war erupt between them and humanity.



artwork by Mike

By 1985, EF! activists were sitting in trees to stop logging companies from destroying old growth—the era of civil disobedience on behalf of the planet had begun. The other tactic that came to define EF!—monkeywrenching—was inspired by Edward Abbey's *The Monkey Wrench Gang*, but it had made its first appearance in 1970, when "The Fox" became the original ecoteur by dumping corporate executives' toxic waste in their own offices.

Ecotage, for EF!, was part of a broader strategy within any given campaign, a last resort when all other means had failed to preserve wilderness or otherwise halt environmental destruction. More recently, taking a cue from the Animal Liberation Front, the Earth Liberation Front (ELF) has rewritten the radical environmental playbook by eliminating the distinction between strategy and tactics. As "hard-core" anarchists driven by a political commitment to destroy capitalism, ELF activists act in defense of Mother Earth anywhere, anytime, often not waiting until other avenues of protest have failed—or have even been attempted.

ELF rhetoric is different as well. Earth First! activists often have been outright victims of destructive forces themselves, as when they were brutally dragged from trees or had pepper spray swabbed directly into their eyes during acts of civil disobedience—to say nothing of David "Gypsy" Chain's unprovoked murder while he protested the destruction of Headwaters Forest or the car bombing of Judi Bari and Darryl Cherney. But the ELF has come close to threatening the lives—and has trashed the vehicles and homes—of those it opposes, personalizing struggles in ways Earth First! never dreamt, while protecting itself from violent persecution and reprisals.

### Deviance Within the Movement

The ELF's rejection of Earth First!'s evolution-of-protest model (i.e., any given campaign should develop roughly step-by-step, from legal actions to civil disobedience to monkeywrenching) has some activists within Earth First! insisting that the ELF practices property destruction, not ecotage. But examples of that kind of internal deviance—rule-breaking within the movement—are nothing new.

Whether it is what others eat around the campfire, what they think of the US, their willingness to compromise in small ways to win big battles, their efforts to admit human concerns into radical environmentalism's purview or even who sits around the fire in the first place, activists within the movement have always struggled with one another.

The EF! "Old Guard" knew that the movement was no longer theirs, one told me years ago, when they saw tofu rather than beef being grilled over campfires at the Round River Rendezvous. Even back then, tofu-eating anarchists were altering the movement's self-perception—from an

effort to save "America" from itself into an effort to destroy nearly everything that is "American."

Other internal deviants included Judi Bari and North Coast Earth First! (NCEF!) activists, who renounced tree-spiking in their region as part of an effort to build bridges between the movement and timber workers. NCEF! was upbraided by many, not for compromising Mother Earth, but for compromising on the tactics that might be used to defend Her.

Dissension over similar acts of deviance occurs today, as activists build upon the continued momentum against corporate globalization that began with the Seattle World Trade Organization protests in 1999. At protest after protest, labor activists have marched alongside human rights, women's rights, children's rights and indigenous rights proponents—and activist environmentalists. Within the movement, however, some question whether it is possible to be ecocentric and uncompromising while building bridges to such groups.

And then there are those who struggle for a place for women and persons of color in the movement—deviants pointing out that all is not well within EF!. Throughout its history, female activists in EF! have questioned men's willingness to make them full partners in the struggle. Those tensions have only risen in recent years as male activists have been outed for raping female treesitters and other-

wise resisting women's full participation in the movement.

Like sexism, racism dogs EF!. Environmentalism is seen by many as a concern of whites, but EF!'s ostensibly free and open community ought to be a welcoming place for nonwhite activists. However, most persons of color who experience the movement encounter a chilly climate, and the movement has a reputation, according to one environmental justice scholar I spoke to, for racism. In the eyes of some, many activists' misanthropy and support for extreme limits on immigration indicates a movement subtly promoting racism.

Of course, what once was deviant often becomes standard and taken for granted. Direct action, for example, has been legitimized worldwide as an effective tactic for social change. And tofu is now a staple around Round River Rendezvous campfires. Other changes—like gender equality and multiracial representation within the movement—may take longer to come about. But a movement like Earth First! never ceases to change.

*Rik Scarce's history of the radical environmental movement, Eco-Warriors, will be republished later this year with a new concluding chapter. In 1993, Rik spent more than five months in jail for refusing to betray confidential sources from his research on the movement. He now teaches sociology at Skidmore College.*



artwork by MIKE



# The Sherman Austin Case and

## An Interview with Jennifer Martin Ruggiero

BY LENNY

On January 24, 2002, federal agents raided the home of Sherman Austin, the black, 18-year-old webmaster of [www.raisethefist.com](http://www.raisethefist.com). The agents confiscated computers and political literature, and they shut down the website. Following a year-and-a-half of threats and harassment, Austin ended up serving a year in prison because a different website, hosted on his server, contained information on how to make explosives. Neither the webmaster of the actual site nor the author of the information were ever targeted by law enforcement.

Austin's case quickly became a rallying point for anarchists and radical speech defenders, as well as a frightening example of where things could go in a post-9/11 police state. Curious about the effects this case has had on our culture of resistance, as well as its legal implications for the future, I spoke with Austin's mother, Jennifer Martin Ruggiero.

Martin Ruggiero has been a community organizer and activist all of her life. She is interested in environmental issues and building self-sustaining communities, and she believes in nonviolent change through community education and empowerment. She currently lives in Los Angeles, California, and administers [www.freesherman.org](http://www.freesherman.org).

EF!J: For those who aren't familiar with it, what was the government's basic case against Sherman?

JMR: Well, they never did have a case against him, so they invented one. They went digging around to try to find something that they could threaten him with, and what they found was called 18 USC 842 (p)(2)(A). It's called "distribution with intent;" it was the first time it was ever used. Basically, it has to do with distribution of information about things like how to make explosives, with the intent that it be used to commit an act of violence.

EF!J: So what exactly did they charge him with?

JMR: They never indicted him. That's the thing that a lot of people don't understand. They never charged him with anything—they threatened to. After the raid on our house, Sherman drove to New York City for a demonstration, and they arrested him there. He wasn't doing anything, he was just dancing around with a bunch of demonstrators. The feds

singled him out and brought him to a high security lockup where they interrogated him—Secret Service and FBI—for hours. And they said that they had found two fully functional Molotov cocktails in the house on the day of the raid, which was a total lie. There weren't any Molotov cocktails in my house; there were empty iced tea bottles. And they threatened him with that.

