CES Musings
Chronicling the Transition from Economic-Industrial To Ecological-Cultural Societies
(July-August, 2015)

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• **BECOME A MEMBER, MAKE A DONATION, VOLUNTEER**

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The Chronicle
By Alice Loyd (through July 18, 2015)

CLIMATE

The pope has spoken. On June 18, 2015, the much-anticipated papal encyclical on climate change was officially presented with fanfare to the media behind the walls of Vatican City. Published in at least five languages, the 192-page document focuses on our shared moral responsibility to address the impact of continued reliance on fossil fuels on the Earth—particularly on the poor who bear the severest consequences. Pope Francis blamed the indifference of those who hold power, saying they put humanity and the whole creation at risk as they pursue unlimited economic growth. Up to now the world, he says, lacking the will up to now to change habits for the good of the Earth, has accepted a “cheerful recklessness” in its approach to the issue. theguardian.com

Such memorable language is sure to add years to the life of the encyclical. Here are some additional quotations:

- "The Earth, our home, is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth."
- "We are not God. The Earth was here before us and was given to us."
- "The idea of infinite or unlimited growth, which proves so attractive to economists, financiers and experts in technology . . . is based on the lie that there is an infinite supply of the Earth's goods, and this leads to the planet being squeezed dry at every limit."
- "The climate is a common good, belonging to all and meant for all."
- "We are not faced with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather one complex crisis which is both social and environmental."
- "Doomsday predictions can no longer be met with irony or disdain."
- “People no longer seem believe in a happy future, a better tomorrow.”
- "Yet all is not lost. Human beings, while capable of the worst, are also capable of rising above themselves, choosing again what is good, and making a new start."
- "We must regain the conviction that we need one another, that we have a shared responsibility for others and the world, and that being good and decent are worth it." cnn.com

Despite the publicity surrounding the message, and the welcome it is receiving by climate activists and world leaders mindful of the need, the immediate response of many US politicians was outright disdain. Even a few voices in the moderate national press seemed mildly skeptical. The first coverage in The Washington Post stated: ‘He warns of ‘synthetic agrotoxins’ harming birds and insects and ‘bioaccumulation’ from industrial waste. He calls for renewable fuel subsidies and ‘maximum energy efficiency.’ Although he offers prayers at the beginning and end of his heavily anticipated missive on the environment, Pope Francis unmasks himself not only as a very green pontiff, but also as a total policy wonk.’ The encyclical, it said, “is sort of a
combination between Saint Augustine and a National Academy of Sciences report.”

Later, however, the Post’s religion reporter gave opportunity for supporters to characterize the pope’s statement, including this perspective from Anthony Annett, climate change advisor at Earth Institute at Columbia University: “Very few people view the environment as a moral issue. This encyclical hopefully has a chance to change that. Have you ever in your life seen such interest in an obscure document? It’s stunning. It’s remarkable. I don’t think people are going to pick it up and say, ‘Been there, done that.’”

The pope himself has said that his text should not be read as a green manifesto, but instead as a social teaching. The entire encyclical can be read in English here.

The world’s best-known climate scientist has also recently spoken with new force. James Hansen and his 16-member team presented an important warning of potentially rapid sea level rise combined with more intense storm systems. On July 27, 2015 he published the results of their eight-year study in an open-access “discussion journal,” which allows the paper to become public while undergoing peer-review. The research includes global climate simulations aimed at trying to understand what happened at the end of the Eemian interglacial period and its relevance to climate change today. Hansen headlined the email he sent to the public: “It’s Time to Stop Waffling So Much and Say that the Evidence is Pretty Strong...Multi-meter Sea Level Rise is an Issue for Today’s Public, not Next Millennium’s.” Hansen writes that he long suspected that “ice sheet disintegration is a very nonlinear phenomena and that the IPCC studies were largely omitting what may be the most important forcing of the ocean: the effect of cold freshwater from melting ice.” His announcement states that comparing today’s temperatures and CO$_2$ with the Eemian “is useful for investigating climate feedbacks, the response of polar ice sheets to polar warming, and the interplay between ocean circulation and ice sheet melt.” His conclusion, based on the total information available, is that continued high emissions would result in multi-meter sea level rise this century, locking in continued ice sheet disintegration.

Like the pope, Hansen had the December 2015 climate negotiations in Paris in mind when he published in the discussion journal. In addition to influencing policymakers, he hopes the public peer review process will expose the general public to the scientific method—helping to make clear that scrutiny and questioning are a natural and healthy part of scientific research. As various scientists weigh in on the findings there should be press coverage, increasing public awareness and making the reality of the climate situation clearer. columbia.edu.pdf and atmos-chem-phys-discuss.net.pdf

The situation addressed by Pope Francis and James Hansen becomes more serious day by day. The first six months of 2015, with an average temperature of 57.83 degrees, were one-sixth of a degree warmer than the old record, set in 2010. But in 2010, the El Niño became weak. Forecasters are predicting this year’s El Niño will get stronger, not weaker. “If that
happens, it’s just going to go off the charts,” said Jessica Blunden, a climate scientist for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. noaanews.noaa.gov. One study shows that if carbon dioxide and methane emissions are not dramatically cut extremely rapidly, anthropogenic climate disruption (ACD) is likely to bring about the most dramatic and encompassing rearrangement of ocean species in at least the last 3 million years. truth-out.org and nature.com. Moose in North America are dying by the thousands. ibtimes.co.uk. Redwoods and other iconic trees in California are dying in record numbers. eenews.net. In India over 2,500 people have died in a heat wave that was at least the fourth deadliest in world history. telegraph.co.uk. Zimbabwe is suffering the worst regional drought in ten years, and the maize harvest is expected to produce only 950,000 metric tons of the 1.8 million metric tons needed to prevent starvation. reuters.com. São Paulo, Brazil, with a population of over 20 million people, is facing severe water rationing as its largest water reservoir is almost depleted by drought. washpost.bloomberg.com. Yet May was the wettest month ever recorded in the United States, despite the mega-drought in California and the West. usatoday.com.

