CES Musings

Chronicling the Transition from Economic-Industrial To Ecological-Cultural Societies
(July-August 2017)

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CULTURE

A revived interest in religion in China has inspired environmental activism. In recent years hundreds of millions of people have turned to religions like Taoism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam, and as they do they are starting social service organizations to oppose polluters, and citing their faith to protest plans to build factories and power plants. Martin Palmer, the secretary general of the Alliance of Religions and Conservation, a group that works with Chinese spiritual leaders, said, “People are asking, ‘How do you make sense of your life?’ An awful lot are looking for something bigger than themselves, and that is increasingly the environment.” The Chinese government, which regulates worship and limits activism, has so far tolerated the rise of religious environmentalists. President Xi Jinping has championed the study of Chinese traditions, including Taoism and Confucianism, in part to counter the influence of Western ideas in Chinese society. Mr. Xi has called for a return to China’s roots as an “ecological civilization”—a term familiar to readers of CES Musings who may not know it originated in China. nytimes.com

The North Carolina Moral Mondays movement goes nationwide. As the Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II spoke to his congregation in Goldsboro, NC, on this past Easter Sunday, 20,000 people were watching on Facebook Live. A June 29, 2017, article in the Washington Post attributed the growing interest in Barber’s mix of piety and politics to the hope for “a different kind of resurrection.” His message of a common moral duty helped to build a racially diverse coalition of believers and nonbelievers—80,000 people showed up for a Moral Monday demonstration in February of this year—that is making inroads against some of North Carolina’s most regressive legislation in decades. In April Rev. Barber began a 22-state tour, where he and members of one of the groups he leads, Repairers of the Breach, are pushing what they call a “broad social justice agenda” to help build integrated movements addressing poverty, voting rights, health care, LGBTQ, worker, and immigrant rights, women’s issues, and the degradation of the environment. “This moment requires us,” Barber said in the speech announcing his resignation as NC NAACP President in order to widen his ministry, “to push into the national consciousness, but not from the top down, but from the bottom up.” washingtonpost.com

Counter to a racially diverse movement is a steady trend by non-college educated whites toward the Republican party regardless of who the candidates are—based on racial concerns. Voter Study Group researchers, in conjunction with the polling firm YouGov, repeatedly surveyed the same panel of 8,000 voters before and after the 2012 election, and then again before and after the 2016 election. The process allowed them to see how individual voter’s preferences changed over time. “If you look at this long list of attitudes that were measured,” commented researcher John Sides, a political scientist at George Washington University, “only three became more strongly associated with a vote in 2016: your views of immigration, your views of African Americans, and your views of Muslims.” Those who thought the economy was
doing poorly tended to vote for the Republican candidates in both elections, but “a really good predictor of whether you supported Trump in the Republican primary wasn’t so much ‘Are you worried about losing your job?’—pure economic anxiety—as it was ‘Do you think that whites lose out on jobs because they have to be given to minorities?’” He concludes that “if economic anxiety mattered (in the 2016 election), it was because it was bound up with concerns about my group’s status versus this other group’s.” thenation.com

CLIMATE

“The Uninhabitable Earth” by David Wallace-Wells, which appeared in New York on July 10, 2017, is the most-read article in the magazine’s history. nymag.com The long article catalogued worst-case climate scenarios regarding heat, food (“the end of food”), air quality, plagues, and war, and offered a doomsday perspective that attracted criticism perhaps more than praise, including comments from highly respected climate scientist Michael Mann on Facebook, who called the framing “doomist.” Mann’s post says, “The article paints an overly bleak picture by overstating some of the science. It exaggerates for example, the near-term threat of climate "feedbacks" involving the release of frozen methane. The science on this is much more nuanced and doesn’t support the notion of a game-changing, planet-melting methane bomb.” Facebook Wallace-Wells maintains his article fills a need. Scientific reports tend to understate the risks of inaction, he says, and “It is important to contemplate the possibility that parts of the tropics and equator will become cripplingly hot, for instance, or that our agriculture will suffer huge losses, so that we may be motivated to take action before we get to those eventualities.” nymag.com