They ended up shipping him back to Los Angeles, where he was released. And he was fine for six months, no charges. We didn't hear back from them—he put the website back up—and then all of a sudden, the federal public defender came back and said, "You know, they don't have anything on you, so they're going to try to invent something."

Which is what they did. Eventually, the two fully functional Molotov cocktails became "the components of a Molotov cocktail." Which basically means that if you have empty glass bottles in your house, gasoline in your garage and matches, you have the components of a

Molotov cocktail! And they threatened to indict him for possession of that if he didn't sign a plea agreement stating that he distributed information with the intent that people use it to blow things up. When Sherman refused to sign the plea, they also threatened him with a 20-year terrorist enhancement. But they never formally indicted him; there was never any preliminary hearing; there was never an investigation of the evidence; there was never any challenging by the federal public defender. It was just, "Sign here, or we're gonna do this to you, kid."

EF!J: I wasn't aware that you can plead guilty to something that you've never been charged with.

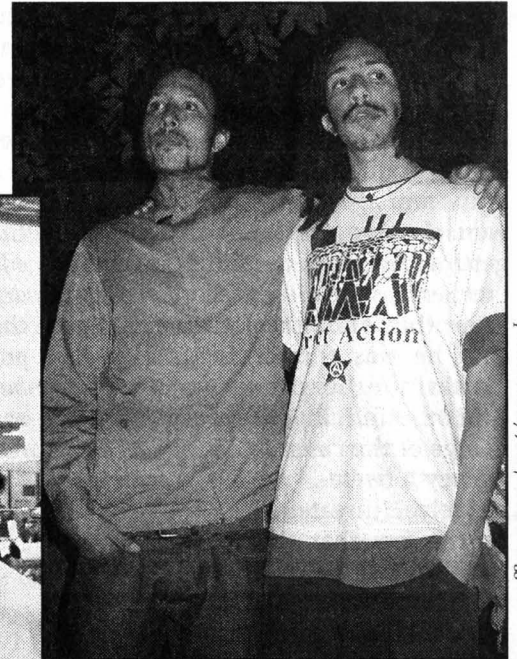
JMR: That's what's so unusual about this case; even the federal public defender said, "I've never seen this happen before." But they offered him a plea agreement without ever formally indicting him, and my perspective on the whole situation is they did that because they knew that they didn't have anything on him, and they knew that we were really intimidated at that point.

The whole thing was a scam; it was a complete setup. I think they basically just used Sherman as an example, and they had to figure out some way to do it effectively. So they just took this arsenal of nonsense, put it all together and threatened him in order to get him to sign the plea.

EF!J: And so Sherman ended up serving a year in prison?

JMR: Yeah... well, the whole thing went on—goodness!—we're now talking a year and a half. We must have had about four or five hearings, one of which, when we all showed up to go to it, wasn't on the court docket. And we found out that was the day that Attorney General John Ashcroft came down with his memo to the federal judges and

# the Criminalization of Speech



photos courtesy Jennifer Martin Ruggiero

Left to right: Sherman Austin at his mother's house shortly after his release from prison in July 2004; Jennifer Martin Ruggiero and Sherman; Zack de la Rocha (former singer for the band Rage Against the Machine) and Sherman

district attorneys about negotiating pleas—basically that minimum sentences were not allowed; they had to give the maximum sentence. I think what happened is that Sherman's hearing was on the docket, and then they removed it—the judge wanted to make sure that whatever ruling he made would actually satisfy the higher-ups.

In fact, I know that's true because on the second to final hearing, the judge asked the district attorney if he had contacted Ashcroft's office and the head of the FBI! I mean, I'm serious—I have the actual notes from the hearing. Had he contacted Ashcroft to find out if they agreed on the sentence? 'Cause what they were offering was, "If you sign this plea, we'll give you a month in prison, three months in a halfway house and then three years of probation." If you sign the plea, this is what you

get—but Judge Wilson wouldn't go for it. We went back and forth about three or four times, and the judge kept denying the plea and saying, "Come back. If this kid is so bad, how come you're only giving him a month in prison?" And Wilson eventually gave Sherman a year in prison, even though the assistant district attorney in charge of the case said that he did check with Ashcroft's office, and they did say that a month in prison, three months in a halfway house and three years of probation was fine.

*EFJ: And now he's on what seems like a really restrictive probation.*

*JMR: It's extremely restrictive, yes. Basically, he can't touch any kind of digital device that has the ability to send information out on the Internet without prior approval of his probation officer. So he can't touch computers at all.*

That is a really big deal for him. He couldn't even take the placement test for college classes because they require you to do it on a computer. He can't even use a computer to look for a job. So he's totally restricted in terms of providing himself with basic needs and information that one would need in order to survive—not even counting the fact that this is the way he supported himself. Writing software, writing code, designing web pages. And the fact that they're not allowing him to work in the field that he's been trained to work in. He also can't touch a pager, a cell phone... anything like that, unless he gets prior approval from his probation officer, and he's not allowed outside of a certain radius without prior approval.

And his probation also says—although it's not a stipulation, but a

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suggestion—that Sherman should not associate with anarchists. I mean, it actually says that!

EFIJ: *Why do you think they singled Sherman out for this? I mean, what they allege that he did, there must be thousands of people who have done that and much worse and didn't get this kind of treatment.*

JMR: Well, Sherman's website was really popular. Kids in schools were joining raisethefist.com and creating Raisethefist groups, and he had thousands of hits every day. Hits from kids—and agents. He knew who they were; I mean, he knew that he was getting hits from the FBI and the Secret Service. He didn't tell me; I didn't know this. And I think they really felt that he was threatening, especially thanks to the overactive imagination of John I. Pi, the special agent in charge of the case.

They were extremely threatened by the fact that this website had become very popular. It was after 9/11; they had totally fucked up with everything, and they were trying to find a way to make themselves look like they were actually doing their jobs. And

then there's the fact that he's African American. You know, here's this black kid who used to shave all his hair off, and now he has dreads, and he has this anarchist website up, and he's a really good organizer—and they thought, "We gotta get rid of him, and we gotta get rid of him quick. So we have to find a way to shut him up. And wow, we have the USA PATRIOT Act, so this is an easy one. We want to use him as an example."

