

INTEGRAL ENVIRONMENTALISM

WHY THE CURE FOR DEVELOPMENT IS MORE DEVELOPMENT

Jeff Salzman: Hello my friends. Jeff Salzman here and welcome to The Daily Evolver Live ... where we look at what's happening in culture, politics, science, and spirituality through an integral lens ... which is the lens that takes evolution, the procreant urge, or Eros itself into account. How's that for a mission?

Welcome everybody. It's Tuesday, May 12th, 2015, and I am coming to you from my home here in Boulder, Colorado. I am here on a beautiful, gloomy, rainy, night with our Daily Evolver producer, Brett Walker. How are you doing tonight Brett?

Brett Walker: I'm enjoying this evening thunder shower.

Jeff: You might even hear some thunder in the background.

Brett: You might.

Jeff: Yes. It's kind of cool ... Brett, you went to the movies this weekend.

Brett: I did. I went and saw *Avengers: Age of Ultron*.

Jeff: You were telling me about it. I was interested because, first of all, it's a huge hit. It was just released two weeks ago and it's already on its way to a billion dollars worldwide. It's the second biggest movie opening in history. Second only to the original Avengers movie a couple of years ago. So this is a big, huge movie franchise with a lineage dating back to the Marvel Comic Books of the 60s with all the superheroes I remember as a kid. I somehow didn't get into them because I was more of a superman kind-of-guy. I was keeping it simple, while the Marvel Universe is pretty complicated ... but nonetheless, here they are making these movies.

It's always interesting when something in the pop culture hits a nerve. You were telling me that there's actually an integral story being told here, and I wondered if you'd share a little bit with the listeners?

Brett: Sure. Well, it's interesting to me that all these characters on the Avengers Team kind of represent these different levels of development ... and of course, I look for that in our culture. Starting with the Hulk for instance, who is Bruce Banner, a very postmodern kind of guy. His alter ego is the Hulk. He waits for the group to call him forth when they need brute strength and aggression. He's hard to control. He's like an impulsive 2-year-old that weighs 1,200 pounds. He's like this really primal force.

Jeff: The id.

Brett: Yeah. Exactly.

Jeff: A superhero id.

Brett: Then there's Thor who of course, is the classic red "power god". I'd say he straddles the tribal and traditional because he has a soft spot for us mortals. But he's very self-important, courageous, and truly heroic. I think he's a little bit neutered by the writers because if he was a true incarnation of that value meme he'd likely be pretty cruel to his enemies and maybe a little hard to like.

Then there's Captain America who I consider to be traditional/modern. He was born out of science, created like the atomic bomb during World War II to defend truth, justice, and the American way. It doesn't get any more traditional than that.

When we get to Iron Man, we're at the postmodern level, I think. Tony Stark is the billionaire genius who values science and individualism. He's been made rich by technology, especially weapons technology. But he has experienced a change of heart mid-life, and he stopped creating weapons and he began using his knowledge to create peace.

You can see how they are evolving. The most interesting thing to me was in this new movie, they introduced this character named Vision. I don't think this is giving anything away about the plot, but he's born out of this sort of artificial intelligence project. I guess he's sort of a flesh creature but maybe he's a cyborg. I'm not really sure. What's interesting is he's really a cosmocentric intelligence. He's curious and compassionate about his friends and his enemies alike, so he's holding multiple perspectives. When he came on the scene, the Avengers were afraid of him because this guy's super powerful and they didn't know what he was capable of. So they asked him, "Are you on our side or are you on Ultron's side?" And he said, "I'm on the side of life."

Jeff: Wow!

Brett: To me, that guy is kind of the postmodern/integral incarnation, which I think is neat. What's fascinating to me is that, I kind of doubt Stan Lee and the other guys who created these characters were thinking about this in a developmental sense. It seems like just naturally, unconsciously, these different memes, these archetypes, are represented.

Jeff: Well, that's an interesting thing. A claim of integral theory is that it is not a philosophy. It's actually the revelation of a pattern that exists whether we believe on it or not.

Brett: Right!

Jeff: A lot of great literature and the great art through time is about the clashes between these memes, between these altitudes ... the drama is just inherent in growth from one stage to the next. Any intelligence that would have all of them online and playing and interacting together ... I just have to say I'm really eager to see the movie because it smells integral to me.

Brett: The most interesting thing to me about the Avengers is how these memes play off of each other, as you were saying. You have these relationships between each of them and they all have to make peace with each other and be willing to operate as a team. You see these miniature conflicts within the group. To me, the one between Captain America and Tony Stark aka Iron Man, that's the most interesting one. This tension between Tony's sardonic attitude and the Captain's wholesome personality.