There may not be a “methane bomb,” but higher temperatures are already causing methane eruptions in the far North. A huge explosion was heard in June of this year in the Yamal Peninsula of Siberia in Russia. Reindeer herders saw flames shooting up with pillars of smoke and found a large crater in the ground where the flames had been. Melting permafrost is suspected, as has been the case with fourteen other giant craters that have been found in the region over the past three years—one estimated as 160 feet wide and 230 feet deep. There have also been instances of the ground trembling as bubbles of methane trapped below the surface set the ground wobbling. theguardian.com And plague? Thawing tundra is believed to explain the release last year of Anthrax spores that had remained dormant for 75 years, and were released from a thawing reindeer to infect an entire reindeer herd and thirteen human victims. livescience.com A study published July 19, 2017, in the journal Scientific Reports, suggests that these methane “seeps” on the tundra may be more problematic than previously thought. The study finds that 17 percent of methane emissions in a 10,000 square-kilometer swath of the Mackenzie River Delta in northwestern Canada came from the seeps, despite emissions hotspots covering only one percent of the tundra’s surface. The peak concentrations of methane emissions were found to be 13 times higher than levels usually caused by bacterial decomposition—a well-known source of methane emissions from permafrost, which suggests the methane is likely also coming from geological sources. What is not yet clear is whether the
rapid climate warming in the Arctic will lead to a massive surge in releases of methane. insideclimatenews.org

Sea ice in the Arctic is reported to be at its sixth-lowest extent for the month of June since measurements began. Unfortunately, sixth-lowest extent is not the improvement the number might seem to suggest. That’s because sea ice extent is on par with 2012 as of July 2, 2017, and 2012 is the year that went on to set the mark for lowest Arctic sea ice minimum on record. That year in August a major storm churned the ocean so badly that ice broke up and melting increased accordingly. If such a thing were to happen in 2017, researchers say, the ice might not be able to recover. Sea ice is now missing from 348,000 square miles of the Arctic Ocean, an area about three times the size of Arizona. climatecentral.org

The breakup of Larsen C that took place in Antarctica on July 12, 2017, is not attributed to global warming, since the calving of icebergs from Antarctica is a common occurrence. Neither will it directly raise sea levels, since ice shelves and icebergs float on the sea. The event is part of a progression consistent with the direction of climate change and dramatic warming on the Peninsula since the 1950s, however, and as sections break off, the smaller sections of ice have more surface exposed to warming water and thus to faster melting. As Larsen C loses a shelf this large, too, there is increasing danger that the glaciers located there could reach the sea, since they would have less distance to travel. Large ice shelves serve as giant brakes that preventing glaciers from flowing directly into the ocean. If the glaciers held in check by Larsen C were to spill into the Antarctic Ocean, the global water mark would be lifted by about four inches, according to estimates. dailymail.co.uk

The city of Ahvaz in Iran registered a temperature of 128.7 degrees Fahrenheit (53.7°C) on June 29, 2017—the hottest temperature ever reliably measured by modern instruments. The heat in this city of 1.1 million people felt even more stifling due to high humidity. The dew point, a measure of humidity, peaked in the low 70s due to air flow from the Persian Gulf, unusual for the desert location. The combination of heat and humidity was so extreme that it was beyond levels the heat index was designed to compute. The index exceeded 140 degrees. Washington Post]

When the heat soared to 98 degrees in Los Angeles, CA, on July 8, 2017, it broke the record of 95 degrees set in 1886, 131 years ago. lacurbed.com The great southwestern heat wave of the week of June 18, 2017, saw long streaks of record-breaking temperatures: Las Vegas, NV, saw nine consecutive days of 110° readings; Prescott, AZ, hit 100° on six consecutive days; Redding, CA, had five consecutive days that broke the record high for the dates with a peak of 113° on June 19. Prolonged heat waves are especially hazardous because there is less chance for people who don’t have access to air conditioning to cool down by night. weatherunderground.com

A list of 490 United States communities that will face flooding across at least 10 percent of their area every two weeks by 2100 was published by the Union of Concerned Scientists on July 12, 2017. The list, based on federal data, predicts the American cities and towns that can expect to become what it calls “chronically inundated” by rising sea levels under three
scenarios: high (6.5 feet of sea level rise globally); intermediate (4 feet); and low (the scenario that assumes carbon emissions decline steeply and warming is limited to less than 2 degrees Celsius, in line with the primary goal of the Paris Climate Agreement). The report also contains lists of communities that can expect that degree of inundation by 2035 and 2060 under each scenario. By 2035 the report concludes 170 communities will face flooding to the degree outlined; by 2060 the number rises to 270. The writers comment: “There comes a threshold of chronic flooding that makes normal routines impossible and forces communities to make difficult, often costly choices.” To see the list of cities impacted in your coastal state, download the Excel file “Complete data by state” on the report’s home page.