There are some signs that these outrages are being noticed. One is the June 8, 2015, announcement by the G7 that they support a 40-70 percent reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from 2010 levels by 2050. The group committed to do its part to meet this goal by striving to transform the energy sector by mid-century and to put long-term, national low-carbon strategies in place. In any pathway chosen by an individual member, fossil fuel use
drastically must be cut while increasing renewable energy and energy efficiency. The leaders also put a major focus on strong provisions to increase transparency and accountability in future negotiations. greenbiz.com

The White House has initiated about 40 new measures to fight carbon pollution just since the start of 2015. Following Barack Obama’s sweeping promise in June 2013 to fight climate change with executive powers, his administration has introduced one measure every 4.5 days this year, according to the running tally kept by the White House. But on May 11, 2015, the President gave approval to Royal Dutch Shell to drill for oil in the Arctic off the coast of Alaska. (The permit must also be approved by other federal and state agencies, and Shell must also prove it can comply with the Endangered Species Act.) As with other pro-oil decisions that frustrate climate activists, here the President seems to balance his concern about climate change with the desire to maintain US economic dominance. newrepublic.com

POLLUTION

As of July 1, 2015, Expandable Polystyrene Foam (EPS) products such as cups, trays, plates, and clamshell containers, and packing peanuts are banned in New York City. EPS, or Styrofoam, is made when small beads of the polymer polystyrene are steamed with chemicals until they expand to 50 times their original volume. The finished product is about 95% air. “These products cause real environmental harm,” said Mayor de Blasio. “They can’t be recycled,” said a spokesperson for the Department of Sanitation. Marine biology professor Douglas McCauley of the University of California, Santa Barbara, said polystyrene causes two main issues for marine animals—mechanical and chemical. When eaten, the foam causes blockages that can be lethal, and chemically, foam’s absorbent properties make EPS even more dangerous. "Polystyrene foams essentially act like little pollutant sponges, picking up and concentrating some of the nastiest contaminants in the ocean," McCauley says. "Then something like a sea turtle comes along and eats this thinking it is a jellyfish." That's not just bad for the fish and the oceans. It could be bad for humans. bbc.com

On June 29, 2015, the US Supreme Court ruled the Environmental Protection Agency must take cost into account when deciding whether to regulate mercury and other toxics emitted from coal-burning power plants. The decision will complicate federal efforts to control these pollutants. Twenty-one states joined in the challenge to the EPA, while sixteen states including California and North Carolina joined to support the EPA’s regulation. The federal Clean Air Act requires the EPA to decide whether it is “appropriate and necessary” to regulate hazardous air pollutants emitted by electric utilities fueled by coal or oil. This threshold question precedes the actual setting of power plant emission standards. While “necessary” means protecting health, the meaning of “appropriate” is open to interpretation. “Appropriate is a capacious term,” Justice Anthony Kennedy noted during oral argument. The meaning of the word shifts with the political winds. kansascity.com
In May, 2015, Home Depot and Lowe’s announced they will ban toxic phthalates added to vinyl flooring by the end of 2015. Together, the two largest home improvement chains in the country sell nearly $10 billion of flooring a year. Most vinyl flooring tested by ecocenter.org contained toxic phthalates, which are commonly used to soften the vinyl. The chemicals get into the air and dust and then make their way into bodies. Certain phthalates have been banned in children’s products since 2009: di(2-ethylhexyl) phthalate (DEHP), dibutyl phthalate (DBP), and butyl benzyl phthalate (BBP). Earlier this year, the US Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) proposed to permanently ban the use of another five phthalates in children’s toys and childcare articles. chemicalwatch.com

BP has agreed to pay the largest environmental fine in US history—a record $18.7 billion. The legal action brought by the US justice department, along with the states of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Texas and Florida, concerns damages from the fatal 2010 Gulf of Mexico oil spill not covered by the company’s earlier settlements with businesses. The settlement announced July 2, 2015, allows the company to pay over 18 years and ends all litigation between BP, the states, and the US government. BP’s share price rose following the announcement. motherjones.com

ENERGY

Powered only by the sun, the airplane Solar Impulse flew from Japan to Hawaii, landing on July 3, 2015. After a historic 4474-mile (7,200km) flight across the Pacific, Pilot Andre Borschberg and Bertrand Piccard, Borschberg’s project co-founder and occasional co-pilot, were elated. Their 118 hours in the sky is a record for a solo, un-refueled journey. The plane, with 17,000 solar cells on its wings and a top speed of about 87mph, is faster than a ship but much slower than traditional aircraft. Weighing only about as much as a car, the plane is easily tossed about by strong winds and driving rains. www.bbc.com/news/. The next leg of the around-the-world journey—from Hawaii to Phoenix AZ, USA, can be followed at www.solarimpulse.com/.

The United States could convert to 100 percent renewable energy through wide-scale implementation of existing technologies. A study published by Mark Jacobson of Stanford
University and Mark Delucci of the University of California at Berkeley and others on June 9, 2015, is the first to outline how each of the 50 states could replace fossil fuel energy with entirely clean, renewable energy by 2050. The 50 individual state plans call for aggressive changes to both infrastructure and the ways we currently consume energy, but indicate that the conversion is already technically and economically possible with no more than 0.5 percent of any state's land covered in solar panels or wind turbines. The upfront cost of the changes would be significant, but wind and sunlight are free. So the overall cost spread over time would be roughly equal to the price of the fossil fuel infrastructure, maintenance and production.

Bill Gates has announced he will invest $2bn in renewable technologies initiatives. Gates said that he would double his current investments in renewables over the next five years in a bid to “bend the curve” on tackling climate change. He dismissed the calls of the fossil fuel divestment movement on the basis that it would have little impact. Instead he said there was an urgent need for “high risk” investments in breakthrough technologies. He said that a “miracle” on the level of the invention of the automobile was necessary to avoid a climate catastrophe.

The Biennial Energy Efficiency Scorecard ranks Boston as the most energy-efficient city in the nation, followed by New York City, Washington, DC, San Francisco, Seattle, and Chicago. The American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE) rated Atlanta as the leading city in the South with an improvement of five points, earned through local government operations, buildings policies, energy and water utilities, and transportation policies. Charlotte made a strong showing as well, improving by nearly eight points. Boston was the only city to earn over 80 points, and all of the ranked cities, even the highest scorers, have significant room for improvement. The full report is available online at aceee.org.

In September of 2013 an average neighborhood in the city of Suwon, South Korea, banned cars for a month. When planning began, the neighborhood was filled with cars, and people typically drove everywhere, even pulling up on sidewalks to park in front of shops while they ran errands. Most of the people could not envision how their lives could work car-free.
After two years of planning and countless meetings to get support from skeptics, fifteen hundred cars were moved out of the neighborhood to parking lots elsewhere in the city. Four hundred temporary bikes and electric scooters were brought in and the neighborhood was transformed. Mail was delivered by electric vehicles. Shuttle buses ran every 15 minutes to take people to their cars. Cafes and restaurants added new sidewalk seating, and the streets filled with people. The length of the experiment helped show how people could actually live without cars in everyday life. After the festival ended, residents made a few permanent changes. They cut the speed limit to 18 miles per hour to reduce traffic and eliminated side parking on sidewalks and some major streets. More people walk and bike now, and every month, the community celebrates a car-free day. The celebration is reported in a new book called *Neighborhood in Motion: One Month, One Neighborhood, No Cars*.