Jeff: Postmodern and modern or even traditional, Captain America is traditional.

Brett: Yeah. They kind of seem to straddle these memes, which we all do I guess. Then also the relationship between the Hulk and Black Widow. When the Hulk needs to calm down and stop smashing things, Black Widow touches him and it brings him down which is kind of neat. It's this maternal energy calming the two year old.

I have this other theory too about how the villain Ultron is a larger than life representation of the postmodern deconstructionist agenda.

Jeff: Oh, good Lord!

Brett: Very similar to the Deep Green Resistance but that's for another show maybe.

Jeff: Yeah, well actually, for later in this show.

Brett: It is.

Jeff: That's cool. All right. Well. Avengers the, what is it? The something of Ultron?

Brett: Age of Ultron.

Jeff: Age of Ultron. We should all check it out.

All right, just a couple of things. I wanted to thank you all for following us here to Integral Radio, our new home in the Integral Life universe. Of course Integral Life is the central web forum for the worldwide integral community and also the home of Ken Wilber, who is the greatest of all integral philosophers, my great inspiration and teacher. His latest work appears on Integral Life.

You can also find more of my work on my personal blog, DailyEvolver.com and you could find this podcast on iTunes and Stitcher.

A minute ago Brett was talking how the superheroes of the Marvel Universe sort of chart with the altitudes of development. If you're interested in following that kind of charting, you can follow along with a couple of diagrams that ... Brett you can link to them now in the Integral Radio comment section.

Brett: Yeah.

Jeff: Then if you check in on this later, you can find them always under the theory tab on the front page of The DailyEvolver.com website.

INTEGRAL ENVIRONMENTALISM

All right, I think we can get into our main topic for tonight. It's a topic that I think is kind of difficult for integralist. It's a difficult topic for me to reconcile and for me to live. The topic is specifically climate and climate change but also in general, humanity's impact on the natural world. How can we, as integralists, be happy and optimistic about the sacred world to come when we're poisoning the world that we have in the process?

I do think that is extra bedeviling to evolutionary thinkers because on one one hand, we do recognize and celebrate the great gifts of development, particularly as humanity has moved into the modern and postmodern world. We've seen what the philosopher Daniel Dennett has dubbed the "spectacularly tangible results of modernity." The tangible results of modernity, to use the quadrant map, is the realm of the third person or the right hand quadrants ... the material world.

We see our gleaming cities, ribbons of highways, airports, the communications networks, the creation of a worldwide virtual space. We see with modernity doubled and tripled lifespans which is the result of sanitation, medicine, and for the first time in history an abundance of calories. In fact, our big problem is an overabundance of calories, which would be astonishing to anybody who lived in any earlier time. That's the third-person.

In the second-person realm, with modernity, we get a decency that just arises out of a history of tyranny. Where we have governments and laws appearing that put sovereignty in the vessel of each individual person and not the king or the elites. We have societies that become more pacified, far less violent. Despite our collective neurotic self-image as human beings, our image of being sinners that have been cast out of paradise, which is so prevalent in really every stage of first tier development. To the contrary, the actual facts are that human beings have gotten relentlessly, century by century, and are continuing to get, nicer as time goes by. That's the second person.

In the first-person, the modern world gives us the freedom to really choose who we want to be, and how we want to live, and how we want to express ourselves. It enables us to expand our circle of care from our family, our tribe, to our clan, to our nation, and ultimately as we move into post-modernity and a worldcentric view, our care extends to all beings in the world. We can even move to the kosmocentric view to care about all beings known and unknown in the universe. All of this represents a huge achievement in terms of the human march of development.

By those standards we are living in a golden age and we integralist appreciate that. But for those of us who are lucky enough to receive these gifts, there comes a catch. That is we're only allowed, and this is interesting, we only allowed to enjoy the golden age if we're willing to see that there are millions, indeed billions of people and beings who are not living in the golden age. In Syria and Nepal for instance. In slums and hamlets throughout the world where we still have over a billion people living on a under a \$1.25 a day. They're living in premodern squalor, ignorance and tyranny that is the equal of virtually anything in history.

We also have to see people who are leading lives that are outside of the mainstream or often living downright miserable lives right in our own backyard. People that we've been talking about the last couple of weeks in Baltimore. The Eleanor Rigbys of the world. The lonely and lost people who are just alienated and personally unmoored by this crazy modern world where we don't even know our neighbors. There are a lot of people who you see and you wonder "how are you even making it in this world?" It's heartbreaking to see people who aren't equipped for modern life, but here they are.

