OMNI
CLIMATE CHANGE AND CAPITALISM NEWSLETTER
#1, Nov. 4, 2014


COMPiled by DICK BENNETT FOR A CULTURE OF PEACE, JUSTICE, AND ECOLOGY

What’s at stake:
"...if way to the Better there be, it exacts a full look at the Worst."
—Thomas Hardy

Newsletters
http://www.omnicenter.org/newsletter-archive/

Index:
http://www.omnicenter.org/omni-newsletter-general-index/

j.dick.bennett@uark.edu

Blog
http://jamesrichardbennett.blogspot.com/

Contents Capitalism and Climate Change Newsletter #1

Take Action Now, AND Deepen Understanding
Credo, Petition EPA to Install Strong Restrictions on Carbon Pollution (CCL)
Protest Democrats
Noam Chomsky, “Can Civilization Survive Really Existing Capitalism”
November 2, 2014, 5th IPCC Report

Two Essays: The Problem and Solutions
Richard Smith, Destruction of Life on Earth
Annie Leonard, Moving from Individual Change to Societal Change

Analysis of US Capitalism: Regulated Capitalism, Socialist, Spiritual/Ethical and Climate Change, Books in Chronological Order
RESISTANCE, PROTEST

Don't let polluters and extremists block President Obama from reducing carbon pollution.

Submit a comment to the EPA:
The Carbon Rule is our last, best hope for progress by President Obama against the pollution that is causing climate change. Take action now.

Dear Dick,

Our last, best hope for significant progress by President Obama against climate change pollution is the Carbon Rule for existing power plants, introduced in June.

The question is: how strong will Obama administration officials make the rule and how urgently they will implement it?

We got a clue last week when the EPA announced it was delaying by 45 days the public comment deadline on the rule, caving to a demand of polluting industries and a large group of mostly Republican lawmakers whose goal is to delay the rule as long as possible.1

We can't afford further delays which could push back the deadline to finalize the rule. It's time to act - and act strongly.
In the face of mounting pressure from polluters, and a President who has proved too willing to delay, we need all hands on deck pushing for the strongest possible rule to limit carbon pollution from power plants. Submit a comment now.

Gone are the days when candidate Barack Obama pledged to slow the rise of the oceans and heal the planet. Or the hope that President Obama would truly commit our nation to moving away from fossil fuels.

However, reducing carbon pollution from existing power plants represents an important, significant step forward. And as a priority of the administration for President Obama’s last years, it is achievable.

Contrary to the lies of industry and the politicians it owns, what the president has proposed is modest — too modest — in scope, especially next to the urgent facts of our rapidly changing climate.2

But the fact is we still face a massive battle on our hands to make even modest changes to move our nation away from unlimited carbon pollution.

That is where we come in. If you want the president to take action, then you need to encourage him to do it, Dick. We all do.

Submit a comment now to show support for strong rules to cut carbon pollution.

Thanks for all you do.

Elijah Zarlin, Campaign Manager
CREDO Action from Working Assets

---

1. "Environmental Protection Agency Pushes Back Deadline For Comment On Carbon Rules," Huffington Post, 9/16/14
2. "Demand stronger rules to cut carbon pollution from power plants," CREDO Action

AND TAKE TO THE STREETS

Democratic National Committee Protested, Day Before Election Day, on Climate Change

The Democrats’ failure to address climate change brought about a protest yesterday at their national headquarters. This was part of a week-long series of actions aimed at the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

Published: November 4, 2014 | Authors: Kevin Zeese | Popular Resistance | Press Release

Warned: Democratic Party candidates should not count on the support of voters concerned about climate change
People from a wide variety of organizations will protest Democrats at their national headquarters (400 South Capitol Street) on Monday, November 3, 2014 at 2:00 PM for their failure to address climate change. They will be delivering a letter to Chairperson Debbie Wasserman Schultz that excoriates the party for putting forward policies that are counterproductive and actually make climate change worse.

They will show how the Democratic Party is corrupted by the oil and gas industry with signs showing Hillary Clinton, Andrew Cuomo and other party leaders in bed with Big Oil and they will be delivering pillows with corporate logos so they can be comfortable.

They warn the Democrats that the climate justice movement will oppose them in elections writing “Siding with the fossil fuel industry is no longer the path of least political resistance.” The event comes as the IPCC is rising alarms on climate change and after 400,000 people marched in New York City at the People’s Climate March.