Over 7.7 million people are employed in the renewable sector worldwide—an 18% increase over 2013. On May 19, 2015, the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) reported that solar is the largest renewable sector employer worldwide, with China, Brazil, and the United States boasting the largest overall employment figures. The report came out as the International Monetary Fund announced that fossil fuel subsidies, along with the external costs associated with extracting and burning coal, oil and gas, adds up to $5.3 trillion each year. The IMF figures show fossil fuels globally subsidized at the rate of $10 million dollars a minute. [treealerts.org](http://treealerts.org)
CES NEWS

RE-IMAGINING CIVILIZATION AS ECOLOGICAL: REPORT ON THE “SEIZING AN ALTERNATIVE: TOWARD AN ECOLOGICAL CIVILIZATION” CONFERENCE
By Herman F. Greene

The conference was highly anticipated. The invitation read:

Some 1,000 presenters from more than 30 countries and 80 fields of specialty and are coming together for the most ambitious trans-disciplinary event ever held on behalf of the planet: “Seizing an Alternative: Toward an Ecological Civilization.” June 4-7, 2015, Claremont, CA. The conference is for everyone who cares about the big ideas that matter for a thriving biosphere.

The conference organizers being highly optimistic hoped for 1,500 attendees, there were over 2,000. They anticipated 800 presenters in 80 different Tracks, there were over 900 in 85 Tracks. People came from all over the world, including more than 200 from the Peoples Republic of China.

This conference was of high importance for ecozoans. Thomas Berry gave us the Great Work of moving from the terminal Cenozoic era, to an emerging Ecozoic era—an age of mutually enhancing relations among humans and the larger community of life. He gave us guideposts, but no roadmap. I liken this to Martin Luther King, Jr., who said he had “been to the mountaintop and seen the Promised Land,” but the task of moving into that Promised Land was left to those who followed him. With respect to the single issue of racism, we are now seeing how difficult that really is. Big changes take a long time and progress for the moment gives way to setbacks and then re-engaging in new ways.

Berry said moving into the Ecozoic era was the most difficult and complex task ever offered to humankind. It was different from all other historic transitions because this time what was involved was not “merely” a disturbance in human affairs, but a disturbance in the functioning of the planet. For the first time in human history, humans were dealing with a change in geobiological eras in the history of the planet Earth.

The only reference point we have for change of this magnitude is the great changes in civilization that occurred 10,000 years ago with the birth of Neolithic villages and agriculture, the birth of the classical civilizations which began some 3,000 years ago, the inception of the modern period some 500 years ago, and what is happening now, which pull in two ways, one to the technozoic and the other to the ecozoic.
There are various movements tending toward the ecozoic, movements to sustainable development, to environmentalism, to eco-communalism, and to the new sustainability paradigm. The new sustainability paradigm foresees that society remains complex with significant globalized elements, but is transformed by ecological awareness and sensitivity. For a discussion of this paradigm, see Paul Raskin et al., *Great Transition: The Promise and Lure of the Times Ahead* (Boston, MA: Stockholm Environment Institute – Boston, 2002), available [here](#). The Seizing an Alternative Conference in general would fall into the new sustainability paradigm—the distinctiveness of the conference being that it stressed the humanistic, or cultural, side of the Great Transition, and the work of the conference was re-thinking civilization.

I’ll cover the keynote speakers at the conference below. They were significant, but it cannot be emphasized enough that the Tracks were the heart of this conference. In a conference of four days—really three because the first day was only a single plenary—12 hours were given to the Track sessions (eight 90-minute sessions). The clear instruction to Track participants was to begin something, not end something at the conference.

As an example of how a Track was structured, the sessions of the Law Track were:

- Flight from Normative Concern and Its Consequences for the Study and Practice of Law
- Process Thought and Legal Theory
- The Rights of Nature
- How Protection of the Environment Requires Rethinking the Idea of Property
- Legal Pluralism in a Globalized World: Re-imagining Dispute Systems as Relational Worldmaking Practices
- Franklin I. Gamwell's Process Political Theory and Constitutional Law
- Earth Jurisprudence
- “Seizing an Alternative” in Legal Theory and Legal Practice: Next steps?

There were 12 presenters in this Track and around 25 total participants including the presenters. AND THIS WAS JUST ONE OF 85 TRACKS! For a complete list of the Tracks [click here](#). Within the Berry community the conference had special significance. For the first time “Berry people,” Teilhardians, and Whiteheadians, came together in significant numbers to work on
common projects. Their interests are aligned on a move to ecological civilization. Will ecological civilization continue to provide a common framework for the diverse groups of people who assembled in Claremont? The intent of the conference organizers was that work in the Tracks would continue after the conference and much would come out of the tracks in terms of publications and teaching.

Two organizations came into being with the purpose of taking the work of the conference forward. **Pando Populus** was brought into being as a co-sponsor of the conference and as an instrument for dissemination and continuation of the work of the conference. Its name came from the largest and oldest organism on the planet, “Pando.” Pando is an aspen tree in southern Utah that spreads over 100 acres and weighs some 13 million pounds. “Populus” is the genus for aspen. Above ground, Pando appears to be a vast grove of individual trees. Underground they are all interconnected through a single root system. Each part is affected by and nourishes the other. It has survived this way for as long as 80,000 years. The name signifies profound interconnectedness. It is a reminder of our remarkable ability to endure. And it embodies hope that we might rethink civilization in explicitly ecological, Pando-like terms.

**Process Century Press** was also brought into being in preparation for the conference. It is an academic press dedicated to transdisciplinary applications of process thought. The press will publish books emerging from the multiple Sections and Tracks of the conference, as well as other books that view scholarly issues and world concerns from a process perspective. A book that will soon be published by this press focuses on the Pope Frances’s recent encyclical, “Laudato Si’ On Care for Our Common Home.”
The keynoters were noteworthy each contributing to the conference—Bill McKibben, Vandana Shiva, Sheri Lao, John Cobb, Herman Daly, Wes Jackson, and David Ray Griffin. Many were responsive to the urgent messages of McKibben and Shiva. People were fascinated by the work of Wes Jackson on perennial wheat and how one could contribute to changing the very nature of agriculture if one devoted one’s life to it. Sheri Lao who works with dozens of eco-villages in rural China was a living demonstration of hope. John Cobb and Herman Daly, who co-authored *For the Common Good* in 1989 (perhaps, along with Thomas Berry’s *Dream of the Earth*, published in 1988, the seminal works behind this conference) spoke gravely about our present situation and the work ahead.

John Cobb the originator and architect of the conference deserves special mention.

Some of the other notables presenting in the Tracks of the conference were Rosemary Radford Reuther—What is Civilization and What Are its Consequences for Human Relations to the Rest of the Natural World?; Mark Analeski, Joshua Farley, David Korten—Ecological Economics; Stuart Kauffman—Systems Theory, Complexity Theory, and Radical Emergence; Brian Swimme, Becca Tarnas, Richard Tarnas—Late Modernity and Its Re-Imaging; Larry Rasmussen—Eco-Feminism; Ellen Brown—Political Collapse; Fubin Yang—Birth Pangs of Ecological civilization; Sally Bingham, Fletcher Harper—Reimagining and Mobilizing Religious Traditions in Response to the Eco-Crisis; Michael Lerner—The Jewish Contribution to Ecological Civilization; Stanislov Grof, John Grimm, Robert McDermott—Extraordinary Challenges to the Modern Paradigm; Mary Evelyn Tucker, Richard Norgaard, Carl Anthony, Paloma Pavel—Journey of the Universe and inclusive History as a Context of Meaning; Tripp Fuller, Brian McLaren—A New Way for a New Day; Spyridon Koutroufinis, Terrence Deacon—Unprecedented Evolution: Human Continuities and Discontinuities with Animal Life; Laura Underkuffler, Mary Christina Wood—Law, Legal Theory and Law Practice . . . and these are just a few taken from the 64-page conference program.
In addition, a large number of people from the Whiteheadian community around the world, young and old, well-known and not so well known, published and unpublished, students, professors, various other professions and endeavors were also present.