EFIJ: *What sort of precedent do you think ended up getting set by Sherman's case, both legally and in terms of what the government feels it can now get away with?*

JMR: I think they definitely wanted to set a precedent, and in fact Judge Wilson made it very clear that Sherman was being used as an example to make sure that future "revolutionaries" will think twice before doing anything.

They really used him to try to instill fear and to prevent other people from doing the same thing, from effectively organizing. But what they did in the process was completely the opposite. They created a huge support base and educated a lot of people about organizing, as well as the things that one should and should not do. So they weren't effective, even though they thought they would be. And I think they did not instill fear in people, they just made people more angry.

EFIJ: *There's currently a grand jury seeking an indictment against Rod Coronado for giving a speech and allegedly showing how to make an incendiary device, and it seems very similar in that it's the same concept of trying to prosecute someone for speech—distribution of information with intent that someone would use it. Do you think we*

**Prosecutors never formally indicted Sherman; there was never any preliminary hearing; there was never an investigation of the evidence; there was never any challenging by the federal public defender. It was just, "Sign here, or we're gonna do this to you, kid."**

*can expect an increase in this strategy of prosecuting people for speech?*

JMR: Absolutely. The fact that Sherman signed a plea so easily without even taking it to court was really not the best thing to do, but I totally understand why he did it at that moment. You know, if I was 18 years old, and they were threatening me with a 20-year terrorist enhancement, I probably would've signed the plea, too. But yes, I definitely think that the time has come when they're gonna start pulling these laws out and using them to try to silence people. I think it definitely shows that we're in a situation where they could easily come down on you very heavily, saying that you had the intent—especially in Rod's case, where he already has a record.

EFIJ: *Having lived through this entire ordeal, which I guess is still ongoing, what do you think that you learned that*

*would be the most helpful for anyone who might be facing a similar situation?*

JMR: *Fight it.* Don't allow them to intimidate you. Do some fundraising and get yourself the best attorney that you possibly can. Don't get a sellout; lots of attorneys are easily bought. Do your research. Make sure you get a good attorney who's willing to stand up to the system, and *don't give in.* If you go to trial, and you get convicted, and you get time; appeal it. If you didn't do it, don't give in.

And fight the law. I mean, if it's a law like "distribution with intent" that was *never challenged.* The climate in this country right now is very different than it was when Sherman's case started. When Sherman's case started, it was a bunch of flag-waving people standing on corners with candles talking about "let's blow up the terrorists."

Things have changed; a lot of people see who Bush is and what he's doing. The consciousness level has raised throughout the country. And I think that now the time is ripe to start fighting.

But you have to have a good strategy. You have to be willing to be dragged through the streets, because these people are really vicious. They don't stop. They use the intimidation factor, the fear factor, and you really have to be strong—you have to stand up to it. You need a really good support base. And the best way to get a support base is to not remain silent. Expose it. Get media coverage wherever you can get it and expose it—with that comes a lot of support.

I know that when I finally went public with this, even though the federal public defender insisted that I shouldn't, it made a world of difference. In retrospect, we should've fought it! I certainly would have survived it. It would have been much better than having to give into something—lie and say that you did something that you didn't do, just because they're trying to intimidate you. Better than sending my son off to prison for a thought crime he didn't even commit. So that's the best advice I have—*don't stay silent.*

# Ask an EF! Lawyer

## He's Working on *Your* Side!

BY STU SUGARMAN

Dear EF! Lawyer,

I keep hearing about the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act, but I don't really know what's in it. Are our direct actions in defense of the Earth really classified as terrorism now?

—NOT WITH THE PRESIDENT

Dear Opposed to Georgie,

Congress passed the Animal Enterprise Protection Act in 1992 to combat activists' success in using tactics including civil disobedience, liberation and firebombing to protect animals and the environment from harm. In 2002, it strengthened and renamed the law the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act (AETA), as the "T" word became more and more appealing to the monied interests funding Congressmembers' re-election campaigns and vacation junkets.

The AETA, found in the statute books at 18 USC § 43 (this means Volume 18, US Code, Section 43), created several crimes. To be found guilty of any of these new crimes, a person must travel across state lines for the purpose of physically disrupting an animal enterprise and must intentionally damage some property of that animal enterprise.

Whether an AETA crime is a felony or a misdemeanor depends on the damage done. If a court determines that the defendant caused *less* than \$10,000 worth of property damage, the defendant would be convicted of a misdemeanor and sent to prison for up to six months. If a defendant caused *more* than \$10,000 in damage, they would be convicted of a felony and imprisoned for up to three years. If a person causes serious physical injury to someone, that person could end up imprisoned for up to 20 years. If a person kills someone while physically disrupting an animal enterprise, that person may be imprisoned for the rest of their natural life. The person might also be ordered to pay a fine and, most despicable of all, pay the corporation for any economic damage done to it, including loss of profits or the cost of repeating the destroyed "experiment."

Even though the word "terrorism" is included in the title of this law, it is not found in the statute's text and being convicted under this law does not in any way label someone a "terrorist." Nor is the AETA related to

other crimes, such as "domestic terrorism," created by the USA PATRIOT Act in 2001. The action itself, however, might bring someone under that far more serious domestic terrorism statute.

The AETA defines "animal enterprise" as any person or group that uses animals for food, clothing, agriculture, research or testing. "Animal enterprise" also includes those who torture animals to amuse self-indulgent humans (e.g., circuses, zoos, rodeos and aquariums). The AETA targets activists working to protect animals from harm, but not so much activists protecting the environment from harm—though the two obviously overlap.

Which brings me to a very interesting part of this law: The AETA seems to give environmental activists, even the Earth Liberation Front (ELF), virtually a free ride. The law

seems to have been hatched directly from the twisted minds of Huntingdon Life Sciences and Chiron, two of the heartless bastards targeted by Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty (SHAC). For example, the AETA is useless against those involved in the May 2001 ELF actions against the University of Washington's Center for Urban Horticulture and a genetically engineered poplar farm, because neither target involved animal torture.