One-fifth of the world's population could become climate change refugees due to rising ocean levels by the year 2100 according to Cornell University researchers. Beyond sea level rise, low-elevation coastal zones in many countries face intensifying storm surges that will push sea water further inland as well, and the two billion people who live near coastlines will face displacement and resettlement bottlenecks as they seek habitable places inland. “We're going to have more people on less land and sooner that we think,” said lead author Charles Geisler, professor emeritus of development sociology at Cornell. “The future rise in global mean sea level probably won't be gradual. Yet few policy makers are taking stock of the significant barriers to entry that coastal climate refugees, like other refugees, will encounter when they migrate to higher ground.” The study appraises the “colliding forces of human fertility, submerging coastal zones, residential retreat, and impediments to inland resettlement,” and foresees land-use trade-offs and conflicts. In the United States and elsewhere, this could mean selling off public lands for human settlement. scencedaily.com

Countries in Asia and the Pacific will face particularly severe impacts from climate change, according to a survey released July 13, 2017, from the Asian Development Bank. Under a business-as-usual scenario the region could see an increase in temperature of 6 degrees C by 2100, rising seas could displace as many as 130 million people, and changes in temperature and precipitation could cut rice yields by up to 50 percent in some of these countries. Marine ecosystems, particularly in the Western Pacific, will be in serious danger by 2100 due to coral bleaching, and heat-related deaths in the region among the elderly are expected to rise by about 52,000 cases by 2050. bloomberg.com

Worsened poverty in already-poor areas of the United States is yet another impact of climate change. We've always known climate change impacts will hurt the poor first and worst, but research published on June 29, 2017, in the journal Science have focused on the widening economic inequality among Americans. “You're going to see this transfer of wealth from the Southeast to the parts of the country that are less exposed to risk,” said study co-author Robert Kopp, a Rutgers University climate scientist. “On average both in this country and on this planet just poorer people are in hotter areas.” The county hit hardest if greenhouse gas emissions continue unabated is tiny and impoverished Union County in Florida, where median income would take a 28 percent hit. And among counties with at least 500,000 people, Polk County in
central Florida would suffer the most, with loss of more than 17 percent of income.

Projected economic damage by county between 2080 and 2099 if the United States continues a “business-as-usual” approach to carbon dioxide emissions. (Hsiang, Kopp, Jina, Rising, et al.)

**Climate kids will be in court on February 5, 2018, to take on the federal government.** The date has been set for the first case to use a theory known as atmospheric trust law, which argues that the federal government, through actions like fossil fuel subsidies, has actively undermined the youth’s right to a livable climate. Atmospheric trust law is based on an old legal doctrine that holds the federal government must preserve certainly commonly held elements, like shorelines and waterways, for public use. Applying public trust to the atmosphere, the plaintiffs argue that the government must also take steps to preserve the atmosphere from rampant greenhouse gas pollution. The trial will take place in Eugene, Oregon, before US District Court Judge Ann Aiken, the judge who in November ruled the plaintiffs could reasonably argue that they were likely to suffer personal damages if the United States did not take action to rein in carbon emissions. thinkprogress.org

The paper "Young Peoples' Burden," released July 18, 2017, provides the scientific underpinning for the legal case brought by these young people. The paper's lead author, Dr. James Hansen of Columbia University, is the grandfather of plaintiff Sophie Kivlehan. "Our case focuses on putting the best available science in the courtroom to show how our youngest generation and future generations will be burdened by the continued high fossil fuel emissions,” the plaintiffs’ co-lead counsel Phillip Gregory said in the press call announcing the research. nexusmedianews.com
Lawmakers in California renewed the state’s landmark cap-and-trade climate legislation on July 17, 2017, with eight Republican lawmakers voting in favor of the bill. Republican backing was much stronger than in the past, when major California climate policies never gained more than one or two votes from the minority party. Assemblyman Devon Mathis (R-Visalia) grew emotional as he spoke on the floor. “We have to make decisions as legislators—do we do what is right or do we do what is politically right?” he asked. Securing Republican support involved a number of concessions, including rolling back a fire prevention tax levied on landowners largely in rural areas of the state, which has long been a target for repeal by the GOP, and extending a tax credit for manufacturers, which was broadened to include some power companies. The concessions to industry were troubling to environmentalists, but the new legislation will extend the world’s second-largest carbon market to 2030, and is a major victory for climate champion Governor Jerry Brown. The legislation passed with a supermajority in both the Assembly and the Senate, insulating it from any possible legal challenges. latimes.com

What would happen if a one-sentence climate report were to be broadcast every hour on popular television networks instead of stock market numbers? (Idea submitted by a reader.)

ABUNDANCE
By Margaret Aiseayew

Editor’s Note: We repeat this article annually during gardening season. There is so much to learn in a garden.

This week was explosive. My garden produced cucumbers, zucchini, yellow squash, potatoes and the first cherry tomatoes. I was overwhelmed and since I can’t share the fruits, I share the reflections.