I feel that the conference was so significant that it should be known as “THE GREAT CONFERENCE AT CLAREMONT” or simply “The Great Conference.”

Never before has such an assemblage been held. As a single event it was highly successful. What the ultimate meaning of the conference will be will depend on whether efforts continue from the conference. There are many people who are carrying forward the work of the conference and CES is highly involved.

AGREEMENT REACHED ON OUTCOME DOCUMENT FOR THE UN’S POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA; UN CONFERENCE ON FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT COMPLETED
By Herman Greene

As reported in CES Musings in our immediately preceding issue, 2015 is a signal year for sustainability with these highlight events:

2. June 18, 2015 – Pope Francis’s encyclical “Laudato Si’ On Care for Our Common Home.”

1The encyclical is dated May 24, 2015. It was published on June 18, 2015.

See reports on Items 1&2 elsewhere in this issue. In this article, we will focus on Items 3&4.

UN POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

Agreement on the Outcome Document for the UN’s Post-2015 development agenda was reached on August 2, 2014. This occurred at the end of the Eighth Session of Intergovernmental Negotiations on the Post-2015 Development Agenda. The document is titled “Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,” and is available here. The document will be submitted to September 25-27, 2015, UN Summit to Adopt the Post-2015 Development Agenda, in New York, where it will presented for adoption by the UN General Assembly. When the UN calls a meeting a “summit” it means that it is expected that 100+ heads of state of the 193 member nations will attend the meeting.

In 2000 the UN held the Millennium Summit and out of that event emerged the “Millennium Development Goals” (MDGs) to prioritize development efforts through 2015. In June 2012 at the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD, or Rio+20), in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, work on a successor set of Goals to be called the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) began in earnest. The MDGs focused on poverty reduction and other issues in developing countries. The SDGs were also to address conditions in developed countries that adversely affected global development, such as sustainable consumption and production and greenhouse gas emissions among others.

After Rio+20 a global process began to come to agreement on the SDGs. This process is described in this report. What came out of the process was an expansive, integrated global program of development comprised of 17 Goals and 169 targets beneath those Goals. Adoption of these Goals and targets by the UN will not result in binding obligations by the member nations. Rather they will be recommended by the UN to the member states for implementation by them. In this sense the Outcome Document will be a “soft” power, rather than a “hard” power document, but both the adoption of the agenda and its implementation will have important consequences. With regard to consequences, among other things global statistics will be kept on each nation’s progress on the targets; the SDGs will influence grant making by both private foundations and governments; and the SDGs will shape the dialogue on the meaning of development.

The Preamble to the Outcome Document is significant and is repeated below:

Preamble

This Agenda is a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity. It also seeks to strengthen universal peace in larger freedom. We recognise that eradicating poverty in
all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development.

All countries and all stakeholders, acting in collaborative partnership, will implement this plan. We are resolved to free the human race from the tyranny of poverty and want and to heal and secure our planet. We are determined to take the bold and transformative steps which are urgently needed to shift the world onto a sustainable and resilient path. As we embark on this collective journey, we pledge that no one will be left behind.

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets which we are announcing today demonstrate the scale and ambition of this new universal Agenda. They seek to build on the Millennium Development Goals and complete what these did not achieve. They seek to realize the human rights of all and to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. They are integrated and indivisible and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development: the economic, social and environmental.

The foals and targets will stimulate action over the next fifteen years in areas of critical importance for humanity and the planet:

**People**

We are determined to end poverty and hunger, in all their forms and dimensions, and to ensure that all human beings can fulfil their potential in dignity and equality and in a healthy environment.

**Planet**

We are determined to protect the planet from degradation, including through sustainable consumption and production, sustainably managing its natural resources and taking urgent action on climate change, so that it can support the needs of the present and future generations.

**Prosperity**

We are determined to ensure that all human beings can enjoy prosperous and fulfilling lives and that economic, social and technological progress occurs in harmony with nature.

**Peace**
We are determined to foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies which are free from fear and violence. There can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development.

**Partnership**

We are determined to mobilize the means required to implement this Agenda through a revitalised Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, based on a spirit of strengthened global solidarity, focused in particular on the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable and with the participation of all countries, all stakeholders and all people.

The interlinkages and integrated nature of the Sustainable Development Goals are of crucial importance in ensuring that the purpose of the new Agenda is realised. If we realize our ambitions across the full extent of the Agenda, the lives of all will be profoundly improved and our world will be transformed for the better.

The 17 Goals of the Post-2015 agenda are as follows:

**Sustainable Development Goals**

- Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere
- Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
- Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
- Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
- Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
- Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
- Goal 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
- Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
- Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
- Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries
- Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
- Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
- Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts*
- Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
- Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

*Acknowledging that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is the primary international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change.

UN Conference on Financing for Development Completed

The Third International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD3) was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on July 13, 16, 2015. The conference was an intended prologue to the September UN summit on the post-2015 development agenda. In a colloquial way one could describe what this conference was about as: “Who’s going to pay for this?”

To say the least it’s an important question. Good intentions will not lead to realization of the SDGs. One ball park estimate of the cost of implementation over the next 15 years is $3-4 trillion. Whatever the actual number is, it’s big.

The official document released at the end of FfD3 was “The Addis Ababa Action Agenda” (AAAA).

There were a lot of issues involved in the financing negotiations. Developing countries felt that too much was left to the private sector and to same country resources in the AAAA and the commitments made by the developed countries fell short. Nonetheless, for those who maintain an optimistic stance toward the post-2015 development agenda and its implementation, FfD3 did its job by affirming the shared obligation of financing global implementation of the SDGs.

This report from Earth Negotiations Bulleting (August 5, 2015, vol. 32, no. 20, pages 24-25) gives a flavor of the negotiations:

Sustainable development still suffers from a lack of clarity. Is it different from the development track? Is it mainly about the environment? Is it something new, or a big umbrella that covers everything? Is it a step on the way to poverty eradication, or a result of it? Even at this meeting that was supposed to be elaborating a sustainable development agenda, comments indicated that not all delegates shared a common working definition of the concept.

This lack of consensus on the meaning of sustainable development was demonstrated when some delegates called for the title of the agenda to encompass “poverty eradication and sustainable development.” Doing so would have set poverty eradication
as a counterpoint to sustainable development, and maintain the “silos” that so many wanted to dismantle. Instead, the agreed title, “Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,” maintains sustainable development as the all-encompassing framework, in which “eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty,” is the greatest global challenge.