We have to make the wellbeing of all of these people ... to make their opportunity to join in the fruits of modernity in first, second, and third person ... we have to make that our top priority. Or else we don't get to enjoy it ourselves. It's the Bodhisattva vow: nobody gets enlightened, until everybody gets enlightened. It's just something, again, that naturally comes on line as we develop. God is good in keeping us focused on where not only our individual growth lies, but the growth of humanity as a whole.

CLIMATE AND ECOLOGY

Then, of course, we can take the biggest possible perspective, which is the perspective of the planet. This is getting into the topic of climate and ecology, We have to see that the costs of this great human success story is a great degradation of the atmosphere, oceans, and of the natural landscape as a whole.

I saw two statistics recently that really floored me. One is that half of the land that's not covered by ice on this planet is colonized to be utilized in some fashion by human beings. The "human cancer" -- as one of my environmentalist friends refers to humanity -- has metastasized and spread to 50% of the planet. That's one statistic.

The other is a mind-blowing statistic from the World Wildlife Federation in a study they did last year. It showed that of all the animals that existed 45 years ago, this is in 1970 ... that of all the animals -- we're talking mammals, reptiles, fish -- that existed 45 years ago on the planet, only half of them exist now. We're not talking species. We're talking the sheer population of mammals, reptiles, and fish. Cut in half in 45 years. This is an untenable trajectory.

Interestingly, it's not necessarily untenable technically or logistically. Human beings could live with a lot less of the wild world, and a lot less biodiversity. We could 1), keep an eye on endangered species and rescue them as they enter a crisis situation. We can rescue them into zoos and research habitats, or we could at least freeze their cells for some future re-animation.

And 2) If we up our factory meat production, we can more than make up for the loss of wild animals that millennia of people have used for nourishment, through hunting, trapping, and so forth. We can more than make up for that loss with animals that are grown in what are known as "confinements," meat farms which are very efficient at putting chickens in and meat out. We can grow a full chicken now in 6 months! It used to take a year or two. So there'll still be plenty of meat to eat.

Again we can continue to live with less biodiversity -- technically. The problem that we run into isn't technical. It's moral. Who would want this world? It turns out actually that nobody does. Not even the most pro-development, anti-government conservatives. Not even Charles Krauthammer. He is of course, one of the top 3 or 4 leading conservative columnists in America. His latest column is entitled Free Willy. Of course when I saw that Free Willy was the title I thought it was going to be some diatribe against Bill Clinton, as a way of bringing down Hillary, which is what conservatives are doing a lot of these days. But actually no, he was referring to the whales kept for our amusement at SeaWorld. He was talking about the plight of animals, and was arguing for moral development, which I like especially when it comes from a conservative.

He starts by ruminating about the founding fathers. I often bring this up myself. In the case of Thomas Jefferson we have a man here who wrote the Declaration of Independence, the seminal manifesto of modernity, affirming that every man is radically free. Yet he wrote this while he was also a Virginia farmer buying, owning, and selling other human beings as slaves. It's astonishing. Charles Krauthammer writes, "while retrospective judgment tends to make us feel superior to our ancestors, it should really evoke humility. Surely some contemporary practices will be deemed equally abominable by succeeding generations. The only question is, which ones? I have long thought it will be our treatment of animals. I'm convinced that our great grandchildren will find it difficult to believe that we actually raised, herded, and slaughtered them on an industrial scale for the eating." I love that.

Later in the column he says, "I myself confessed to living in Jeffersonian hypocrisy" because he does eat meat. I'm in that category; a lot of us are. Denial is strong. The ability to willfully not see something because you think that your life (or at least your comfort and pleasure) depend on your not seeing it is an amazingly sturdy thing. That is the moral challenge that I am myself dealing with as are, I think, a lot of us listening in. Those of you who have stopped eating animals, I wish you could wave the magic wand for the rest of us.

THE POLITICS OF ENVIRONMENTALISM

Now, let's look at how this all arises in terms of the politics of our time. We see that there is a conservative and liberal polarity when it comes to development and environmentalism. We have two competing views. We have, on one hand, the view of development as being constructive and productive. On the other hand is the view of development as being pernicious and destructive. These are the political poles that we deal with certainly here in the United States.

We have the folks on the right, the traditionalist and the early modernists. And they're holding up the pole for the position that development is good and look at the progress humanity has made; which is the story I told earlier. The pole on the left is being held by the progressives, the liberals, the postmodern green altitude people who see the limits of development. Basically, they are worldcentric, a view that comes on line at late modernity and postmodernity. Therefore, they're more vigilant about the downsides and dangers of development in a finite world. The Green altitude has a sense of doom, and to the degree that any of us integral practitioners are green (altitude) we have it too, as we see the human developmental juggernaut push up against the limits of a finite planet.