The FBI reports that beginning in 2004, SHAC and the Animal Liberation Front have eclipsed the ELF in terms of successful actions against the powers that be. In reports to Congress in 2002 and 2003, the FBI identified the ELF as the primary domestic terrorism threat. In 2005, however, the FBI has been reporting that the chief domestic terrorism threats to the US are those fighting drug companies—that means groups like SHAC.

The AETA, which might better be called "The SHAC Attack Act," is a relatively narrow law that provides relatively light penalties for those convicted of direct action, assuming that no person is injured in the action. But to those being prosecuted under the AETA, such as the SHAC 7, even a "relatively light" sentence of three years behind bars for each count would be devastating. Please support those being persecuted under the AETA, and fight for its repeal.

Do you have a legal question? Contact Stu Sugarman, c/o Walker, Warren and Watkins, 838 SW 1st Ave, Ste 500, Portland, OR 97204; quixote516@yahoo.com. Please write "Dear EF! Lawyer" in the subject line.



artwork by Leah



# Prisoners in the Struggle: Support Them!

The following list is a small sample of the total number of political prisoners worldwide. Regulations for mail sent to prisoners vary according to individual prisons. Before sending monetary donations, stamps, books or packages, ask prisoners what the regulations are. Assume that the authorities read everything that you write to a prisoner. Although many prisoners are listed together, they must be written to separately. The EF! Journal offers discounted subscriptions for prisoners. Please contact us for more information.

## Prisoner and Legal Updates

•Jon Ablewhite, TB4885, John Smith, TB4887, and Kerry Whitburn, TB4886, HMP Birmingham, Winson Green Rd, Birmingham B18 4AS, England. Arrested on September 30 and accused of blackmail in the campaign to shut down the Darley Oaks guinea pig farm in Newchurch.

•David Agranoff was released on October 12 after serving two months for contempt and refusing to testify before a grand jury investigating an Earth Liberation Front (ELF) arson. The judge ruled that Agranoff was never going to be coerced into testifying and ordered his release.

•Tre Arrow, CS#05850722, Vancouver Island Regional Correction Center, 4216 Wilkinson Rd, Victoria, BC V8Z 5B2, Canada. Awaiting extradition to the US to stand trial for alleged involvement in the arson of logging trucks and an ELF arson of vehicles owned by a sand and gravel company. Arrow has been moved to the above address.

•Annalisa Capone, one of the Lecce 5, has been released pending trial.

•Rod Coronado, Matthew Crozier and John Richardson had the three federal misdemeanor charges against them dismissed by their trial judge on September 24. Coronado and Crozier are still facing federal conspiracy and state misdemeanor charges for allegedly interfering with a mountain lion hunt.

•Nicole Fink, #94369-198, GEO, 220 West C St, San Diego, CA 92101, USA. Serving up to 1.5 years for refusing to testify before a grand jury investigating an ELF arson. Potential supporters should be warned that Fink is the current girlfriend and vocal supporter of snitch Justin Samuel.

•William Frediani, Via Maiano, 06049 Spoleto (PG), Italy. A member of the Italian eco-anarchist group *Il Silvestre* awaiting trial for allegedly promoting sabotage and participating in direct action. Frediani has been moved to the above address.

•Sarah Gisborne, LT5393, HMP Cookham Wood, Rochester, Kent ME1 3LU, England. An appeals judge has reduced Gisborne's sentence for conspiracy to cause criminal damage to vehicles owned by people linked to Huntingdon

Life Sciences (HLS) from 6.5 to 5.5 years.

•Johan Jaatinen was released in October, after serving six months for openly damaging 18 machines at a chicken processing plant.

•Charles Jordan, accused of planning to destroy equipment at a quarry, has been transferred to a halfway house to await trial.

•Danae Kelly was released on October 6 after serving 74 days for refusing to testify before a grand jury investigating an ELF arson. Her immunity from prosecution has been dropped, thus restoring her Fifth Amendment right to not testify.

•Aaron Linas, #38448-083, FMC Butner, POB 1600, Butner, NC 27509, USA. Serving 3.5 years for a series of ELF actions against McDonald's, Burger King, urban sprawl, the construction industry and an SUV dealership. In 2004, for personal reasons, Linas asked to have his name removed from our prisoner list, but he has now asked to be listed again.

•Stephen Marshall, #691374, 11540 NW Inverness Dr, Portland, OR 97220, USA. Awaiting trial for allegedly planning to destroy equipment at a quarry. While imprisoned, Marshall has found it difficult to obtain an adequate vegan diet, and this has resulted in conflict between him and the prison guards. He recently ended a hunger strike in protest of the

lack of suitable vegan meals. He has since been moved to the above address.

•Brendan Philbin McGrath, Vincent McGrath, Philip McGrath, Willie Corduff and Micheál Ó Seighin were released on September 30 after serving three months for blockading Shell Oil from building a natural-gas pipeline across their land. For more information, visit [www.shelltosea.com](http://www.shelltosea.com).

•Christopher "Dirt" McIntosh, #30512-013, FDC Seatac, POB 13900, Seattle, WA 98198, USA. Awaiting sentencing for a joint Animal Liberation Front (ALF)/ELF arson against a McDonald's. McIntosh went on hunger strike on September 2, demanding a nutritious vegan diet. He ended his hunger strike a week and a half later after guards threatened to start force-feeding him. On September 26, faced with a 30-year "terrorist" sentence enhancement and the testimony of several snitches, McIntosh pleaded guilty to arson. He is expected to receive an eight to 10 year sentence. For more information, visit [www.supportchris.org](http://www.supportchris.org).

•Leonard Peltier, #89637-132, USP Lewisburg, POB 1000, Lewisburg, PA 17837, USA. Peltier, an American Indian Movement activist, is serving life in prison after being framed for the deaths of two FBI agents killed during the 1975 Pine Ridge siege. He has been transferred to the above address. For more information, visit [www.leonardpeltier.org](http://www.leonardpeltier.org).

•Salvatore Signore, Casa Circondariale di Sulmona, Via Lamaccio 21, 67039 Sulmona (AQ), Italy. Signore, one of the Lecce 5, has been moved to the above address.

•Peter Young, #223341, Dane County Jail, 115 W Doty St, Madison, WI 53703, USA. On September 2, Young pleaded guilty to two counts under the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act relating to the release of more than 10,000 mink from fur farms. He is expected to receive a two-year prison sentence. For more information, visit [www.supportpeter.com](http://www.supportpeter.com).