Differences in interpretation also pervaded the financial commitments around development and sustainable development. Until the last moments of the FfD3 negotiations leading up to the Addis Ababa conference in July, for example, governments argued about whether to title that outcome document “financing for development” or “financing for sustainable development.” (The agreed title was “financing for development post-2015.”) And discussions in the final round of post-2015 negotiations were fraught with competing outlooks on the means of implementation to support the agenda. Had the AAAA succeeded in expanding the development financing framework to encompass the entire sustainable development agenda, to the point where no other arrangements were needed? Or did the SDGs require more? Many developed countries considered the AAAA to be enough. Many developing countries, on the other hand, asserted the latter, and called for greater attention on trade, debt and technology in order to implement the SDGs. This was a key difference of opinion underlying the debates over whether the AAAA would be described as “integral” to the agenda, considered the entire means of implementation pillar of the agenda, or as “supporting and complementing” the agenda.

The tension between the environmental and development tracks was also reflected in the heated debate on the scope of the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities (CBDR). Developed countries insisted that CBDR applies only in the environmental context and is not appropriate in the post-2015 development agenda, calling for it to be replaced by the principle of “shared responsibility.” Developing countries, in contrast, called for making CBDR the overarching principle of the post-2015 development agenda.
POPE FRANCIS AND THE CULTURE OF CARE
By Sheila Read

Editor’s Note: To celebrate Pope Francis’ new encyclical “Laudato Si’”: On Care of Our Common Home,” the Catholic Community of St. Francis of Assisi in Raleigh hosted an Interfaith Prayer Vigil on June 28, 2015. People from 20 different faith communities, including Jewish and Muslim leaders, participated in witness to willingness to work together to respond to Pope Francis’ call to be protectors of people and the Earth. “Laudato Si’” translates as “Praised be” and is the repeated phrase in St. Francis’ famous “Canticle of Brother Sun.”

The keynote talk for the prayer vigil was given by Sheila Read, MA, MSW, LCSW. Ms. Read is a spiritual counselor who restores her connection to God and the natural world by gardening and taking long walks in the woods. She wrote a master’s thesis on Catholic social teaching on care for creation and leads the new Care of Creation & Climate Change ministry at her church community of St. Francis.

Four years ago, I proposed a topic for a master’s thesis in a journalism program. The topic was Catholic Social Teaching on Care of Creation, and how the church had communicated – or failed to communicate – that message.

The idea to research this topic came on a Florida balcony as I looked out over the bay, worrying over the sea-level rise that year by year was drowning mangrove trees at my favorite beach. I was concerned about the changing climate and the droughts, floods, and hurricanes that were becoming more frequent. But I wasn’t hearing anything at church about caring for the environment. I started to wonder if being a Catholic was compatible with being an environmentalist.

I was surprised when my secular thesis adviser accepted the topic. I was even more surprised when I learned that Pope Francis was writing an encyclical—the highest form of church teaching—urging people to care for Earth.

I want to begin by reading the opening paragraphs of Pope Francis’ encyclical, as an appetizer of sorts. I hope you leave tonight with the desire to read his letter in full, to digest it with others, and to begin to incorporate small changes in your life.

Pope Francis begins:

“LAUDATO SI’, mi’ Signore” – “Praise be to you, my Lord”. In the words of this beautiful canticle, Saint Francis of Assisi reminds us that our common home is like a sister with whom we share our life and a beautiful mother who opens her arms to embrace us . . .
“Praise be to you, my Lord, through our Sister, Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us, and who produces various fruit with coloured flowers and herbs.”

This sister now cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her . . . . The violence present in our hearts, wounded by sin, is also reflected in the symptoms of sickness evident in the soil, in the water, in the air and in all forms of life . . . . We have forgotten that we ourselves are dust of the earth; our very bodies are made up of her elements, we breathe her air and we receive life and refreshment from her waters. (Pars 1 & 2)

At heart in “Laudato Si’” Pope Francis is inviting each one of us to participate in what he calls a “culture of care,” both for people and the earth. He asks the big question: “What kind of world do we want to leave to those who come after us, to children who are now growing up?”

Change of Heart

Pope Francis is asking for a change of heart, and he touches on many ecological concerns such as pollution, deforestation and extinction of species. He also details most of the human injustices of our time. But he starts with climate change, which he calls one of the principal and most urgent challenges facing humanity in our day.

Pope Francis, like his predecessor Pope Benedict, has accepted the scientific consensus that the evidence for global warming is unequivocal, principally caused by humans, and that inaction carries great risks.

The great injustice of climate change is that poor people in developing nations who have contributed least to the burning of fossil fuels are suffering the most from weather-related disasters. The World Health Organization estimates that 150,000 people per year are already dying from the effects of climate change. War in Africa is frequently driven by shifts in climate and the growing deserts that rob communities of pastures. The devastation of the Philippines from Super Typhoon Haiyan shows how storms have intensified and how poorer countries with fewer resources suffer.

Poor people in other nations who make subsistence livings from farming, fishing and forestry have no resources to adapt when climate changes causes plants and animals to die or move. Unable to feed themselves in traditional ways, growing numbers of migrants flee from the poverty caused by environmental degradation.

The same mindset that promotes self-interest above the common good leads to degrading the earth and devaluing people. Pope Francis writes, “When we fail to acknowledge as part of reality the worth of a poor person, a human embryo, a person with disabilities—to offer just a few examples—it becomes difficult to hear the cry of nature itself; everything is connected.”
Pope Francis is like a doctor diagnosing the moral diseases that are causing so much suffering in our time. Pope Francis names these diseases the “throwaway culture” and the “globalization of indifference.” In the modern throwaway culture, the idolatry of profit, money and consumerism lays waste to both the natural world and to people’s lives, especially the young, the elderly and people in developing countries.

The symptoms of our cultural sickness are environmental degradation, anxiety, a loss of the purpose of life and of community living, Pope Francis writes. I think most of us recognize these symptoms in the anxiety in our own families, in rampant violence, alcohol and drug use, broken marriages, and cutthroat workplaces.

The pope also offers challenging and nuanced critiques of politics, technology, and multinational corporations. Though he challenges us, his message is always “both-and” and not “yes or no.” He praises the right use of politics, technology and business as noble when their first priority is human dignity and sustainable development.

A Long Tradition

Some of the public debate over Pope Francis’ encyclical is almost laughable, especially the attacks on his valuing a society based on love of God and neighbor and concern for the common good. It’s as if some commentators are surprised to learn the pope is Catholic.

Catholic teaching on the relationship between God, humans and nature originates in the Bible in Genesis. God made creation and sees it as very good. God also gave humans a special responsibility to care for creation and exercise “dominion” over it.

The word dominion has been problematic, to say the least. Pope Benedict and now Pope Francis have clarified that dominion does not mean license to destroy the natural world for the material gain of a few people. We are called to care for the earth in a balanced way, taking what we need for sustenance but ensuring its preservation for future generations.