What we also see as integralists is that both sides of this pole belong in the first tier. As such, they tend to think that their view is the only correct one, and that people who hold the other view are either co-opted, or deluded, or stupid. And this is the politics of environmentalism. From an integral perspective, we see that the idea of polarity itself is fruitful and powerful and brings a lot of energy to the system. There's a lot of energy in that struggle between the left and the right on this issue.

We see that as Walt Whitman wrote in Song of Myself, he said, "Out of the dimness, opposite equals advance." I love that. "Out of the dimness, opposite equals advance." It is an expression of the dialectic of progress. That we have a thesis. We have an idea of how things should be. Then we have an antithesis, which is an opposition to that thesis. All of the sudden, we then have 2 poles. They're holding opposite views. We're talking the difference between Fox News and MSNBC. There's inevitably conflict and there is inevitably, I don't know how else to put it, sex. I mean, our ideas want to have sex with each other.

There's a theory that with the internet and all of the possibilities that are out there, and the media environment in general, that people can sit in their own silos. They can stay in their own bubble and just listen to things that are supporting their own point of view. That's certainly true, particularly in the early stages of any altitude development. We really want to have that stage of development reified. We really want to hear people agree with us.

But there was a recent study, I saw it last week, that showed that silo theory doesn't really hold water. That inevitably people run into views opposite of their own and actually begin to seek them out. As this happens the rate of integration between the two poles ... between the thesis and the antithesis ... leads them to a new synthesis where you take the best of the mind, heart and juice that exists in each of the poles and you integrate that into a new structure, a new synthesis.

THE CURE FOR DEVELOPMENT—MORE DEVELOPMENT

At integral we do see that, yes, development is good in some very important ways, and development is bad in some very important ways. We see that going into the future the cure for the downsides of development is, and this is wonderful surprise, the cure is actually more development. We just need further development of a more intelligent and loving kind. The cure is not to go back to a previous retro-romantic past where we think everybody lived in harmony. That actually never existed. That's always been a paradise fantasy of the human mind.

At the integral stage of the game, then, it is not about fighting something. It's about supporting something. We recognize that there is a developmental urge, a thing called Eros that is operating in the world. It is moving the world in all 4 quadrants to a more intelligent, loving and powerful place. And it's doing it under its own power ... or His own power, or Her own power, or even Our own power. It doesn't matter how we see the nature of things. What is important is that we see that we don't have to fight something or correct something as much as we have to support something that is happening under its own power ... or in other words, the updraft of first-person consciousness, second-person culture and, third-person technology.

With that in mind, then, let's revisit these examples of how the world is going to hell environmentally. To start with the example of animals populations ... the drop in the population of animals in the last 45 years has happened in the premodern world, in the developing world, as human beings take over more and more of what was previously wild and natural. This happened 200 plus years ago in America as well, where we had the number of animals drop by at least half when we moved from a pre-traditional or wild indigenous ecology to a civilized ecology. Once we get to a modern stage of development -- and here we're talking the first world: North America, Europe, Japan, the more developed countries -- in these countries the number of animals is stable. And so where we need to work with saving animals is in the pre-developed world.

This is also true of the biomass and reforestation. I did a little Americana pilgrimage a couple of years ago and went to Williamsburg, Virginia which is a colonial town that's been restored. It's a park. There are people in costume, it's educational and it's beautiful. There are huge chestnuts and oak trees and pine trees everywhere. What was surprising to me and to a lot of people on the tour is that back in the late 1700s when the town was actually built and lived in, there were no trees. They showed old newspapers; it was of great consternation to the community that all the trees had been cut down for firewood within a 50-mile radius. This is true of early traditionalism where wood is your source of energy. Energy is really key to development and we'll look at that a little closer in a second.

This is a story you see throughout the globe. Great Britain was almost completely deforested in pre-modern time, and has been reforested as it has moved into modern times. This is true of America and Europe also in general. Human beings impact nature according to their technological abilities. As we reach modernity we get hip, there's actually a new sensibility that arises in our own consciousness ... where we begin to value and want to conserve nature in a way that never occurred to us before when we thought it was infinite or that was given to us by God to have dominion over.