## Awaiting Trial or Sentencing

•Felipe Arreaga Sánchez, Cárcel Preventiva de Zihuatenejo, Calle Paseo de la Deportiva s/n, Col. Deportiva, Zihuatenejo, Go. CP 40880, Mexico. Awaiting trial on false charges of homicide, as retaliation for his environmental organizing. Arreaga only reads Spanish, but letters in English or German may be sent to him via [econoticias@sosbahia.org](mailto:econoticias@sosbahia.org).



•Amanda Cerezo García, CP Alicante II, Ctra. N-330, km 66, 03400, Villena, Spain. Awaiting trial for allegedly burning a road-construction vehicle. She is also accused of sending a letter bomb to a neo-Nazi politician.

•Manase Furima and Matius Nasira, Lembaga Pemasyarakatan Manokwari, Jl Sabang No 4, Manokwari, Papua, Indonesia. Awaiting trial for taking part in a road blockade to prevent illegal logging.

•Francesco Gioia, Modulo VII, Ctra. Comarcal 611, km 37.6, 28770 Soto del Real, Madrid, Spain. *Il Silvestre* member awaiting extradition to Italy to stand trial for allegedly participating in direct action, promoting sabotage and escaping house arrest.

•Ryan Lewis, #4101338 8W312, Sacramento County Main Jail, 651 I St, Sacramento, CA 95814, USA. Awaiting trial for alleged involvement in ELF arsons against urban sprawl.

### Animal Liberation

•Dave Blenkinsop, EM7899, HMP Rye Hill, Onley, Warwickshire CV23 8AN, England. Serving 10 years for attacking the managing director of HLS, liberating 600 guinea pigs and planting incendiary devices under slaughterhouse vehicles.

•Joshua Demmitt, #12314-081, Federal Prison Camp, POB 6000, Sheridan, OR 97378, USA. Serving 30 months for an ALF arson at an animal testing facility.

•Keith Mann, KJ9365, HMP Guys Marsh, Shaftesbury, Dorset SP7 0AH, England. Serving 1.5 years for liberating 695 mice from a lab and threatening the lab's director in court.

### Ecodefense

•Marco Camenisch, Postfach 3143, CH-8105 Regensdorf, Switzerland. Serving 27 years for using explosives to target nuclear facility powerlines and for the alleged murder of a Swiss border guard. Camenisch reads French, German, Spanish and Italian fluently. He can also read some English.

•Ibai Ederria, Cárcel de Pamplona, C/ San Roque Apdo 250, 31080-Iruñea Pamplona, Navarra, Spain. Serving nearly five years for sabotaging machinery at the controversial Itoiz dam construction site.

•Jeffrey "Free" Luers, #13797671, OSP, 2605 State St, Salem, OR 97310, USA. Serving 22 years and eight months for arson at a car dealership and for the attempted arson of an oil truck.

•John Wade, #38548-083, FCI Petersburg Low, Satellite Camp, POB 90027, Petersburg, VA 23804, USA. Serving three years for a series of ELF actions

against McDonald's, Burger King, urban sprawl, the construction industry and an SUV dealership.

•Helen Woodson, #03231-045, FMC Carswell Admin Max Unit, POB 27137, Ft. Worth, TX 76127, USA. Serving nearly nine years for violating her parole by dumping red paint over the security apparatus of a federal court and making warnings ("threats") of weapons of mass destruction. In March 2004, Woodson completed 20 years for disarming a missile silo with a jackhammer, mailing warning letters to officials with bullets inside, robbing a bank and burning the money.

### Indigenous Resistance

•Byron "Oso Blanco" Chubbuck®, #07909-051, USP Beaumont, POB 26030, Beaumont, Texas, North America. Serving 80 years for aggravated assault on federal agents, escape and bank robbery. Chubbuck funneled money that he stole from banks to the Zapatista National Liberation Army in Chiapas, Mexico.

### Lecce 5

*The Lecce 5 are awaiting trial, accused of damaging gas pumps in opposition to the war on Iraq, targeting Benetton in support of the Mapuche and damaging an ATM at a bank with links to an immigrant-detention facility.*

•Marina Ferrari, via XXI aprile, 29 CAP 73042, Casarano (LE), Italy. Under house arrest.

•Cristian Paladini, Via De Mura C2/73100, Lecce, Italy. Under house arrest.

•Saverio Pellegrino, Casa circondariale, Via Lecce, 85025 Melfi, Italy.

### Mapuche

*The indigenous Mapuche people in Chile are fighting to defend their forests from multinational companies.*

•Aniceto Norin Catrیمان and Pascual Pichun Paillalao, Cárcel de Traiguén—Coronel Gregorio Urrutia N° 129, Traiguén, IX Región, Chile. Mapuche lonkos (chiefs) serving five years for intimidation and "terrorist arson."

•Victor Ancalaf Llaupe, Complejo Penitenciario El Manzano Concepción—Dirección, Camino a Penco N° 450 Casilla 70, Chile. Mapuche leader serving five years for "terrorist arson."

•Jaime Huenchullan Cayul, Juan Carlos Huenulao Tricauko, Florencio Jaime Marileo Saravia, José Patricio Marileo Saravia, Jose Nain Curamil and Patricia Troncoso Robles, Centro Detención Penitenciaria Pedro Aguirre—Cerdeña N° 80 y Los Con-fines s/n°, Angol, IX Región, Chile. Huenchullan is awaiting trial, accused of theft and intimidation.

Huenulao is awaiting trial, accused of "terrorist arson." Troconso and the Marileos are serving 10 years for "terrorist arson." Nain, a Mapuche leader, is serving five years for arson.

### MOVE

*The "MOVE 9," members of an eco-revolutionary group, were framed for the murder of a cop and sentenced to 30 to 100 years each.*

•Debbie Simms Africa, #006307, Janet Holloway Africa, #006308, and Janine Philips Africa, #006309, SCI Cambridge Springs, 451 Fullerton Ave, Cambridge Springs, PA 16403-1238, USA.

•Michael Davis Africa, #AM4973, and Charles Simms Africa, #AM4975, SCI Grateford, POB 244, Grateford, PA 19426-0244, USA.