The letter begins:

The actions taken by the Democratic Party to address the climate crisis have not only been inadequate, they have been counterproductive. We are writing to let you know that Democratic Party candidates should not count on the support of voters who recognize the urgent need to put in place effective solutions to the climate crisis.

The Democratic Party’s support for the dirty energy industry’s “all of the above” energy strategy, mislabeling fracked gas and nuclear energy as ‘bridges to a clean energy economy’ and the increased export of dirty fuels have directly caused greater Greenhouse Gas emissions as well as harm to public health, the environment and the economy. The extreme extraction of fossil and nuclear fuels through unconventional methods such as hydrofracking and mountaintop removal have been and continue to be responsible for contamination of the air, land and water and significant suffering, disease and death. The transport of these substances by pipeline and train have caused further damage and leave communities at risk for catastrophic events such as major pipeline spills and oil train explosions.


The protest is part of a week long series of actions at the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission that began Monday morning and continues through Friday. Protesters will be shutting down FERC with sit-ins and other actions.

Noam Chomsky, “Can Civilization Survive Really Existing Capitalism?”

Google the title for several sources of the text. I read the speech in the new selection,
Masters of Mankind, Essays and Lectures, 1969-2013. To see Chomsky presenting it in Dublin, April 2, 2013, go to:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_uuYjUxf6Uk

IPCC #5

The Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) provides a clear view of the current state of scientific knowledge relevant to climate change. It contains three Working Group (WG) reports and a Synthesis Report (SYR). The outline and content can be found in the AR5 reference document and SYR Scoping document.


And here’s a link where you can download and read the 2,000 + page Synthesis report. With a good summary. http://ipcc.ch/

NOVEMBER 2, 2014, FINAL INSTALLMENT OF THE FIFTH IPCC REPORT, Google Search

1. IPCC Report - save-the-climate.info

Remainig CO2 budget from 2015 only about 900 Gt.

Search Results

In the news

1. Invest now or face 'irreversible' effects of climate change, UN panel warns

CNN - 1 day ago

In its "synthesis report," the Intergovernmental Panel on ... According to the IPCC, to stay below a 2-degree C ... climate summit, scheduled to start November 30, 2015.

2. 2014/31/PR IPCC PRESS RELEASE 2 November 2014 Concluding instalment of the Fifth Assessment Report: Climate ...

IPCC - 2 days ago

3. Fossil fuels should be phased out by 2100 says IPCC

BBC News - 1 day ago

More news for IPCC 2014 report Nov. 2
4. [PDF]2014/31/PR IPCC PRESS RELEASE 2 November 2014 ...
www.ipcc.ch/.../11022014_s...

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IPCC PRESS RELEASE. 2 November 2014. Concluding instalment of the Fifth Assessment Report: Climate change threatens irreversible and dangerous ...

5. [PDF]Summary for Policymakers - IPCC
www.ipcc.ch/...report/.../SY...

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IPCC Fifth Assessment Synthesis Report. CLIMATE ... 1 November 2014 ...
This report includes information relevant to Article 2 of the United Nations Framework ...

TWO ESSAYS: THE PROBLEM AND SOLUTIONS

Capitalism and the Destruction of Life on Earth: Six Theses on Saving the Humans
Sunday, 10 November 2013 By Richard Smith, Truthout | Opinion

Email

(Photo: Chris / Flickr)As global capitalist economic growth accelerates planetary ecological collapse, this article, originally published on November 10, 2013, argues that - impossible as it may seem at present - only the most radical solution - the overthrow of global capitalism, the construction of a mostly publicly-owned and mostly planned eco-socialist economy based on global "contraction and convergence," on substantial de-industrialization, on sharing, on much less work and much more play and on bottom-up democratic management - is, in fact, the only alternative to the collapse of civilization and ecological suicide.

When, on May 10, 2013, scientists at Mauna Loa Observatory on the big island of Hawaii announced that global CO2 emissions had crossed a threshold at 400 parts per million for the first time in millions of years, a sense of dread spread around the world - not only among climate scientists.

CO2 emissions have been relentlessly climbing since Charles David Keeling first set up his tracking station near the summit of Mauna Loa Observatory in 1958 to monitor average daily global CO2 levels. At that time, CO2 concentrations registered 315ppm. CO2 emissions and atmospheric concentrations have been climbing ever since and, as the records show, temperatures rises will follow. For all the climate summits, the promises of "voluntary restraint," the carbon trading and carbon taxes, the growth of CO2 emissions and atmospheric concentrations has not just been relentless, it has been accelerating in what scientists have dubbed the "Keeling Curve."