Or consider the whales in the pre-traditional and traditional stages of development in the United States. This is when people burned whale oil in their lamps. There was almost a complete decimation of the whales in the Atlantic ocean. So whalers went from the East Coast of the United States down around South America and were well on their way to decimating the whales in the Pacific. At which point, we discovered oil in Titusville, Pennsylvania and changed from a whale oil to a petroleum economy. This was progress for the whales at least. I saw recently, I think it was last week actually, a study that showed that finally -- and this is 200 years later -- the population of blue whales in the Atlantic is now back where they were at pre-modern levels.

We see also with human populations that as societies become more affluent their birth rates decrease naturally. It's a matter of simple economics. In earlier stages of development where there is no such thing as a social safety net, or even a stable government, your social security was having a lot of kids. Kids who were indoctrinated into the moral imperative that life is all about taking care of old people just like you. That is a very functional system in the absence of a modern economy.

As we move into a modern economy where we have a safety net and laws and civilization, then children become an economic liability, which is what they are now, and people respond accordingly. They have fewer of them to the point where in many societies, such as in Scandinavia, Italy and Japan, the worry is that there are not enough children being born to maintain the stability of the population.

Yet we see headlines -- and they're accurate, actually -- saying that currently we have 7 billion people on Earth and that we are going to have 9 billion people by the end of the century. That's probably roughly true. What you don't hear so much, because the media is geared towards fear, is that by then the center of gravity of world population will have become modern. At that point having children may still be a beautiful thing, but it's only one of many beautiful ways that we can live our life. Like I said we see more and more of this as countries develop. In America, we see it with millennials, people born before 1990, many of whom are choosing to live a child-free life.

We also see as people grow into modernity a natural move to urban living. We see that in the United States for instance, just over a hundred years ago 85% of the population lived on a farm. It's now 2%. Of course, the urban lifestyle has a much smaller footprint than the rural or even the suburban setting; less lawn, less square footage, less energy per person, more efficient use of food, more efficiencies of every kind.

Another of the features of urban living is that we have more and better sex. I'm not just talking physically, I'm talking about the communion that we have with other people, as we engage their minds, their thinking and their world view. It's just built into us. People want to be with people. We want to rub up against other people. There is a vibrancy, creativity and productivity that arises out of just being close to other people. It's a natural attractor as people develop.

We notice that as societies develop into modernity and post modernity, as people become more affluent, they care more about the natural world as well as the world that they're raising their children in. We see that in first-world countries, carbon dioxide has actually leveled off and is beginning to drop even as populations increase and the economies grow. We've taken great pains to clean up our own air and water. Now again let's note that this is not a world centric move. We're not necessarily looking to clean up the whole planet, we're looking to clean up our city and our town. But that itself is huge progress.

I remember growing up in the 60s and 70s in Western, Pennsylvania in the Steel Valley. It was then a vibrant manufacturing area; there was mining and coal, car and steel mills, it was the heartland of the industrial revolution in this country. But you didn't swim in the lakes or rivers, and you certainly didn't fish. If you did, you certainly didn't eat the fish that you caught in the lakes and the rivers. There weren't many of them anyway, most of the fish were gone.

The air was worse. I remember living in Youngstown, Ohio in 1976 in a basement apartment where every morning at 4 am, the steel mills nearby would release all the fumes from the coke ovens. You could literally see the fumes crawling along the landscape about 2 or 3 feet up from the ground. I was in a basement apartment as I said, and I would get up at 4 in the morning and close my windows because the sulfur would choke me. I would wake up from it. And that wasn't so long ago, just 1976 ... and all that's cleaned up now.

This is what I referred to as the first stage of the environmental movement which again, does not require a worldcentric view. This is environmentalism for traditionalists and early modernists. You're seeing this happening really all over the world in what we might say the second world countries like China, where consciousness is being raised as people walk around with gas masks. We all want to clean up the nest that we're living in. We don't want our kids wearing masks out in the street. That's the kind of environmentalism we see as countries move into modernity. It's definitely good news even though it doesn't really yet take into account the finite planet. They're still thinking about their own countries and their own cities at that point.

What else bodes well for the future? Well again, the millennials as they move from an acquire-and-own economy to more of a rent-and-share economy. With the internet and with the proximity of people living together, it's often easier to rent and share resources than it is to own and store them.

Brett sent me a quote from a sociologist and thinker that I pay attention to, Jeremy Rifkin, and he summed it up really well. He said and I'll quote, "Millennials are already seeing through the false notion that the more we accumulate, the more we are autonomous and free." I love that. What a relief. He goes down to say, "It seems that they are more interested in developing networks and joining the sharing economy than in consumption for consumption's sake." I think that is, again, just an astonishing new emergent at the cutting edge of human and cultural development.