I am not sure there is anything in this world to be learned that cannot be known through growing a garden. That work is required to do a life is a given, so you prepare the soil and plant the seeds. Then, as a first thing, is the dynamic of trust. You must trust the soil to render up its nutrients. You must trust the weather that it will not dish out more than the plants can bear, and that it will meet out enough of what they really need. Then there is the issue of patience. You must wait. But you also learn that patience is not idle. Unseeded growth must not be allowed to consume what you wish for your plants.

A garden is like going to church daily. The plants growing tall raise praises to the heavens. Evil is manifest in the garden when you are deterred from participation. That which distracts you may be a change of focus or it may simply be evil made manifest and attacking your intention. Mosquitoes so insidious as to blight your body and mind can make you feel akin to Job.

Unseeded growth seems related to unintended consequences. I am saddened to realize that seeds sewn through the ages by the wind and water will come up to overtake your intentions if there is no care or with a loss of focus. It makes the “news” nearly every day.
Sorrow is known in the loss of a whole crop. Obviously the rabbits needed the tender shoots of the beans more that I needed the beans. Joy is known in abundance. Timing is everything to both the comedian and the garden.

Forget your drivenness toward perfection. It just won’t happen. You are not that much in control. Planting these seeds didn’t make you god. You have dirt under your fingernails (those that aren’t broken to the quick) that won’t come out until you are dead.

Responsibility is sometimes overwhelming in the garden. Deciding which shoots to thin and which to leave. Not deciding condemns to marginality. Against your own sense of will you must be obedient to the rain, sun, wind and soil. Freedom is exhilarating as you watch fruit flourish.

Pride, covetousness, lust, anger, sloth, envy and gluttony are all present in the garden, both within the gardener and among the plants.

When you dig the potatoes and deposit newborn rabbits to your bucket, your heart breaks. Guilt is there in many forms. You should have known a nest might be there. They did eat all the beans. Why were you in such a hurry? Will your touch result in a mother’s permanent rejection?

Grace is abundant. Sometimes it happens. Sometimes it doesn’t.

That work should make more than a living, it makes life, is obvious. Love is a garden. It must see all things, bear all things, believe all things and hope all things. The kindness love requires may, most of all, be to you, the gardener. It is a way to understand all things.

THRICE-BORN: ON THE TRANSFORMATION OF AN EXPERT DUFUS
By James Peacock

James Peacock, PhD, is a member of the Board of Directors of CES. He is Kenan Professor of Anthropology and Professor of Comparative Literature Emeritus at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He served as President of the American Anthropological Association. He is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and has received numerous grants and awards. His books include “The Anthropological Lens: Harsh Light, Soft Focus” (2009),

Isabella, my granddaughter, explained on the way home from having pizzas, the “expert dufus.” Abuelo, there are many kinds of experts, which she named, and then she said there is the expert dufus: the person who is expert at being a dufus.

I was an expert dufus with respect to the environment.

Here was my stupidity and emerging learning and limitation. When I was four years old, my father was stationed at Fort Dix to train for D-day. We lived in a couple of rooms in a farm house in New Jersey. In wartime toys were cardboard, which we assembled. My father complimented me for fitting Tab A into Slot A, even though I had not yet learned to read. I did this, however, at the expense of learning about the environment that surrounded us on the farm, though I did learn a little, such as when I got to ride a mule. The Tab A/Slot A activity continued through erector sets, Lincoln Logs, and making things as well as drawing things, mainly individuals, and eventually photographing them, including my sister caught in unflattering poses. That led me eventually to read about psychology, which started when my sister and I read Parents Magazine, to which our mother subscribed. My father was an electrical engineer who became an electrical contractor and I, continuing the Tab A/Slot A activity, worked on his crews as a laborer from age thirteen to nineteen.

In college, focusing on the individual, I majored in psychology and minored in biology. Running a tachistoscope in a basement laboratory, I worked as a research assistant to Professor Charles Spielberger. When I was a senior, a friend named Chris Crocker invited me to accompany him and his teacher, Weston LaBarre, to a meeting of the American Anthropological Association in Washington, DC. That meeting was a revelation. I heard Alfred Kroeber, Margaret Mead, Alan Lomax, and others speak about cultures around the world. A gust of fresh air blew into my basement lab, and I immediately applied to graduate school in anthropology.

When I began graduate study, I encountered the ideas of culture and of society, at first through ethnography then, in the spring of my first year, through the theory of Talcott Parsons. That spring, I drove overnight with several fellow graduate students from Cambridge, MA, to Chicago to go to meetings of the Association for Asian Studies. As I drove through the night, stopping perhaps once, I harangued my colleagues with my thoughts on Parsons’ theory, which several of them knew better than I. I was caught up in the realization that social and cultural systems were powerful and pervasive.