In the early 1960s, CO2ppm concentrations in the atmosphere grew by 0.7ppm per year. In
recent decades, especially as China has industrialized, the growth rate has tripled to 2.1ppm per year. In just the first 17 weeks of 2013, CO₂ levels jumped by 2.74ppm compared to last year -- "the biggest increase since benchmark monitoring stations high on the Hawaiian volcano of Mauna Loa began taking measurements in 1958." [1] Carbon concentrations have not been this high since the Pliocene period, between 3 million and 5 million years ago, when global average temperatures were 3 degrees or 4 degrees Centigrade hotter than today, the Arctic was ice-free, sea levels were about 40 meters higher, jungles covered northern Canada and Florida was under water - along with coastal locations we now call New York City, London, Shanghai, Hong Kong, Sydney and many others.

Crossing this threshold has fueled fears that we are fast approaching "tipping points" - melting of the subarctic tundra or thawing and releasing the vast quantities of methane in the Arctic sea bottom - that will accelerate global warming beyond any human capacity to stop it: "I wish it weren't true, but it looks like the world is going to blow through the 400-ppm level without losing a beat," said Scripps Institute geochemist Ralph Keeling, whose father, Charles, set up the first monitoring stations in 1958: "At this pace, we'll hit 450 ppm within a few decades."

"It feels like the inevitable march toward disaster," said Maureen E. Raymo, a scientist at the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory, a unit of Columbia University. [2]

Why are we marching to disaster, "sleepwalking to extinction" as The Guardian's George Monbiot once put it? Why can't we slam on the brakes before we ride off the cliff to collapse? I'm going to argue here that the problem is rooted in the requirements of capitalist reproduction, that large corporations are destroying life on Earth, that they can't help themselves, they can't change or change very much, that so long as we live under this system we have little choice but to go along in this destruction, to keep pouring on the gas instead of slamming on the brakes.

The only alternative - impossible as this may seem right now - is to overthrow this global economic system and all of the governments of the 1% that prop it up and replace them with a global economic democracy, a radical bottom-up political democracy, an ecosocialist civilization. I argue that, although we are fast approaching the precipice of ecological collapse, the means to derail this train wreck are in the making as, around the world, we are witnessing a near-simultaneous global mass democratic "awakening," as the Brazilians call it, almost a global uprising from Tahir Square to Zuccotti Park, from Athens to Istanbul to Beijing and beyond such as the world has never seen.

To be sure, like Occupy Wall Street, these movements are still inchoate, still mainly protesting what's wrong rather than fighting for an alternative social order. Like Occupy, they have yet to clearly and robustly answer that crucial question, "Don't like capitalism? What's your alternative?" Yet they are working on it, and they are for the most part instinctively and radically democratic. And in this lies our hope. I'm going to make my case in the form of six theses: MORE http://truth-out.org/opinion/item/19872-capitalism-and-the-destruction-of-life-on-earth-six-theses-on-saving-the-humans

Annie Leonard. “Moving from Individual Change to Societal Change.” Chapter 23, Is Sustainability Still Possible? State of the
Even if we could convince everyone to make all the adjustments advocated [by environmentalists], it simply would not significantly change our environmental trajectory—which is headed toward an ecological cliff.”

“Framing environmental deterioration as the result of poor individual choices—littering, leaving the lights on. . .failing to carpool—not only distracts us from identifying and demanding change from the real drivers of environmental decline [corporations, the US capitalist system]. “It also removes these issues from the political realm to the personal, implying that the solution is in our personal choices rather than in better policies, business practices, and structural context.”

CRITIQUES OF CAPITALISM[DB1] versus CLIMATE CHANGE, LEADING TO ACTION, In Chronological Order of Publication

Speth 2008
Magdoff and Foster 2011
Naomi Klein 2014

The Bridge at the Edge of the World
Capitalism, the Environment, and Crossing from Crisis to Sustainability

- A 2008 Top Seller in Environmental Sciences as compiled by YBP Library Services
- Selected as one of the best books of 2008 by the Washington Post in the Nature & The Environment category
- Finalist for the 2009 Orion Book Award, given by The Orion Society.