THE MAGIC OF TIDYING

Along these lines, there's a book that caught my eye. It's a big bestseller that's sold over 2 million copies which is a huge publishing achievement. It's been 6 months on the New York Times bestseller list. It is called *The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up: The Japanese Art of Decluttering and Organizing*. I love it. It seems to me that it's about enlightenment in the third-person. Creating a life that's full and aware. Creating a home that is clean and organized, and I love this word, tidy. The principle of the book is that you start by going through all your stuff. The stuff in the kitchen, the kid's stuff, your wardrobe, the stuff in the garage, basement, office, whatever. It's not about what you're throwing away, but what you're keeping. The default is "everything goes," so the decision is "what are you going to keep?" Every item has to be re-chosen. How do we re-choose it? We hold it up. We look at it and we ask ourselves if the thought of this staying with us is either enlivening or deadening. We hold it up and how do we feel? Again, it's about enlightenment in third-person. I think it's really unique and really interesting that that has hit a nerve in the culture. Forget the millennials. This is a cure for us baby boomers who really have the sickness of affluenza of just accumulating stuff.

AN ECOMODERNIST MANIFESTO

Something has arisen in the culture in the last couple of weeks that really accommodates this more integral view of environmentalism, and how development can happen in a healthy way. It's an essay written and released a couple of weeks ago by The Breakthrough Institute in Oakland, California and it's called *An Ecomodernist Manifesto*. I think it could also be called the *Ecointegral Manifesto*. It was written and signed on by 18 or 20 environmental activists, scholars, and scientists. They're the usual suspects from Harvard, and Stanford, and Columbia and so forth. I think it presents a path forward that is as integral as anything I've seen.

Let me just read the thesis from the first couple of paragraphs. In *Ecomodernist Manifesto*, they write, "To say that the Earth is a human planet becomes truer every day. Humans are made from the Earth and the Earth is remade by human hands. Many Earth scientists express this by stating that the Earth has entered a new geological epoch, the Anthropocene, the Age of Humans.

"As scholars, scientists, campaigners, and citizens, we write with the conviction that knowledge and technology applied with wisdom might allow for a good or even great Anthropocene."

I read that and already I'm hooked, because I believe in this ever better future. I'm also suspicious because they go on to write that, "A good Anthropocene demands that humans choose their growing social, economic, and technological powers to make life better for people, stabilize the climate, and protect the natural world." I note that that covers second-person and third-person reality, but it's not really first-person. The first person is interiority itself, not just culture and technology.

For us to have a fully integral, "good" Anthropocene demands that humans use their growing consciousness as well. Consciousness again, being defined as what I'm able to see. I'm able to see not just my world and my family's world, or my tribe's world, or even my nation's world, but I'm able to see the whole shebang. I'm able to see the global view of climate and oceans. I'm able to feel into the karmas of history. I'm able to feel into the interiority of other people and cultures. This first-person realm, too, is real and seen as a real world space. It's a place we live, and we want to notice it and take care of it, and nurture that forward as well.

Again, the *Ecomodernist Manifesto* is more focused on the second and third person. What they say is that to create a good or even great anthropocene, or age of humans, we need to do two things. Number one, we need to create more wild nature. I love that. They're saying that, "Humanity must shrink its impact on the environment and make more room for

nature." Number two, we need to rely less on that nature, for our own human well being. Notice that they're differentiating. This is one of the principles of evolution: we differentiate things that are fused together into clear things that are separate ... and then we integrate them.

So in the Ecomodernist Manifesto they are creating two spheres of life on Earth. One is the more human environment where there is a cycle of sustainability within the human bubble of civilization. Food, shelter, energy, everything is cycled.

Then there's a more wild natural world that lives on its own terms. We recognize it as good, true, and beautiful on its own terms and leave it to be as wild as possible. They have an interesting terminology for this differentiating. They call it decoupling. They say that decoupling the human realm from the natural world is antithetical to current thinking, which is the green altitude idea that humans and nature are to live together in one glorious paradise.

At any rate this decoupling would feature three principles. 1) intensified farming and food production, so modern food production. Think of the second and third world, the three or four billion people who, like those of us in the first world, would like to have meat if they wanted. Maybe two times a week. Maybe three or four ... meat everyday is beyond their thinking, but they're going to want that. There are going to be more factory farms and it breaks my heart but it's happening. You see that happening in the third world, in China, and India. There's an intelligence to that in terms of ecology, and I trust we'll grow beyond it in the first world and create palatable meat substitutes and artificial meats in the meantime so that at some point we can emancipate the animals.

2) there would be high technology energy deployment that includes both nuclear power and solar power. They're big in both of those and we'll get to them in a minute. And 3), the intensification of urbanization. Again, this is something that happens as people become more affluent.