Soon afterwards I left for Indonesia to do fieldwork on the eve of the year of living dangerously which brought the killing of hundreds of thousands of alleged Communists. Later I returned to live and work with a Muslim movement, Muhammadiyah, whose membership now numbers thirty million. These experiences reinforced a sense of the huge power of the collective, culture and society.
Of course, the environment was important. Florence, my wife, and I lived in a slum in the midst of one of the most densely populated islands in the world. Volcanoes erupted, people starved, but I was blind to the power of the Earth and the threat to the Earth. Thomas Berry published *The Great Work* in 1999. Upon reading this, I finally began to see, but I did not know what to do. What not to do is obvious, not to violate the Paris Accord, not to dismember the EPA, etc. William James wrote about the twice born. The twice born are “born again.” They see the light, they are converted religiously. Goethe described Wilhelm Meister’s “Lehrjahre.” Wilhelm is a young man who experiences a Lehrjahre, a year of learning. His eyes are opened by a child of nature, Mignon, whose poignant song by Schubert is “Kenst du das land, wo die zitronen blühen?” Do you know the land where the lemon trees bloom? This is a song of nature that Wilhelm hears in his soul. Wilhelm’s transformation illustrated the concept of Bildung, life transformation, that is an emblem of maturation in German thought. My own account suggests a “thrice born” step, an evolution of awareness passing through a sense of the individual to a sense of society and culture and then to the wider and deeper reality of the environment. Thomas Berry takes us through this evolution and renders it as a spiritual journey; ecology is theology, the Earth is divine, humans have the great work of preserving and sustaining the Earth and all who live therein.

Romanticism and theology aside, the hard facts of science rebut decisively the expert dufus who refuses to get it or, getting it, acts with criminal intent to murder Earth and all who live therein.

**ON ECOVILLAGES AND THE UNIVERSE STORY**

*By Herman Greene*

In a piece in the last *Musings* on “Does Thomas Berry Provide a Foundational Set of Principles for Ecozoic Societies?” I reported on and agreed with a way of viewing paradigms for a sustainable future based on ecocommunalism and a new sustainability paradigm. The latter saw the future as still being urban, technological and global, the former emphasized relatively autonomous local communities. I still believe that the ecozoic will need to be worked out in an “urbanized, globalized, technology- and energy-dependent world.”

But what about the former, ecocommunalism? We can’t wait for global structures to change, we need to act now where we can at the local level. This means localization, the sharing economy, community-based agriculture, and much more. Ecovillages are laboratories for the future pioneering a new human-Earth relationship and less consumptive, sustainable, organic lifestyles. Ecovillages also pioneer in other ways, including re-skilling and communal decision-making and support. Individuals and small groups are transformed in ecovillages and are inspired and enabled to build an ecozoic future.
The **Local Futures website** gives many resources, including free downloads of
- *Localization: Essential Steps to an Economics of Happiness (2016)*
- *Post-Growth Localisation (2016)*

Films to watch
- **One Way to Rebalance the World** (video of Helena Norberg-Hodge’s presentation at the Local Futures’ Economics of Happiness Workshop in Totness, UK in September 2016), Educating Independence, October 21, 2016
- **Economics of Happiness: How Much Human Scale Is Essential for Solving Our Social and Ecological Problems?** Interview at Lingnan University in South Korea, October 7, 2015

And films to purchase:
- *The Economics of Happiness* (DVD)
- *Ancient Futures: Learning from Ladakh* (DVD)
- *Paradise with Side Effects* (DVD)
- *Local Futures: Beyond the Global Economy* (DVD)

In regard to the universe story (Thomas Berry’s “New Story”), we have focused primarily on Berry’s historical and cultural criticisms and his principles for the transition to ecozoic societies. Yet we have included a great deal in our research, publications, and events on the New Story. We understand that it is as central to Berry’s thought as anything and a case can be made that it is the central idea of Berry. We heartily agree that it is important to the transition to the ecozoic.

The **Journey of the Universe website** is a great way to learn the New Story. The film *Journey of the Universe* is available for purchase there. And then there is the journey of the universe taking place all around us. Summer skies and flowers are telling the story.

**REVIEW OF NAOMI KLEIN’S NO IS NOT ENOUGH**

**WE NEED A MUCH BIGGER LEAP!**

*NO IS NOT ENOUGH*

*Resisting Trump’s Shock Politics and Winning the World We Need*

By Naomi Klein

Haymarket Books, 2017

Reviewed by John Bellamy Foster

*Editor’s Note: John Bellamy Foster is editor of Monthly Review and a professor of sociology at the University of Oregon. This review first appeared on June 13, 2017, in the [Monthly Review Online](https://www.monthlyreview.org) with*
A new book by Naomi Klein, one of the leading left journalists and critics in North America, and the author of such important treatises as No Logo, The Shock Doctrine, and This Changes Everything is not something one wants to miss, especially when it is on the 2016 election and the rise of Donald Trump. This book, though, written over a few months rather than years, is meant to play a different role than her major treatises. No Is Not Enough is a conversational book aimed at a liberal audience perplexed by the whole Trump phenomenon and wanting to know what to do. Klein’s answer is to resist, but to resist with a purpose.