For information on upcoming events, visit the author's website Bridge At the Edge of the World.com
How serious are the threats to our environment? Here is one measure of the problem: if we continue exactly what we are doing, with no growth in the human population or the world economy, the world in the latter part of this century will be unfit to live in. Of course human activities are not holding at current levels—they are accelerating, dramatically—and so, too, is the pace of climate disruption, biotic impoverishment, and toxification. In this book Gus Speth, author of *Red Sky at Morning* and a widely respected environmentalist, begins with the observation that the environmental community has grown in size and sophistication, but the environment has continued to decline, to the point that we are now at the edge of catastrophe.

Speth contends that this situation is a severe indictment of the economic and political system we call capitalism. Our vital task is now to change the operating instructions for today’s destructive world economy before it is too late. The book is about how to do that.

James Gustave Speth, a distinguished leader and founder of environmental institutions over the past four decades, is dean of the School of Forestry and Environmental Studies at Yale University. He was awarded Japan’s Blue Planet Prize for "a lifetime of creative and visionary leadership in the search for science-based solutions to global environmental problems." He lives in New Haven, CT.

---

**Capitalism, Economy, and Religion: A Christian-Marxist Dialogue**

*by Richard Wolff. PUBLISHED ON APRIL 22, 2010  http://www.rdwolff.com/content/capitalism-economy-and-religion-christian-marxist-dialogue*

Efforts to ally religion (and especially Christianity) with Marxism (and other sorts of socialism) built on converging social criticisms as capitalism achieved global hegemony over the last two centuries. The objects of those criticisms included inequalities of wealth, inequalities of income, the fetishism of commodities, the idolatrous worship of material objects (and their accumulation) at the expense of spiritual values, and the calculating treatment of human beings as mere means to economic goals. The general theme of those criticisms from the side of religion has been that religious values fundamentally contradict and clash with those social conditions accompanying capitalism and thus with the capitalism that...
Yet the alliance of Marxism and religion is not as strong as it once was and needs renewal for the twenty-first century. Here I propose to broaden the theme by adding another critique that played only a secondary and implicit role in the Christian-Marxist dialogues so far. This critique is taken from Marx’s analysis of capitalist production and resonates deeply with certain religious values. My goal is significantly to strengthen the alliance of Marxism and religion. Read More http://www.rdwolff.com/content/capitalism-economy-and-religion-christian-marxist-dialogue


*Ecology and Socialism: Solutions to Capitalist Ecological Crisis*

*Environment & Science*

**BY CHRIS WILLIAMS**

Around the world, consciousness of the threat to our environment is growing. The majority of solutions offer, from using efficient light bulbs to biking to work, focus on individual lifestyle changes, yet the scale of the crisis requires far deeper adjustments. *Ecology and Socialism* argues that time still remains to save humanity and the planet, but only by building social movements for environmental justice and demand qualitative changes in our economy, workplaces, and infrastructure.

“Williams adds a new and vigorous voice to the growing awareness that, yes, it is our capitalist system that is ruining the natural foundation of our civilization and threatening the very idea of a future. I am particularly impressed by the way he develops a clear and powerful argument for an ecological socialism directly from the actual ground of struggle, whether against climate change, systematic poisoning from pollution, or the choking stream of garbage. *Ecology and Socialism* is a notable addition to the growing movement to save our planet from death-dealing capitalism.”
—Joel Kovel, author of *The Enemy of Nature*

“Finally, a book that bridges the best of the scholarly and activist literatures in socialist ecology. Sophisticated and compelling, eschewing academic jargons ‘postmodern’ and otherwise, *Ecology and Socialism* more than competently champions a Marxist approach to environmental crisis and the economic democracy needed to achieve an ecologically friendly system of production and human development.”—Paul Burkett, author of *Marxism and Ecological Economics*
“What Every Environmentalist Needs to Know About Capitalism”

topics: Ecology, Marxist Ecology

Fred Magdoff ([fmagdoff@uvm.edu](mailto:fmagdoff@uvm.edu)) is professor emeritus of plant and soil science at the University of Vermont and adjunct professor of crop and soil science at Cornell University. He is the author of *Soils for Better Crops* (with Harold van Es, third edition, 2009), and *The ABCs of the Economic Crisis* (Michael Yates, Monthly Review Press, 2009). John Bellamy Foster ([jfoster@monthlyreview.org](mailto:jfoster@monthlyreview.org)) is editor of *Monthly Review* and professor of sociology at the University of Oregon. His most recent book is *Ecological Revolution* (Monthly Review Press, 2009).