Early Christian theologians often referred to the natural world as a gift from God. They said God is revealed in two books: the book of Scripture and the book of nature. Nature, in its abundance, beauty, majesty, and the wondrous variety of plant and animal life, teaches us about the goodness of God. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus told his disciples to learn from nature how to trust in God, telling them to let go of their daily anxieties and “look at the birds in the sky; they do not sow or reap, they gather nothing into barns, yet your heavenly Father feeds them.”

Many early saints described the interconnected relationship between God, humans and nature. St. Augustine wrote about the ways in which all elements of nature and all creatures give praise to God. St. Thomas Aquinas taught “that God created living and nonliving entities in an orderly
relationship with one another to achieve their common good.” In St. Francis’s well-known “Canticle of Brother Sun,” all of creation praises God, and the sun, moon, wind and water are our brothers and sisters.

In the modern era, Pope Francis’s talk of the sin of consumerism and climate change as a moral issue is not new in Catholic teaching.

Twenty-five years ago, Pope John Paul II wrote: “Modern society will find no solution to the ecological problem unless it takes a serious look at its life style. In many parts of the world, society is given to instant gratification and consumerism while remaining indifferent to the damage which these cause.”

The US Bishops in 2001 described climate change as a serious problem that requires action motivated by prudence. Pope Benedict was dubbed the “Green Pope” for his writings on the environment and his program to reduce carbon emissions at the Vatican. Benedict emphasized “human ecology,” and made explicit the connection between the way people treat each other and the way they treat the Earth.

An Urgent Call for People of Faith

So what’s different now? First, Pope Francis is so popular that people all over the world are paying attention. Second, he is emphasizing the urgency of making lifestyle changes and taking collective action now. Third, Pope Francis has addressed his message to all people and is calling us to work together as we build a new culture.

People of faith have a special role to play in social action to address climate change. As we see in the stalemate over action on the climate, scientific, technological, and economic entities fail to adequately spur action because they don’t address the values that guide people’s behavior. He writes:

Any technical solution which science claims to offer will be powerless to solve the serious problems of our world if humanity loses its compass, if we lose sight of the great motivations which make it possible for us to live in harmony, to make sacrifices and to treat others well. Believers themselves must constantly feel challenged to live in a way consonant with their faith and not to contradict it by their actions. They need to be encouraged to be ever open to God’s grace and to draw constantly from their deepest convictions about love, justice and peace. If a mistaken understanding of our own principles has at times led us to justify mistreating nature, to exercise tyranny over creation, to engage in war, injustice and acts of violence, we believers should acknowledge that by so doing we were not faithful to the treasures of wisdom which we have been called to protect and preserve. (Par. 200)

Confronting global warming will involve a fundamental change in lifestyles and a collective
global move to sustainable development, Pope Francis emphasizes. We must relearn to value people above things. We must rediscover the value of the common good in shaping economic policies and build a future for the entire human family.

Pope Francis calls for dialogue and an “ecological conversion” of both individuals and communities to new attitudes of gratitude and giving, loving awareness, creativity and enthusiasm for solving the world’s problems.

Pope Francis’ message is full of hope, as he reminds us of God’s grace, love and power to heal us. He asks us to adopt a lifestyle of “less is more,” where we practice gratitude for small daily joys and true presence to each other. A simpler lifestyle motivated by care leads us to true freedom and spirituality.

He says, "those who enjoy more and live better each moment are those who have given up dipping here and there, always on the look-out for what they do not have. They experience what it means to appreciate each person and each thing, learning familiarity with the simplest things and how to enjoy them.”

I encourage you to read Pope Francis’s encyclical for yourself. No summary can do justice to the comprehensive vision, challenge and beauty of Pope Francis’s message. His writing style is down to earth and full of concrete examples and well-chosen images.

I will conclude with one of the last lines in the letter. “Let us sing as we go. May our struggles and our concern for this planet never take away the joy of our hope.”
POPE FRANCIS AND INTEGRAL ECOLOGY
By Sam Mickey

Editor's Note: This article was first published on the blog Becoming Integral: Coexistence in the Planetary Era and is reprinted with permission. Dr. Mickey teaches at the University of San Francisco in the Environmental Studies program and the Theology and Religious Studies department.

The new encyclical by Pope Francis, Laudato Si': On the Care of our Common Home, contains many references to “integral ecology,” including an entire chapter by that title.

It’s relatively clear that Francis is working with the integral ecology proposed by the Brazilian liberation theologian Leonardo Boff, who draws on the general ecology of Félix Guattari and the integral ecology proposed by the cultural historian Thomas Berry. Regarding Boff’s influence, consider the pope’s allusion to Boff’s Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor. ““Today, however, we have to realize that a true ecological approach always becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor” (Par. 49). The pope’s sense of integral ecology is also clearly influenced by the ecological sensibility of St. Francis of Assisi, whose phrase “Laudato Si” (from his Canticle of the Creatures) provides the title and opening line for the encyclical.

The following are the selections from the encyclical that explicitly mention integral ecology. There are also many other references to integral and integrative approaches, including integral development, progress, and education. Moreover, the pope does not intend integral ecology to be an exclusively or primarily Catholic endeavor. The encyclical is addressed to “every person living on this planet” (Par. 3).

“I believe that Saint Francis is the example par excellence of care for the vulnerable and of an integral ecology lived out joyfully and authentically. . . . Francis helps us to see that an integral ecology calls for openness to categories which transcend the language of mathematics and biology, and takes us to the heart of what it is to be human.” (Par. 10-11)

“We urgently need a humanism capable of bringing together the different fields of knowledge, including economics, in the service of a more integral and integrating vision. Today, the analysis of environmental problems cannot be separated from the analysis of human, family, work-related and urban contexts, nor from how individuals relate to themselves, which leads in turn to how they relate to others and to the environment.” (Par. 141)

Any approach to an integral ecology, which by definition does not exclude human beings, needs to take account of the value of labour. (Par. 124)
“An integral ecology includes taking time to recover a serene harmony with creation, reflecting on our lifestyle and our ideals, and contemplating the Creator who lives among us and surrounds us . . . .” (Par. 225)

“An integral ecology is also made up of simple daily gestures which break with the logic of violence, exploitation and selfishness.” (Par. 230)

“Intergenerational solidarity is not optional, but rather a basic question of justice, since the world we have received also belongs to those who will follow us. The Portuguese bishops have called upon us to acknowledge this obligation of justice: “The environment is part of a logic of receptivity. It is on loan to each generation, which must then hand it on to the next”. An integral ecology is marked by this broader vision.” (Par. 159)
RELIGION, ECOLOGY, RACE, AND CULTURAL EVOLUTION

By Matthew David Segall

Editor’s Note: This article was posted on June 23, 2015 on the blog Footnotes 2 Plato. Matthew David Segall is a doctoral candidate in philosophy and religion at the California Institute of Integral Studies in San Francisco, California. He recently chaired the session on “Late Modernity and Its Re-Imaging” at the conference on “Seizing an Alternative: Toward an Ecological Civilization” held in Claremont, California on June 4-7, 2015. The summary of the session read: “The discoveries of geological deep time and biological evolution that emerged during the 18th and 19th centuries dealt a death blow to substance dualism, forcing humanity to make a fateful ontological decision: either, (1) re-imagine nature as ensouled or (2) re-imagine the human as a machine. This track will examine Western civilization’s choice of the latter option, contrasting it with the former one.”