No Is Not Enough is an attempt to view Trumpism through the triple framework provided by her earlier books, focusing on branding, neoliberalism, and the critique of climate change. This approach works best with respect to branding: the subject of No Logo. Klein unveils the nature of the Trump brand, its origins, and significance, the effect of his ghost-written bestseller The Art of the Deal, his role as a Reality Show star, and how Trump saw the presidency as the ultimate extension of his brand. He even dreamed that he would be the first person to run for president and make money on it. Klein’s succinct depiction of Trump the brand, reminds one of Michael Rogin’s 1987 book, Ronald Reagan: The Movie.

But there are limits to explaining Trump and the Trump family as a brand, because while it reveals important things about the Trump phenomenon, it does not provide much understanding of Trumpism as a political movement. And it is this which has constituted a jolt to establishment politics. Klein might have analyzed the White House role of Steve Bannon and those surrounding Breitbart, but at the time she wrote her book it was being emphasized by the mainstream media that Bannon and the alt-right were out and Jared Kushner, Trump’s son-in-law and a consummate FIRE (finance, insurance, and real estate) capitalist was in. This led Klein to downplay the role of neo-fascism in the White House (represented by figures like Bannon, Attorney General Jeff Sessions, Labor Department appointee Curtis Ellis, and numerous others) and the very different politics that this represented. Instead, Klein presents Trump as a representative of neoliberal shock politics, which she defines as “extreme capitalism.”

Seeing Trump as an extreme, and more dangerous, neoliberal does not take us very far in the analysis of Trumpism. But the limited nature of the criticism seems to be intentional on Klein’s part because she is trying to reconnect to a broader liberal audience. She remarks that her open support of Bernie Sanders in the election cost her a number of friends. While she does not back away altogether from her support of Sanders, she claims that criticisms of him for being weak on race and gender were “legitimate”—and even that he would have won in the primaries against Hillary Clinton if he had been better in these areas. In this respect, her chapter on “Learn to Love Economic Populism” is the most interesting and contradiction-laden in her book.
For Klein, resisting Trump, or developing a meaningful anti-shock politics, then, is some combination of what Sanders represented and what Clinton symbolized: Sanders with respect to class and economics, Clinton as far as race and gender, and everything else. (Imperialism and war scarcely enter the argument.) Trump himself is seen not as someone who in any sense won the election; rather the Democrats lost it. Her analysis in this respect is firmly pinned to the task of creating a new progressive, electoral majority, with a more coherent left message—and one in line with Canada’s “Leap Manifesto,” which takes its cue from Indigenous resistance. Her most moving chapter is the one on the struggle at Standing Rock, North Dakota, and the alliances that it created.

What is missing, however, is any sense that Trump represents a different kind of politics that is here to stay, something more dangerous than mere neoliberalism. To be sure, Klein warns in her chapter “The Toxic To-Do List” that any external shock like a terrorist attack would undoubtedly be seized by Trump to remove civil liberties and create a much more repressive state. But the relation of Trump to the whole question of the state and liberal democracy, and indeed to the radical right or neofascism is largely absent. The main issue posed by this book remains one of opposing neoliberalism (and by implication restoring liberalism in the sense of affirmative government). Trump represents a heightening of what she calls “racial capitalism,” which, like neoliberalism itself, is a form of extreme capitalism. But in many ways, according to Klein, Trump does not constitute a fundamentally new challenge, the product of a more crisis-ridden capitalism, just a more extreme version of neoliberalism. It is all one shock doctrine.

The most radical parts of Klein’s book, which point to the need for rapid, large-scale change—a leap into the future—are those focused on climate change. Klein says that climate change “isn’t more important” than the other issues posed by the left. It is simply bigger, the stakes are higher, and the time in which to act is less—admissions that might lead one to in fact say that it is strategically more important. Here she rejects Trump’s “ecocidal capitalism” as an extreme form, without failing to criticize the inadequate and contradictory climate policy under Obama.

The biggest shortcoming in Klein’s book—albeit one that presents itself to all utopian projects—is represented by its title. Naturally one would expect a book entitled No Is Not Enough: Resisting Trump’s Shock Politics and Winning the World We Need to present a concrete, alternative politics. But here Klein struggles to create a new Democratic Party politics. In a section called “Remember When We Leapt,” referring to the 1930s and the 1960s, she mentions Karl Marx, W.E.B. Du Bois, Martin Luther King, the New Deal, Bernie Sanders, and Upton Sinclair. But nowhere is the issue of socialism raised.