So these are the three pillars of their thinking: intensified food production, energy deployment, and human settlements. This is the path forward for the ecomodernists. Again, it involves forward technology, not a retro-romantic vision of going back to living as noble savages. In fact, they take on that idea directly: "The process of decoupling challenges the idea that early human societies lived more lightly on the land than do modern societies. Insofar as past societies had less impact upon the environment, it was because these societies supported vastly smaller populations." I would also say that they had earlier technologies. It's harder to hurt the environment with a spear than it is with a bulldozer.

They go on, "In fact, early human populations with much less advanced technologies had a far larger individual land footprint than societies have today. Consider that a population of no more than 1 or 2 million North Americans hunted most of the continent's large mammals into extinction by the late Pleistocene while burning and clearing forests across the continent in the process. Extensive human transformations of the environment continued through the Holocene period. As much as three quarters of all deforestation globally occurred before the industrial revolution." This challenges a basic tenet of postmodern, green-altitude environmentalism, the "pre-trans fallacy" that says the way forward for humanity is to go back to the way it was in premodern and even pre-agricultural times. This is of course is completely unachievable short of the collapse of civilization and a major human die-off -- which is why some people in the environmental movement that actually wish for a "great collapse."

Brett, you sent me an excerpt from a YouTube video on collapse from ... who was it?

Brett: Deep Green Resistance.

Jeff: Deep green resistance. It expresses this radical view beautifully and explains why the environmental movement is often marginalized from mainstream thinking. Brett, play a little bit from this.

Brett: Okay. This is an excerpt from a trailer for their documentary.

Female: "We haven't done very well over the last few thousand years. We've had militarism, we've had slavery, we've had misogyny, and this is horribly stratified societies where there's the rich and the poor, and chronic starvation and all the rest of it. What's wrong with saying let's abandon this and do what we did before, which worked. We didn't destroy the planet for those first 4 million years. We actually participated."

Male: "We look at this culture and we say the sooner this thing comes down, the better. The sooner collapse happens, the better. We actually lay out a strategy for a way to achieve that collapse because we believe that not only the natural world but humans will be better off without this culture. You know, so many of us are living in a state of alienation, in a state of dependence upon a system that's killing us, that's poisoning us, that's feeding us this toxic imagery, this toxic culture that really destroys our internal selves just as it destroys the external world all around us. We think it's long past time that this culture came down."

Jeff: Yes, so there you have it. The prayer for the end of civilization manifesto. We have to destroy the village in order to save it. I think in integral we want to get over this. We want to say that yes, human beings are a natural outgrowth of this amazing blue ball that is falling around the sun. That Gaia loves us. That we're not a mistake. We're not a pernicious force.

A powerful critique that conservatives make of the environmental movement, and of liberals in general, is that environmentalism is for them is a religion. And it is. Aside from the actual facts of the matter, green is animated by the same fall from paradise story, or a version of the fall from paradise story, that also animates the earlier stages of development. That is: we were born of Divine Gaia. We were given rules to live by for harmony and sustainability. We

disobeyed the rules and as a result we are being punished and cast out of the garden, and we risked apocalypse unless we change our ways. Changing our ways means getting back to the lap of the mother.

The problem is that this view is stuck in an infantilized relationship with mother Earth. We can think about it in terms of our own individual development. As a little baby I love my mother because she fulfills my needs. I cling to her and I cry when she leaves me ... but I don't worry about her needs particularly. I don't even notice them actually. I don't mind that I pee in her face when she's changing my diaper or that I wake her up in the middle of night when I'm hungry, or any of that.

Eventually, though, as we grow into older children, teenagers or even adults, we realize that our mother is actually a person. She is a woman, an individual in her own right. She has her own history. She has her own karma which is independent of us ... and we begin to care for her. If we live long enough, we take care of her like she took care of us.

I think human beings are doing the same thing with Mother Nature. It's like humanity as a whole is in that transition period from teenage to young adulthood. We're like that slovenly 19-year-old (or okay, 26-year-old) who's still living on his mother's couch, eating her food, taking her money ... and she's cleaning and doing the laundry, and running herself ragged trying to keep us healthy and happy. At some point we begin to realize, "Wait a second. I'm a bad person. I'm a slug. I'm bleeding this poor woman dry."