Reading the book: Chap. 4 “The Environment and Capitalism” could be a good beginning, if you remember that the preceding chapters explain the ideas being summarized in Ch. 4: Ch. 1 “The Planetary Ecological Crisis,” Ch. 2 “Business as Usual: the Road to Planetary Destruction,” Ch. 3 “The Growth Imperative of Capitalism.” Then Ch. 5 “Can Capitalism Go Green,” on the basis of the preceding, argues no. Finally, Ch. 6 “An Ecological Revolution Is Not Just Possible—It’s Essential.” —Dick

Discussion of the book by Magdoff and Foster preceded its publication:

I. The Planetary Ecological Crisis  READ MORE

[https://monthlyreview.org/2010/03/01/what-every-environmentalist-needs-to-know-about-capitalism/](https://monthlyreview.org/2010/03/01/what-every-environmentalist-needs-to-know-about-capitalism/)

This 2010 essay is apparently a summary of their book, which is available in UAF’s Mullins Library HC79.E5 M329 2011. And I have both the article and the book if you wish to borrow.

From the discussion in the magazine:

For those concerned with the fate of the earth, the time has come to face facts: not simply the climate change but also the pressing need for social-system change. The failure to arrive at a world agreement in Copenhagen in December 2009 was not simply an abdication of world leadership, as is often suggested, but had deeper roots in the inability of the capitalist system to address the accelerating threat to life on the planet. Knowledge of the nature and limits of capitalism, and the means of transcending it, has therefore become a matter of survival. In the words of Fidel Castro in December 2009: “Until very recently, the discussion [on the future of world society] revolved around the kind of society we would have. Now, the discussion centers on whether human society will survive.”
You are invited to join a brand new NSP Book group. We'll be reading the same book and then communicating through email with each other about our reactions. At some point we might want to make it live on a conference call or on a Skype or G chat. And we are starting with a fabulous book, Resisting Structural Evil: Love as Ecological and Economic Vocation by Cynthia Moe Lobeda (a professor at Seattle University). 2013. What is so powerful about this book is that it is grounded in spiritual and religious principles yet is an amazingly powerful critique of capitalism. Let me explain.

The everyday workings of global capitalism are endangering the survival of the planet and perpetrating structural economic violence on many people in the developing world.

How can flawed people like ourselves who are hopelessly entangled in practices and institutions that perpetuate injustice and violence against the earth (and ultimately our own children and grandchildren) possibly live an ethically responsible, justice-promoting life? (excerpted from Thad Williamson's review of Cynthia Moe Lobeda's book--read the review to get a taste of what the book is about and why it's worth reading: http://www.tikkun.org/nextgen/doing-justice-in-an-unjust-world)

If you are intrigued, please email me, Amy Broyles, at northknoxamy@gmail.com. We will set up a private email list that allows us to have an ongoing, open conversation as we read together. Feel free to join in at anytime - it is sure to be a rich discussion. If you can't make the first date, just email me at a later date, once you've gotten and read the first chapter or two. You are welcome to join at anytime.

This is a book that will inform, inspire, and can transform one's perspective. I look forward to your reply, hearing your thoughts and insights on the challenging topic that Cynthia D. Moe-Lobeda explores in this book.

Much love, Amy

web: www.spiritualprogressives.org
email: info@spiritualprogressives.org

INSTEAD OF A REVIEW OF THIS CHANGES EVERYTHING, HERE IS AN INTERVIEW OF KLEIN IN IN THESE TIMES

Newsletter 20 Sept 2014

Naomi Klein: 'We Can't Dodge This Fight' Between Capitalism and Climate Change.

The author of THIS CHANGES EVERYTHING explains what right-wing climate-change
deniers understand and liberals don't. BY MICAH UETRICHT
http://inthesetimes.com/article/17181/naomi_klein_we_cant_dodge_this_fight_between_capitalism_and_climate_change

DONATE
The Left, such as it is, has kind of opted out of [addressing] climate change. With some exceptions, the climate has never taken off as an issue—it's always sort of tacked on.

That the clock on climate change is ticking—and louder by the day—is not news to anyone. Like many people, journalist Naomi Klein spent years feeling overwhelmed by scientists' increasingly apocalyptic pronouncements about impending planetary doom, and largely opted to ignore them. She had her hands full exposing the abuses of multinational corporations like Microsoft and Nike in her first book, No Logo (1999), and the imposition of free market policies and expanding inequality on unwilling populations around the globe in her 2007 book, The Shock Doctrine.