•Edward Goodman Africa, #AM4974, SCI Mahanoy, 301 Morea Rd, Frackville, PA 17931, USA.

•William Philips Africa, #AM4984, and Delbert Orr Africa, #AM4985, SCI Dallas, Drawer K, Dallas, PA 18612, USA.

•Mumia Abu-Jamal, #AM8335, SCI Greene, 175 Progress Dr, Waynesburg, PA 15370, USA. Abu-Jamal, a politically active journalist, was framed for the murder of a cop in 1981.

### Political Prisoners

•Harjit Singh Gill, #148118-097, 111 Taylor St, San Francisco, CA 94102, USA. Serving six months in a halfway house for lying to a grand jury that was investigating two ALF arsons of McDonald's.

•Robert "Rob los Ricos" Thaxton, #12112716, MCFE, 4005 Aumsville Hwy, Salem, OR 97301, USA. Serving a seven-year mandatory minimum sentence for throwing a rock at a cop at a 1999 Reclaim the Streets action in Eugene, Oregon.

•Fran Thompson, #1090915 HU 1C, WERDCC, POB 300, Vandalia, MO 63382-0300, USA. Before she was given a life sentence in the early 1990s for shooting a stalker in self defense, Thompson was active in animal rights and environmental campaigns.

### Vieques

*Actions taken during a May 2003 celebration of the end of US military maneuvers on Vieques, Puerto Rico, led to the conviction of several activists for conspiracy to destroy federal property.*

•José Pérez González, #21519-069, Federal Prison Camp, POB 725, Edgefield, SC 29824-0725, USA. Serving five years.

•José Vélez Acosta, #23883-069, Federal Correctional Complex, US Penitentiary, POB 1033, Coleman, FL 33521-1033, USA. Serving two years and nine months.



# announce

## **International Demonstrations on Climate Change December 3**

During the first week of December, representatives from more than 150 nations will be meeting at a climate conference in Montréal, Québec. The vast majority of those present will be signers of the Kyoto Protocol on global warming, and they will be discussing the latest developments with this deepening world crisis and what should be done about it.

Representatives of the US government, however, will be working behind the scenes to block any positive action. This is the role they have played for several years. Climate change activists from around the world are outraged by the US's obstructionist approach to one of today's most critical and urgent issues. It is time to stand up and take action!

An international day of mass demonstrations is being planned for December 3, in order to support: US ratification and implementation of the Kyoto Protocol; clean, safe and sustainable non-nuclear energy alternatives; an end to government subsidies for oil and coal corporations; increased fuel-efficiency standards; forest defense; and community-run tree-planting campaigns.

Leading up to the day of action, local groups can organize house parties, forums, teach-ins, conferences or town meetings. And, of course, groups can schedule events in their communities for the international day of action!

For more information, contact the Climate Crisis Coalition, POB 648, Lenox, MA 01240; (413) 637-2486; [www.climatecrisiscoalition.org](http://www.climatecrisiscoalition.org).

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## **Call for Entries: Art Not Oil**

Art Not Oil is an annual event aimed at encouraging artists to create work exploring the damage that oil companies are doing to the planet. It is designed, in part, to paint a more accurate portrait of an oil company than the caring image manufactured by the BP Portrait Award, which diverts public attention away from BP's actual activities.

Art Not Oil includes paintings, photography, sculpture and other creations that address issues like climate chaos, corporate sponsorship and greenwashing, and the suicidal madness that proclaims: "profit is king" and "money can solve any problem." Artwork dealing with the cancerous impacts of the oil industry on the planet is welcomed and, of course, so is work that dares to imagine what solutions to these serious but not insoluble problems might look like.

For more information, contact Art Not Oil, 62 Fieldgate St, London E1 1ES, UK; [info@artnotoil.org.uk](mailto:info@artnotoil.org.uk); [www.artnotoil.org.uk](http://www.artnotoil.org.uk).

## **Call for Submissions: Lady, Queer and Differently Abled Trainhoppers' Stories**

Looking back at the historical hobo stereotype, it seems that most freightriders were down-and-out straight men and, unless they'd had a mishap with the train that they were riding, had fully able bodies. Of course, there are those shining examples of brave women or disabled men whose stories we might hear from time to time, but they were the exceptions that proved the rule.

The current generation of trainhoppers seems to abound with new types of trainriders—larger numbers of women, many queers and possibly some riders who are differently abled. These folks' are invited to submit their train stories, as well as pictures of themselves in all their hobo glory for a possible zine about lady, queer and differently abled trainhoppers. If you haven't written of your adventures, what's stopping you? Photos and drawings of train graffiti and monikers are also encouraged.

For more information, contact Lynne, 2372 Pinewood Ln, West Palm Beach, FL 33415; [lynnepurvis@gmail.com](mailto:lynnepurvis@gmail.com).

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## **Announcement to Organize an @lternative Social Forum January 24-29 • Caracas, Venezuela**

The sixth annual World Social Forum and the second Social Forum of the Americas will both take place in Caracas, Venezuela, from January 24-29. As in the past, there is a need to create a space outside of the established order of these events to express views and share tactics that are more uncompromising and far-reaching than the traditional rhetoric and action of mainstream activism. With this goal in mind, social activists, artists, professionals, students, environmentalists and intellectuals are proposing the creation of such an alternative space. Based on experiences with recent social forums and festivals of solidarity, such events do not effectively allow for an open and pluralistic gathering of opinions and perspectives on important issues and vital strategies for transforming our world.

Along this same line of thought, the creation of the @lternative Social Forum has been proposed to be celebrated in Venezuela at the same time as the mainstream forums. The goal is to create decentralized spaces and events in various parts of Venezuela in order to focus on themes collectively defined. An @lternative Social Forum that respects diversity, identity and autonomy can potentially produce an open and permanent network for dialogue between diverse social actors.

For more information, or to participate in the creation of the @lternative Social Forum, contact [fsa@contrapoder.org.ve](mailto:fsa@contrapoder.org.ve).

# ments

## **Earth First! Organizers' Conference and Winter Rendezvous** February 15-20 • South Florida

Jeaga EF! invites you to the 2006 Organizers' Conference, which will be held at the Everglades Youth Camp inside the JW Corbett Wildlife Management Area. The location includes full facilities and a swimming hole!