“Today we cannot ignore that a true ecological approach always becomes a social approach and should integrate justice in discussions on the environment to hear both the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor.” -Pope Francis (Par. 49)

Pope Francis released his encyclical on June 18, 2015. I have only skimmed it thus far myself, but I am encouraged by the reviews I have read. Especially that by the liberation theologian Leonardo Boff, whose work connecting ecology and social justice is among the major spiritual inspirations behind the encyclical. The impact of this document on public policy remains to be seen, but the pope explicitly intends it to speak to all Earth’s people, not just Catholics.

Conservative politicians are predictably beside themselves. Their common refrain seems to be to tell the pope to stick to religion and stay out of politics. As I said in a post two weeks ago, perhaps these climate change denying politicians should stay out of science. But of course, part of what the ecological crisis is revealing to us is the way everything—from politics, to religion, to science—is connected. The Earth does not respect our artificial boundaries and all too human constructs. We’ve entered the Anthropocene, which means the old dichotomy between free human subjects and inert natural objects is entirely obsolete: If anything, it is humans who have become inert, unable to act to avoid the worst of the coming ecological catastrophe, while nature—or better, Gaia—is the new dominant actor on the scene, no longer content to remain the static background of human history. The pope is rightly linking economics, morality, and ecology. There are other issues that need to be addressed, of course (i.e., SEX—more on that in a second), but under Francis’s leadership the Church is way ahead of state governments on this. Politicians need to catch up.
Other theistically-minded critics are upset by the fact that one of the pope’s main advisers, Hans Schellnhuber, is a Gaia theorist. About Gaia theory, The Stream’s William Briggs sarcastically writes:

“This is what we might call ‘scientific pantheism,’ a kind that appeals to atheistic scientists. It is an updated version of the pagan belief that the universe itself is God, that the Earth is at least semi-divine—a real Brother Sun and Sister Water! Mother Earth is immanent in creation and not transcendent, like the Christian God.”

Ah yes, the dreaded paganism. It is strange to me that so many Christians seem to neglect the little detail of Christ’s incarnation. Trinitarian theology is not as clear on the issue of transcendence as Briggs makes it seem. And let’s be honest, if Christians continue to insist on the other-worldliness of their God, then their religion will wither away even faster than the ecosystems of this planet. A totally transcendent God is utterly irrelevant to human life on Earth. Who cares about a God unmoved and unaffected by human and earthly concerns? Only death-denying patriarchal authoritarians. This is not to say that some forms of transcendence do not carry liberatory potentials, but I would argue transcendence needs to be held in polar tension with immanence to remain relevant (e.g., panentheism). The geologian Thomas Berry coined the term “incendence,” which beautifully captures the necessary polarity.

Briggs is also worried about what he views as Schellnhuber’s misanthropic statement that the carrying capacity of Earth is around 1 billion people. There is something important in this criticism, since many “environmentalists” who take a more or less “protectionist” approach seem to imply that humans are some kind of eco-disease who would do best to just withdraw from nature as much as possible, to let it do its wild thing without our unnatural interference. This sort of dualism only re-enforces the problem, in my opinion. Anthropologists have thoroughly deconstructed the idea of “wildnerness” by pointing out that indigenous
populations have always been intimately involved in caring for their local ecologies. Restoration ecologists have also made it clear that humans can constructively participate in the flourishing of life on this planet, if only we shift our anthropocentric values so they are inclusive of the intrinsic values of all organisms and habitats.

Finally, Briggs dismisses Schellnhuber’s claim that educating women would help reduce population. The evidence on this question is so unambiguously on Schellnhuber’s side that I’m at a loss as to who Briggs thinks he is kidding. Then I realized he is associated with the Heartland Institute. So much for fidelity to the facts. Or perhaps he is himself Catholic, which would also explain his ideological resistance to sex education.

As I mentioned parenthetically above, the Church’s stance on sexuality remains highly problematic. By continuing to enforce patriarchal norms, the Church is perpetuating an injustice to women and LGBTQ (etc.) communities. I can only hope that the pope’s Earth-positive message will carry over in time to sex-positivity and gender equality, as well. The pope is willing to listen to Gaian scientists about climate change and mass extinction but still looks to the Old Testament for his understanding of healthy human sexual relationships. Society’s views on sex continue to change faster than the LGBTQ (...) acronym can keep up. Pope Francis rightly critiques the “rampant individualism” and “self-centered culture of instant gratification” that dominates our postmodern world (Par. 162), and it is true that in such a context, the sacredness of sexuality is often ignored or debased. But for an institution still so mired in its own sex abuse scandals to pretend to speak with such moral authority about the singular legitimacy of heterosexual marriage as the only container for human sexuality is embarrassing, to say the least. Contemporary human societies are undoubtedly struggling to find new ways to raise and care for children, but instead of condemning so many people to hell, the Church could do a better job supporting anyone, gay or straight, for whom love is the guiding factor in the formation of families. And further, those who wish to express their love without increasing the human population should also be able to avoid the Church’s condemnation, since it is ecologically obvious that we’ve reached and probably surpassed the carrying capacity of this planet. If the pope is serious about rejecting humanity’s absolute dominion over the planet, he must come to understand this.

For an alternative perspective on the role of sex in society, check out primatologist Isabel Behncke’s short presentation about bonobo sexuality. The connections she draws between play and ritual resonate strongly with what I tried to articulate in the paper I delivered at the recent International Whitehead Conference on religion in human and cosmic evolution.

Again, moving toward an ecological civilization is going to take more than just a sustainable and green economy. It is going to take a massive transformation of every aspect of our modern human lives, including how we relate sexually. Conservatives are clearly terrified of such changes, but the power of their ideology pales in comparison to the power of evolutionary creativity. We are primates and our behavior is evolving on every level, or at least needs to if we hope to adapt to a shifting environment.
One final word about the terrible shooting in Charleston that stole the headline from the pope’s encyclical last week. Responding to racism must be part of any integral ecological movement. The Civil War started as much for economic as for political and moral reasons. The North was industrializing, while the South remained tied to slave labor and dependent upon the agricultural exports, especially cotton, that their slaves produced. Black slaves helped get this country on its feet economically, mediating between Whites and the natural world. As machines began to take over this mediating role, the moral absurdity of slavery became more and more apparent to those in the North. The ecological and moral consequences of industrialization are only now becoming obvious. This is far more complex than I can articulate fully here, but there is clearly a connection between the White fear of the natural world, the need for mediation (whether by slaves, machines, or something else) to protect us from it, and the ecological crisis. The Union won the war and ended black slavery only to enforce the enslavement of the regenerative processes of Earth to the new machine overlords of technocapitalism. Healing from the residual racism still blighting our country’s collective psyche seems to me to be a far deeper issue than just being nicer to one another. There are deeper wounds at play here . . . .