But Klein came to realize not only that climate change was so all-encompassing and urgent that it couldn’t be ignored, but also that it creates a unique opportunity. Climate change “could be the best argument progressives have ever had,” she says, to create the kind of bottom-up mass movements that can not only force action on the environment, but fight economic inequality, create more democratic societies, rebuilding a strong public sector, addressing historical gender and racial injustices, and a litany of other issues.

Doing so, however, won’t simply require changing a few lightbulbs. “We have not done the things that are necessary to lower emissions because those things fundamentally conflict with deregulated capitalism,” Klein writes. In This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate, she explores the failures of “Big Green” environmental groups and supposedly benevolent CEOs, the right-wing climate deniers who actually understand the stakes of climate change better than many progressives, and the grassroots movements coalescing to fight climate change. Klein spoke with In These Times from her home in Toronto.

ITT: Your book begins with a discussion of the Right and climate change denial. This makes sense both because the Right has waged a very effective campaign to insist that global warming isn't real and to block potentially helpful legislation, and because, you argue, they actually understand what's at stake in addressing climate change better than most liberals do: It will require a total overhaul of free-market capitalism as we know it. Why does the Right understand climate change better than the Left?

Naomi: First, it's important to understand that the climate-change denier movement is often entirely a product of free market thinking. The conferences like the annual Heartland Conference, the publications—they're overwhelmingly published by right-wing think tanks like CATO, the American Enterprise Institute and [the] Heartland [Institute].

Heartland is most famous now as a climate-change deniers institution—I think a lot of people have only heard of it in the context of their annual climate change conference. But Heartland
is a free market think tank, first and foremost. It's been around for a long time. It exists to push the **hardcore neoliberal platform of deregulation and austerity policies, anti-labor policies.** It's a familiar package.

When I interviewed **Joe Bast, the head of the Heartland Institute**, at the conference a couple of years ago, he was very frank about this with me. He said that he became interested in climate change not because he found a problem with the science, but because he understood that if the science was true and left unchallenged, it would mean “anything goes” in terms of government regulation. You'd have to intervene in the market. You'd have to invest in the public sphere. Basically, their entire ideological project would be dead in the water.

So they dug in, as he explained, and found what they believed were flaws in the science. If you look at who deniers actually are, it’s clear that what’s driving them is a desire to protect the neoliberal project.

They're absolutely right that a crisis of this magnitude requires collective action, requires investment in the public sphere, requires strong regulation. That doesn't mean that it requires socialism. Within that, there’s a big range of state responses—some of which, in my opinion, are very undesirable, some more desirable. But the idea that you can just have a laissez faire response to climate change is pretty absurd.

The reason that's relevant is because that's what a lot of the main [environmentalist] groups have been telling us: that we can leave this to the market. Well, the track record for leaving it to the market is 61 percent emission increases since we've been supposedly dealing with climate change.

In reading your chapter “Big Green” on the major environmentalist groups—which you give a pretty thorough excoriating—I was struck by the way the right- and left-wing responses to climate change mirror the political shifts of the Right and Left in the era of neoliberalism generally. On one hand, you have the Right, which actually understands what's at stake and has taken hardline stances to prevent any kind of mildly progressive action, and on the other, you have a liberalism that is just drifting further and further rightward, largely capitulating to the Right's agenda. Can you talk about Big Green?

Naomi: Big Green are liberals—it’s a very liberal movement. The Left, such as it is, has kind of opted out of [addressing] climate change. With some exceptions, the climate has never taken off as an issue—it's always sort of tacked on. I think it's significant that when Occupy formed, the first manifesto that listed everything wrong with capitalism didn't mention climate change. To me, that's a telling oversight.

I think climate change is the best argument we've ever had against capitalism destabilizing life on earth. Yet somehow the Left has opted out. Part of that is the idea that the climate
movement was Al Gore, for God's sake, and was Hollywood celebrities and liberals. We on the Left didn't want to have anything to do with that, so let's leave it to the Big Green groups.

I think it's also a kind of fatigue on the Left, because there's so many issues we're supposed to be dealing with, and this seemed to be one issue that somebody else was dealing with. So it's not that lefties didn't think climate change was happening, they just treated it like, "Okay, I'm going to avoid this one, because I've got my hands full, and it doesn't seem that urgent."

I don't think you can ever estimate the impact of people being afraid of making mistakes. Climate policy is an incredibly wonky world. Big Green has managed to take an issue that is actually pretty simple and make it amazingly inaccessible and arcane.