Meetings will take place from February 15-17, and the usual subject matter will be on the table: reports from the *Journal*; evaluating strategies, tools and tactics; examining our visions and aspirations; where we've been and where we're going; review of state repression; anti-oppression workshops; and bioregional roundups. Some extra attention will be given to the question of solidarity beyond borders. Then, February 18-20, a weekend of debauchery will begin—ushered in by the annual "Night to Howl!" Be sure to bring poems, songs, stories, workshops, music and hiking gear.

South Florida is an accessible location for international travel, and it is a social hotspot of current global commerce and politics. For several years, the anti-globalization movement has influenced (and has been influenced by) EF!, but rarely has it been possible to

dialogue with eco-radicals in other parts of the world. For these reasons, an invitation to participate in the Organizers' Conference and Winter Rendezvous is being extended to folks from other countries' radical environmental movements and indigenous struggles.

Locally, the battle against the Scripps biotechnology center in Florida is heating up to be one of the largest and broadest environmental justice campaigns in this region's history. Massive land scandals, biotechnology, hazardous waste, animal torture and exurban development are all within a mile of our lovely camp in the swamp.

Conference organizers are requesting donations of \$25-50 to cover the costs of the gathering and to provide potential travel compensation. If your bioregion knows that it will need assistance getting to Florida, please get in touch as soon as possible. Also, people are encouraged to bust out old copies of the *Journal* and review articles on past conferences before coming down. If you don't have access to an EFler's archives in your area, conference organizers are willing to send out copies so that we can all be a bit closer to the same page.

For more information, contact the 2006 EF! Organizers' Conference Committee, POB 961, Lake Worth, FL 33460; (561) 547-6686; jeagaeearthfirst@riseup.net.



## **Are you looking for a new way to contribute to the EF! movement?**

Do you like hearing about the latest direct-action news as it happens?

Do you like big, starry skies, mild Winters and Summer monsoon rains?

If so, you may be the person we need!

The *Earth First! Journal* is looking for someone to join our long-term editorial collective in Tucson, Arizona. Ideally, we are seeking a computer-literate person with direct-action and publishing experience, familiarity with the *Journal* and the radical environmental movement, and excellent editing skills. All of the work on the collective is shared, so a successful editor must be responsible, diligent and play well with others. Enthusiasm and a willingness to learn are a must! Preference will be given to women and people of color.

We are looking for someone who can commit to at least a year and a half. To apply, send a letter of interest, resumé, writing sample, activist history and the names of some EF! activists who can vouch for you to:

*Earth First! Journal*, POB 3023, Tucson, AZ 85702; collective@earthfirstjournal.org.

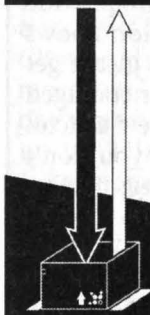




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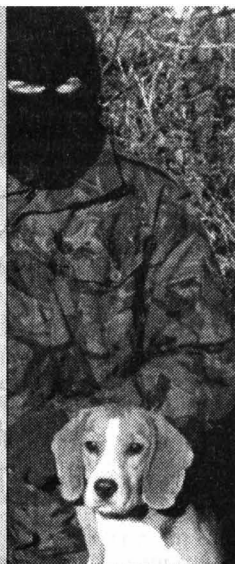
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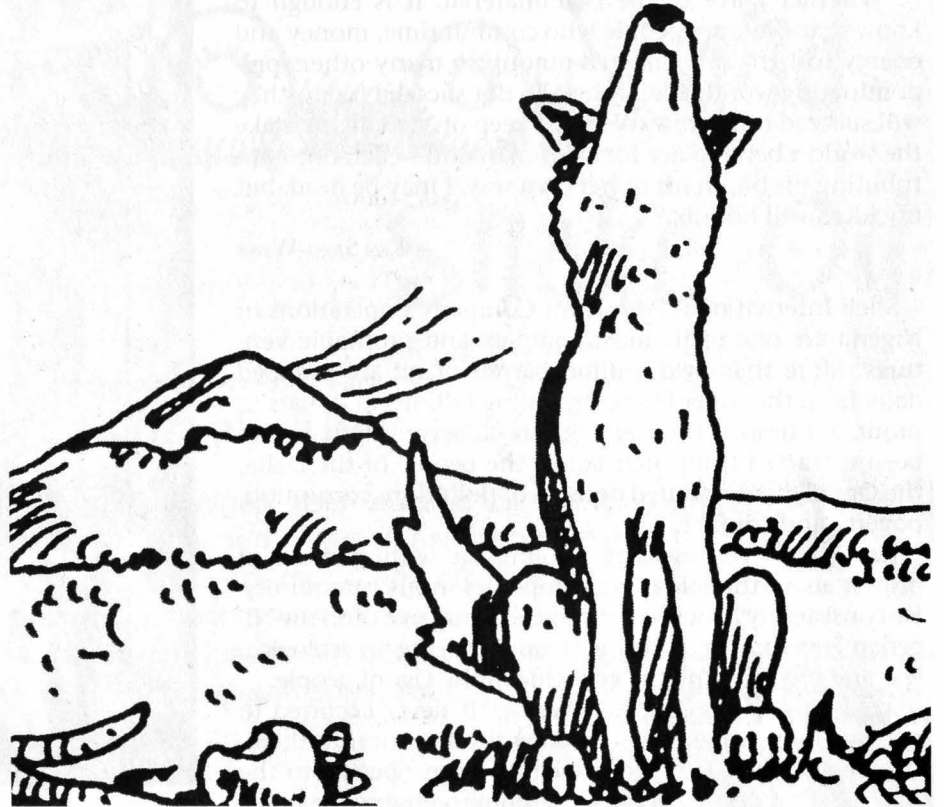
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# THE TRUE COST OF OIL

## Remembering Ken Saro-Wiwa 10 Years Later

"Whether I live or die is immaterial. It is enough to know that there are people who commit time, money and energy to fight this one evil among so many others predominating worldwide. If they do not succeed today, they will succeed tomorrow. We must keep on striving to make the world a better place for all of mankind—each one contributing his bit, in his or her own way. I may be dead, but my ideas will not die."