The penultimate chapter of the book is “A Time to Leap” that tells the story of Klein’s role and that of others in the development of the Canadian “Leap Manifesto,” which attempted to provide a kind of peoples’ platform, including Indigenous peoples, labor unions, environmentalists, civil rights activists, women’s organizations, etc. As Klein emphasizes,
this was an exercise in intersectional politics, trying to bring the various popular interests together, with Indigenous and environmental values at the center: a kind of popular, town-hall politics. The result is a platform that opposes austerity and promotes the rights of peoples and the environment. Again and again, Klein says “Let’s leap” rather than take small steps. The “corporate coup” that Trump represents needs to be confronted with a “reverse shock.” The most powerful words, she says, are reparations and redistribution. Society should learn to value things other than “growth.”

There is much to admire here, as in all of Klein’s work. But No Is Not Enough is distinct from her other books in that it is less about movement politics and actual grass roots resistance than it is in developing a new progressive Democratic Party politics. For this reason, the Leap she envisions is not high and far enough. It stops short of directly challenging capitalism itself or advocating a socialism for the twenty-first century. It is true that No Is Not Enough. But a new yes, needs to offer much more.

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FOR CLIMATE CAUSE, TRUMP’S WITHDRAWAL FROM PARIS ACCORD JUST ONE HURDLE AMONG MANY
By Andrew Revkin

Editor’s Note: This article was originally published in ProPublica, on June 2, 2017, and is reprinted with permission under a Creative Commons license. Revkin provides an analysis of economic forces beyond the reach of the Paris climate accord, forces that are at work regardless of the US or other nations are committed to the Paris agreement.

In much of the debate surrounding President Donald Trump’s decision to withdraw from the Paris Agreement on climate change, some critical points have been lost.

One reality is that the agreement was always going to reflect, more than determine, whether the world develops a sustainable relationship with the climate system. The language was intentionally “soft” on what countries pledged to do domestically. There was no other way to get nearly 200 sovereign states to the table. And there was little reason to aspire to more.

The forces both driving and constraining worldwide emissions of greenhouse gases are largely outside the top-down influence of some accord. Rising global energy needs and the enduring abundance of fossil fuels are driving fuel demand and emissions growth. Dropping costs of renewable energy, the increasing substitution of natural gas for coal, and a growing focus on energy efficiency in developing economies are slowing emissions.

But obviously the agreement wasn’t soft enough for Trump, who made no mention of the clear risks from climate change laid out by his secretary of defense, James Mattis, after his
confirmation hearing earlier this year, but warned of “massive legal liability” if the United States remained a signatory.

There were going to be setbacks no matter which option Trump chose, and it will take years for the consequences of his decision to play out. He included enough nuance—including the notion of working with Democrats to “negotiate our way back into Paris” or crafting something to replace it—to keep everyone guessing.

And separate from Thursday’s announcement, he had already decided on steps that could undermine international action. For example, his earlier decision to cut funding to United Nations programs related to the climate agreement (not to mention funding for Population programs) is going to have substantial adverse impacts on its own. And if his budget cuts for climate science and programs aimed at fostering environmental resilience are not altered by Congress, there’ll be lots more real consequences not directly related to Paris.

Perhaps the most sobering, largely shrouded, reality is that the nations some have pointed to as the new climate leaders lose some of their luster on closer examination.

China and the European Union have used the Trump moves on climate and energy to assume, at least rhetorically, a leadership role in the public discourse over limiting global warming.

Both have garnered headlines for their aggressive and heavily subsidized pushes to expand wind and solar power generation. But while Chinese and German clean-energy policies and investments have driven the deep drop in the cost of solar panels, the economies of both countries remain heavily dependent on coal and oil.

China, while curbing domestic construction of coal-powered plants, has become a leading lender financing the construction of new coal-burning power plants in developing countries, according to a 2016 study by researchers at Boston University and the Institute for World Economics and Politics at the Chinese Academy of Social Science.

China is clearly past the peak of the domestic coal-burning binge of the early 2005 that fueled its dizzying recent rate of urbanization and industrialization. But it will be burning billions of tons of coal or turning it into cleaner natural gas for at least several more decades. Synthesizing gas from coal is great for curbing urban air pollution, particularly if the gas substitutes for burning coal as a domestic heating and cooking fuel, as is still common in China. But there’s a climate cost, as Princeton researchers have found, because the energy required to synthesize the gas is supplied by, yes, coal, producing more greenhouse gases.