You've got two worlds that are both tricky. One is the science, and the other is policy. Both of them are seemingly very complex. It's not a very welcoming world if you're not in it. There's a lot of guys waving their charts at each other. And deniers have been really effective with their "gotchas." There was this feeling that you had to hedge everything—that you couldn't make a connection between extreme weather and climate because they aren't the same thing. There were no clear statements coming out for a while.

When you have language that's that hedged and complex and specialized, it sends a message to regular people that this is an experts-only club and you're not in it. I don't think the Left is immune from that.

You emphasize that capitalism is responsible for our climate predicament, but you also mention, mostly in passing, the need for a transformation in how all people in countries like the United States and Canada live. And at one point, you mention a turn away from some of the Enlightenment values that you associate with extractivism. When I hear people on the Left talk about turning away from some parts of Enlightenment and modernity, I sometimes get very nervous.

Naomi: I think we should be as clear as possible that [addressing climate change] isn't about being anti-technology. It's about the need for technology as a decentralized power. Technology can be at the center of just about any transformation, but that doesn't mean all technology is good.

We need to be careful of a completely anti-progress fetishizing of some idyllic past. But at the same time, hanging out with geoengineers really scared the hell out of me. What's clear is that the further we go down this road, and the more this Francis Bacon idea of progress becomes equated with taming and controlling nature, the more these ever-larger and higher-risk technologies are going to take hold.

I think we do need to talk about that fundamental issue of whether our place on earth is to
dominate nature—whether we're at war with it. I'm not against science, but we're on the verge of scaling up the risks in a really frightening way if we don't ask ourselves some really tough questions about just how smart we are. We don't want to wallow in ignorance, but there are huge dangers in overestimating our intelligence.

Near the end of the book, you talk about growing impatient with the structureless movements that you've defended in the past, such as the anti-globalization protests around the turn of the century. Is this because of the urgency of climate change, or are there other reasons?

Naomi: I don't think I'm the only one. I think that's been an evolution, and my generation—the Seattle generation of anti-globalization activists—swung really far in an anti-structure direction. Anything that seemed like politics or institutions was regarded with great suspicion. What I see in the Occupy generation and in the anti-austerity movements in Europe is a desire to find a route that balances a real belief in decentralization and a rightful suspicion of centralized state power with a serious engagement with politics and policy.

That's why I spend a fair amount of time in the book talking about successes, imperfect as they are, of Germany's energy transition. It's a major social movement victory—Angela Merkel did not do this out of the goodness of her heart, she did it because Germany has the strongest anti-nuclear movement in the world and a very strong environmental movement more broadly.

The speed of Germany's transition is stunning. Twenty-five percent renewables in a decade-and-a-half, much of it via decentralized community-controlled co-ops. This isn’t “hey, let's do this, me and my friends starting an energy co-op”—this is a broad national policy that created a context in which you could have a multiplication of alternatives that coalesce into what I would argue is the most meaningful energy transition anywhere in the world.

I know some of the people involved in [the German movement]. Their roots are in the anti-globalization movement, too, and they used to be a lot more dismissive of engaging with politics. But people are getting their hands dirty. You see it in Seattle with the fight for minimum wage. You see it in Chicago with the teachers. You see it in Iceland with the anti-austerity movement birthing its own political structure. You see it in Spain with Podemos. More and more, there are these new political formations where people are trying to change the very nature of politics.

It's not only the climate science that makes me impatient. When I was defending the anti-globalization movement's structurelessness, I was mostly trying to fend off other people's attempts to co-opt the movement and say “Here's my ten-point plan.” I said, “Give it some time—we're going to come up with the plan ourselves.” But we didn't.

I wasn't saying that we didn't need to—I was looking for the catalyst and the framework. I think climate change—because it grounds the need for change in scientific necessity, puts us
on a deadline and brings so many movements together—can be that framework, can be that catalyst. MORE
http://inthesetimes.com/article/17181/naomi_klein_we_cant_dodge_this_fight_between_capitalism_and_climate_change

Right now you can get a copy of Naomi Klein's *This Changes Everything* by donating $50 or more to *In These Times*.

MICAH UETRICHT  Micah Uetricht is an *In These Times* contributing editor. He is an assistant editor at Jacobin and has written for *The Nation, Al Jazeera America, Dissent, Salon,* and the *Chicago Reader,* and the author of *Strike for America: Chicago Teachers Against Austerity* (Verso/Jacobin Books, March 2014). Perhaps most importantly, he is also a proud former *In These Times* editorial intern. Follow him on Twitter @micahuetricht or contact him at micah.uetricht [at] gmail.