—KEN SARO-WIWA

Shell International Petroleum Company's operations in Nigeria are one of its most complex and profitable ventures. More than two million barrels of oil are pumped daily from the Niger Delta, providing billions of dollars in profit. Yet despite the tremendous oil revenues that have been extracted from their lands, the people of the Delta, the Ogoni, have endured decades of pollution, corruption, poverty and conflict.

Ken Saro-Wiwa began at a young age writing letters of protest about the role of oil companies in his community. He consistently attacked both the oil companies and the Nigerian government, accusing them of waging an ecological war and precipitating the genocide of the Ogoni people.

According to his son, Ken Wiwa, "It never occurred to me, until my father began to draw my attention to them, that the gas flares in Ogoni might be contributing to the acid rain that destroyed the aluminum roofing of the houses in the area. I had no idea that the incidence of oil spills in Ogoni was one of the highest recorded in the world.... Some of our people were aware of our predicament, and some had even spent their lives fighting the oil companies. There had been periodic riots, protests and letter-writing campaigns since the 1960s, but most of these fizzled out after the leaders were intimidated into silence or bought off. Our people endured their situation silently, suffering the indignity and humiliation of wallowing in poverty in an oil-rich land."

In 1993, Saro-Wiwa vowed that Shell would have to kill every Ogoni man, woman and child before it could take any more oil from their land. He had become extremely effective at mobilizing people to protest and stand up for their rights. As international attention to what was happening in the region increased, Saro-Wiwa's life became increasingly at risk, until he eventually was arrested in May 1994.

"The events between January 1993 and May 1994 are the story of an unfurling tragedy.... Ogoni villages were flattened; Ogoni men were killed and detained; Ogoni women and children raped by soldiers who were supposed to be keeping the peace so that Shell could resume its operations in the community.... It is also a saga of remarkable grace under pressure, of devastating betrayals, of cowardice and courage in the face of calculated aggression," writes Ken Wiwa in his book, *In the Shadow of a Saint*.



On November 10, 1995, Nigeria's military government executed Saro-Wiwa and eight Ogoni leaders. Today, the oil corporations in the region would like nothing more than to have the names of the Ogoni 9 erased from the collective memory.

The decision to execute the Ogoni 9 shocked the world and triggered a global re-evaluation into the impacts of corporate activity. The killings focused world attention on the Nigerian dictatorship at the time, but despite the restoration of democracy in 1999, the government has yet to address the ecological disaster in the Ogoni region. Ten years after the killings, the communities in the oil-producing areas remain poor and neglected, lacking such basic amenities as clean water, passable roads, schools, hospitals and clinics.

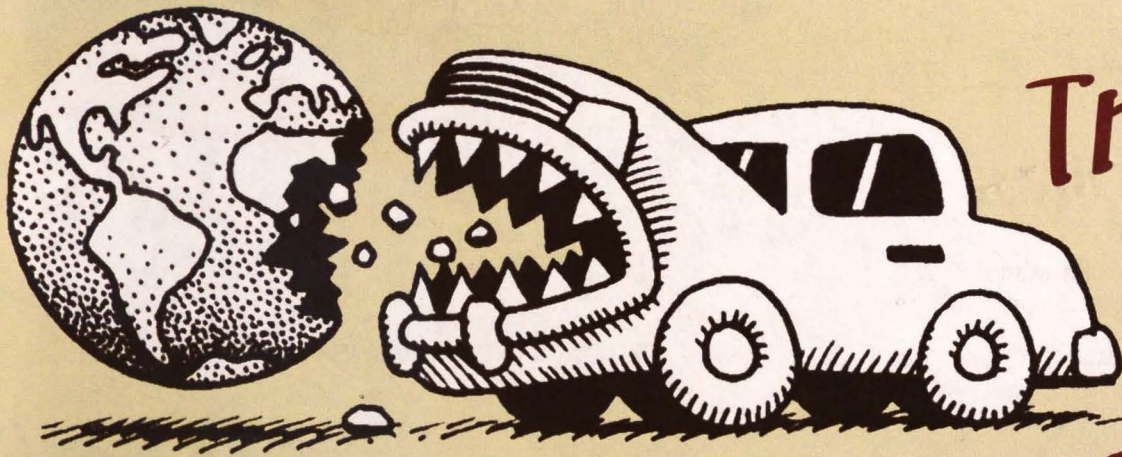
Today, Ken Wiwa believes the situation in Ogoni is worse than it was when his father was executed. He feels that "Shell was part of the problem and must be part of the solution.... With some kind of dignity and a commitment to social justice, the situation could still be salvaged.

"I know who killed my father.... The way I see it, the dead cannot be brought back, and all that is left for us—the living—is to honor the dead by building a better future from the despair of the past, because those who forget the mistakes of the past are condemned to repeat them."

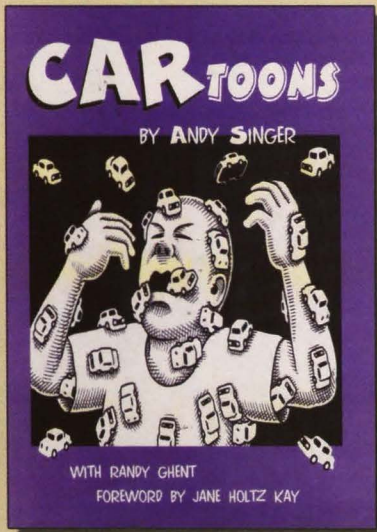
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The Ogoni 9: Baribor Bera, Saturday Dobe, Nordu Eawo, Daniel Gbokoo, Barinem Kiobel, John Kpuinen, Paul Levura, Felix Nuate, Ken Saro-Wiwa





# Trinkets and Snake Oil



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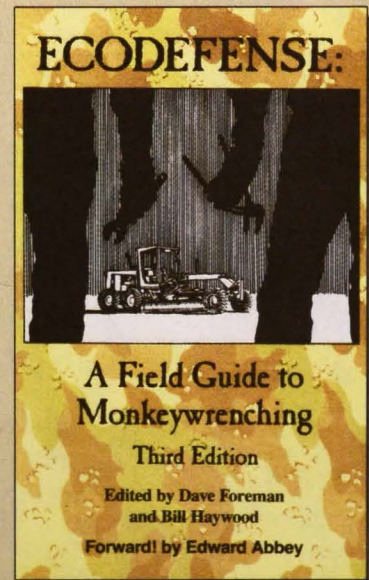
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