Thoughts? The connections I’m drawing are obviously still in their larval phase. I am hoping to start a dialogue to shed light on it all.

*Editor’s Note: You may respond to Matthew’s blog at [Footnotes 2 Plato](http://example.com).*
EDUCATION AND EVENTS

THE INNER LIFE OF THE CHILD IN NATURE: PRESENCE AND PRACTICE PROGRAM, 2015-2017

The Center for Education, Imagination and the Natural World (CEINW) is now soliciting applications for the “The Inner Life of the Child in Nature: Presence and Practice Program, 2015-2017,” a two-year co-research program for educators, therapists, parents, earth educators, health care providers and others with children and young adults in their care at Timberlake Earth Sanctuary, in Whitsett, North Carolina. Click here for more information.

The Inner Life program unfolds over the course of two years. In the first year, we focus on "Presence”—the cultivation of inner capacities, both in ourselves and in children and young adults that bring us into a bond of intimacy with the natural world. In the second year, we focus on "Practice”—on new ways of being and working in the world.

At the Center, we try to create a meaningful context for our programs by paying close attention to the rhythm of the day. Retreats begin with a moment of silence intended to quiet the mind and create a field of receptivity for the group. Every retreat includes solo time in the natural world, time for reflection and sharing, the fellowship of shared meals at lunch, and presentations related to the theme at hand.

Faculty

Director Peggy Whalen-Levitt has been with the Center since its beginnings in 2000. Working closely with Center Founder Carolyn Toben and cultural historian Thomas Berry, Peggy has been deeply engaged in the formation of a work for adults and children, based in intuitive, imaginal and contemplative ways of knowing, that recovers the inner vision of a society in harmony with nature. She holds a PhD in Language in Education from the University of Pennsylvania, where she co-created a graduate Course of Study in Childhood Imagination. She has written widely on aesthetic communication in childhood and is the editor of Chrysalis, the Center journal, and Only the Sacred: Transforming Education in the Twenty-first Century, a Chrysalis reader. Peggy coordinates the “The Inner Life of the Child in Nature: Presence and Practice” program.

Director of Children's Programs, Sandy Bisdee, completed her Association Montessori International (AMI) Teaching Certificate in 1979. A born naturalist and Native American flute player, Sandy has developed the Center’s eco-contemplative practices for children since 2005. She completed her certification in the North Carolina Environmental Education Certification Program in 2009. Sandy brings to her work a lifetime of loving children and of loving the earth and of finding ways to bring the two together!

Andrew Levitt holds a BA in English from Yale University and a PhD in Folklore from the University of Pennsylvania. He trained as a mime with Marcel Marceau and with Paul J. Curtis at
The American Mime Theatre. Andrew performed and taught mime professionally for over thirty years and then helped found the high school at the Emerson Waldorf School in Chapel Hill, NC where he taught Humanities and directed theater for seven years. Andrew co-created a performance piece, "The Meadow Across the Creek: Words from Thomas Berry" for the Thomas Berry Centennial and is the author of *All the Scattered Leaves of the Universe: Journey and Vision in Dante's Divine Comedy and the Work of Thomas Berry*, forthcoming in the Fall of 2015. As Dr. Merryandrew, he currently works as a clown doctor in the Pediatric unit at Moses Cone Memorial Hospital.

**Colette Segalla** holds a PhD in clinical psychology from Pacifica Graduate Institute in California and is a practicing therapist in Raleigh, NC. Before returning to graduate school, Colette was an AMI certified Montessori teacher in a lower elementary classroom of six-to-nine year old children. The work of Steiner and Montessori has contributed to her current Jungian-based exploration of children's spirituality and how a relationship with the natural world contributes to the child's spiritual development. Colette's dissertation, *Spirituality and Its Embeddedness in Nature as It Relates to a Child's Development of a Sense of Self*, will be published by the Center in the Fall of 2015.

**We are now accepting applications for the class of 2015-2017 on a rolling admissions basis through October 1, 2015.** [Click here](#) to download an application.

**Cost:** $750
**Place:** Timberlake Earth Sanctuary  
1501 Rock Creek Dairy Road  
Whitsett, NC 27377

**Calendar of Retreats:**

**First Year 2015-2016**
- Retreat 1: Saturday, November 14, 2015 (9:00-4:00)
- Retreat 2: Saturday, January 30, 2016 (9:00-4:00)
- Retreat 3: Saturday, April 9, 2016 (9:00-4:00)
- Retreats 4-5: Tuesday-Wednesday, June 28-29, 2016 (9:00-4:00)

**Second Year 2016-2017**
- Informal Gathering, October 9, 2016 (2:00-5:00)
- Informal Gathering February 12, 2017 (2:00-5:00)
- Graduation, June 25, 2017 (2:00-8:00)
STUDY OF ALFRED NORTH WHITEHEAD’S *PROCESS AND REALITY*
BEGINNING AUGUST 27, 2015
CONTACT ecozoicsocieties@gmail.com

A one-year study of Alfred North Whitehead’s *Process and Reality* will on begin on Thursday, August 27, 2015. The group will meet monthly in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. The group met for two introductory meetings in June and July, but will begin the actual study of *Process and Reality* on August 29. It’s not too late to join.

Whitehead gives a philosophy of organism. His book, *Process and Reality*, is considered one of the most important philosophical texts of the 20th century. It provides an undergirding philosophy for an ecological worldview.

The leaders of the study are Herman Greene, founder of the International Process Network, and Lewis Ford, who for more than 20 years was editor of the journal, *Process Studies*. The members of the group thus far are very interesting people. No prior knowledge of Whitehead is required and one does not need to be a “philosopher.” The purposes of the study are to let Whitehead speak to the personal situations of the group members and to enhance the appropriation of Whitehead through a group study. Contact ecozoicsocieties@gmail.com, if you are interested in participating.

BECOME A MEMBER, MAKE A DONATION, VOLUNTEER

Your support of CES through becoming a member or making a donation is important. Benefits of membership include a subscription to our print publication, *The Ecozoic*, and discounts to CES events. Membership is on a calendar year basis. Memberships received after November 1 of a calendar year count as membership for the following calendar year.

You may become a member at [http://www.ecozoicsocieties.org/membership/](http://www.ecozoicsocieties.org/membership/). Or, you may send a letter to CES at 2516 Winningham Road, Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27516, USA, with your contact information (name, address, email and phone) and dues. Dues for regular membership is US$35 (individual or family). You may become a sustaining member of CES for US$135 each year or by paying $5 or more monthly through an automatic payment service. Alternately you may become a member (and pay by credit card or PayPal) by contacting us at ecozoicsocieties@gmail.com. CES also accepts members who pay lesser dues or no dues.

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