The People Search for Transformative Mass Liberation

World Peoples’ Conference on Climate Change, and the Rights of Mother Earth, April 22, 2010, Cochabamba, Bolivia

World People’s Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth

*PEOPLE’S AGREEMENT*, Aril 22, 2010, Cochabamba, Bolivia. Magdoff and Foster’s *What Every Environmentalist...* includes the full text.

Search Results

1.  *World People's Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth*. Building the People's World Movement for Mother Earth...

2.  *Projet de Déclaration Universelle des Droits de la - Rights of Mother Earth*. Building the People's World Movement for Mother Earth...

3.  *World People's Conference on Climate Change - Wikipedia, the free*...
The **World People's Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth** was a global gathering of civil society and governments hosted by the ...

4.  

[World People's Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of ...](motherearthritis.org/.../world-peoples-conference-on-climate-change)  

You +1'd this publicly. **Undo**

Apr 27, 2010 – Proposal. UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF MOTHER EARTH. Preamble. We, the **peoples** and nations of Earth: considering ...

5.  

[Mother Earth Rights](motherearthritis.org/Cached - Similar)  

You +1’d this publicly. **Undo**

... (1982), the Rio Declaration (1992), the Earth Charter (2000), and the **World People's Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth** (2010): ...

6.  

[World People's Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of ...](www.facebook.com/.../World-Peoples-Conference-on-Climate-Change)  

You +1’d this publicly. **Undo**

**World People's Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth** is on Facebook. To connect with World People's Conference on Climate Change ...

7.  

[PDF](www.ienearth.org/.../WorldPeoplesConferenceonClimateChange.pdf)  

You +1’d this publicly. **Undo**

File Format: PDF/Adobe Acrobat - **Quick View**

Apr 22, 2010 – **World People's Conference on Climate Change** and the **Rights of Mother Earth**. April 22nd, Cochabamba, Bolivia. PEOPLES AGREEMENT ...

8.  

[World People's Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of ...](www.alternet.org/.../world_people's_conference_on_climate_change)  

You +1’d this publicly. **Undo**

Apr 20, 2010 – The world's governments were unable to find enough common ground in Copenhagen to hash out even a weak treaty. Now, a justice-focused ...

9.  

[World People's Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of ...](www.un-ngls.org/spip.php?page=article_s&id_article=2394)  

You +1’d this publicly. **Undo**

From 19 to 22 April, the '**World People's Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth**' was held in Cochabamba and convened by Bolivian ...
A Stunning Day in September: The Perspective of a Climate Activist
A common cause brings together many people. The great gathering speaks volumes and shows commitment, community, and yes, love.
Read the full story

“We Can’t Rely on Our Leaders”: Inaction at Climate Summit Fuels Call for Movements to Take the Helm
Amy Goodman, Video Interview, NationofChange, Sept. 25, 2014
At the UN special climate summit this past week, world leaders came together in an historic moment to talk about climate change.
Read the full story

A few books on capitalism: See OMNI’s Newsletters on US Capitalism and the now ended newsletters on Occupy.


Contexts
2006: Year discussion of climate change by members of OMNI began.
2007: IPCC Fourth Assessment Report, declaring the evidence for man-made global warming "unequivocal" and long-term sea level rise and other disastrous impacts of climate change now inevitable. Soon afterward the Report was revised to reflect overwhelming evidence that the Report had underestimated magnitude and rapid development of climate change and weather extremes.

2008: The year apparently that formal OMNI Climate Change Book Forums began. At least, I have a list of the books we discussed 2008-2012; it should be brought up to date. Dick 9-10-14

Recent OMNI Newsletters
UN Day 10-24
US Capitalism 10-18
UN Food Day 10-17
Indigenous Peoples of Americas Day 10-13
Vegetarian Day 10-1
WWI Centenary 9-28

END CLIMATE CHANGE v. CAPITALISM NEWSLETTER #1

[DB1]

--
Dick Bennett

Newsletters
http://www.omnicenter.org/newsletter-archive/

Index:
http://www.omnicenter.org/omni-newsletter-general-index/
jbennet@uark.edu
Blog
http://jamesrichardbennett.blogspot.com/
j.dick.bennett@gmail.com
(479) 442-4600
2582 Jimmie Ave.
Fayetteville, AR 72703