And Europe, while generally basking in the glow of the Paris Agreement, has been quietly lobbying the Trump administration since February to fast-track approvals of multibillion-dollar terminals for exporting America’s abundant shale-drilled natural gas as liquefied natural gas, or LNG, across the Atlantic. Who’s the fossil fuel villain there?
In an interview in early April at a conference on sustainable energy in New York City, Maros Sefcovic, Vice President of the European Commission for energy policy, said LNG exports were a central focus of meetings earlier in the year in Washington with Trump administration officials. The hope is to cut European dependence on piped Russian gas—and to provide the flexible power generation needed to balance variable output from solar and wind installations.

Later that month, Secretary of Energy Rick Perry used an appearance at the Bloomberg New Energy Finance meeting in Manhattan to announce the approval of a giant Texas LNG export terminal, owned by Qatar, ExxonMobil, and others.

In an onstage discussion with Ethan Zindler of Bloomberg, Perry used a question on Paris to point out the difference between Europe’s climate-focused public statements and its work to gain gas supplies. “We’re out in the public and they’re giving all these speeches about the Paris accord and all the things we’re going to do, and we get into private meetings, it’s like, ‘How do we get that LNG?’,” he said, adding: “Don’t get up on the front end and make all these speeches about how good you’re doing, when the fact of the matter is you’re not.”

It’s important to note that expanded gas exports to Europe were also a goal of the Obama administration, both for economic and strategic reasons. President Obama had also urged fracking-averse Europe to do its own energy development, as well. Hillary Clinton, too, took heat from environmentalists during her campaign for her longstanding support of natural gas drilling, and natural gas exports.

In an email, Myles R. Allen, a climate scientist and policy analyst at Oxford University, said Trump’s decision hinted at a bigger issue, simmering well beyond the United States, that would continue to hinder progress—the enduring abundance of, and demand for, fossil fuels:

> The proposal to renegotiate the U.S. terms is interesting—is it just a distraction tactic? Perhaps, but if we really want to put the future of the planet first, we do need to think about how to make the agreement both more effective and more acceptable to nations with substantial fossil reserves—or the U.S. won’t be the last one to jump ship.

It is worth noting that the site of next year’s round of annual climate change negotiations, announced Thursday by the United Nations, will be Katowice, Poland—a city in the heart of the Polish coal belt. Poland signed the Paris Agreement along with the rest of the European Union last October, but only after gaining concessions allowing its coal use to continue.
REMEMBERING WM. THEODORE DE BARY

By Herman Greene

Wm. Theodore de Bary, a renowned scholar of Asian thought, died on July 14 at his home in Tappan, New York, at age 97. He taught at Columbia University and finished his last class in May of this year. He was a close friend of Thomas Berry, and Mary Evelyn Tucker did her doctoral studies under de Bary’s instruction and guidance.

Thomas met de Bary when he embarked from San Francisco en route to China in July 1948. They traveled on the same boat and became lifelong companions. From 1959-65, Thomas participated in an elite faculty seminar at Columbia University. Six scholars met twice a month to discuss Asian thought. Dr. de Bary’s wife Fanny was also an important part of Thomas’s life as were the de Bary children. Fanny assisted Thomas in the development of his ecological papers prior to the time that The Dream of the Earth was published in 1988. Thomas was a frequent guest in the de Bary home.

Mary Evelyn Tucker’s father was a professor at Columbia and he taught de Bary when he was a student there. She has known de Bary her whole life and had her last visit with him in June.

De Bary’s obituary in The New York Times stated:

Professor de Bary was an internationally esteemed Sinologist with a shelf of at least 30 books to his credit, either written or edited by him, and a bevy of academic awards and honors, including the National Humanities Medal, presented by President Barack Obama.

More locally, on the university campus in Morningside Heights in Manhattan, he was the consummate Columbia man — “one of the towering figures of modern Columbia history,” as Columbia College Today declared in 2013, a courtly figure “with the bow-tied elegance and comportment of a seasoned ambassador.”

As an editor, Professor de Bary presented thinkers from various Asian cultures in their own words in dozens of books that became standards in the field, elevating Asian studies far beyond Columbia to a prominence once reserved for European scholarship. In 1987, The New York Times reported that his “Sources of Chinese Tradition” had been the fourth-best-selling nonfiction book in universities over the last 25 years.

Dr. De Bary’s obituary is available here. Tributes to Thomas Berry by Fanny de Bary and Catherine de Bary Sleight appeared in the “A Tribute to Thomas Berry,” special issue, The Ecozoic 2 (2009).
The passing of Wm. Theodore de Bary is of great moment to the Berry community. His influence will live on and he will always be remembered.

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