Again, I think that's where we are collectively as human beings. We do have some people who are advanced. We have our big brothers and sisters who were saying, "Hey, stop it. Wake up. Grow up. Look what you're doing to Mom." These are the progressive world centric people. What we also have, though, is a whole crowd of younger kids who haven't seen beyond the family. It turns out that our mother is "the old woman who lives in the shoe, and she has so many children she doesn't know what to do." And there are still 2 or 3 billion people who have yet to reach modernity and they want to, and they will. The way forward is for these pre-modern people to have all the opportunities that modern people have, for security, health, longevity, interior freedom and conveniences that the rest of us enjoy. And to do it in a way that doesn't wreck the planet in the process.

I think the ecomodernists really are bringing something new to the table when they differentiate the natural space from the wild space. And here they do have a one little reference to first-person reality. They say "The case for a more active, conscious and accelerated decoupling to spare nature draws more on spiritual or aesthetic than on material or utilitarian arguments." I do like that they bring it to the first-person, even though they promptly go back to the second- and third-person, "What we're calling nature or even wild nature, encompasses landscapes, seascapes, biomes and ecosystems that have in more cases than not been regularly altered by human influence over centuries and millennia. These environments will continue to be shaped by local, historical, and cultural preferences. While we believe that agricultural intensification for *land-sparing* is key to protecting wild nature, we recognize that many communities will continue to opt for *land-sharing*, seeking to conserve wildlife within agricultural landscapes ..."

Of course, that's going to happen. It makes me think of a beautiful Japanese aesthetic concept -- and the Japanese are so good at this sort of thing -- called *Satoyama*. *Satoyama* represents the ideal of coexistence between humans and nature. Most languages don't even have a word for this. *Satoyama* is defined as a patchwork of human settlement in natural areas. The natural areas are actively managed using traditional techniques such as controlled burns and planting trees that compliment local soil compositions. But no one species of vegetation is allowed to dominate. *Satoyama* supports a certain level of biodiversity while simultaneously providing wild foods and other resources for residents. It is in short, an ancient attempt at sustainability. Japan has about 500 organizations dedicated to *Satoyama*, and as such is culturally in the avant-garde of humanity right now.

The one last thing I want to emphasize is that while the Ecomodernist Manifesto describes a new kind of decoupled sustainability, there is one thing that needs continue to grow exponentially into the future for the whole thing to work: *energy*. Whether it's intensified farming, water desalination or even carbon sequestration, if sometime we deemed that is required to normalize the climate ... all of these will require great amounts of energy, terabytes of power. They write, "Most forms of renewable energy are unfortunately incapable of creating this amount of energy. The scale of land use and in other environmental impacts necessary to power the world on bio fuels or many other renewables are such that we doubt they provide a sound pathway to a zero-carbon low-footprint future."

They do point out one exception however, and I mentioned it before. It's solar. "High-efficiency solar cells produced from earth-abundant materials ... have the potential to provide many tens of terawatts from just a few percent of the Earth's surface." But not just solar. As they write, "In the long run, next-generation advanced nuclear fission and fusion represents the most plausible pathways toward the joint goals of climate stabilization and the radically decoupling of humans from nature. This transition will take time," they write, "and during this transition, other energy technologies can provide important social and environmental benefits such as hydroelectric dams, fossil fuels with carbon capture, and biomass energy."

That's the Ecomodernist Manifesto and as I said, in the world of the environmentalists versus deniers, and what passes for conversation about this in most of the mainstream media, it is a breath of fresh air. We'll link to it and you can look at it. Slate Magazine, which is pretty liberal, wrote of it: "After decades of hearing environmentalist rally against things (no Keystone pipeline!) the change in tone coming from ecomodernists is palpable and welcome. It's inclusive. It's exciting. And it gives environmentalists something to fight *for*, for a change. Plus the ecomodernists focus on people *and* planet, giving the broad middle of the American public a way to embrace ethical economic growth without having to chain themselves to a pipeline." I like that. I like how it moves beyond the typical green and only green interpretation of environmentalism, which has served to alienate a lot of the modernists and traditionalists.

For more on this, you can look at some of the stuff that Steve McIntosh has written at the Institute for Cultural Evolution about how the environmental movement has to move beyond an anti-modern interpretation.

Brett: Jeff, they don't happen to talk about GMO's in the manifesto, do they?

Jeff: No, but I'm assuming that they are for them as are most scientists. I'm kind of agnostic on that, but I do think that in terms of GMOs, I think we ought to have labeling. Let people choose. Let the market of ideas and freedom and transparency lead the way. From what I've seen scientifically GMOs are actually doing a lot more good than harm.

Brett: There's a little discussion in the chat of Integral Radio about them, and Corey sent a link saying he found himself more on the side of GMOs after listening to this, so I'll pass it on.

Jeff: I think that we need to have an open mind. It's so easy to be reflexive *against* this stuff, and I think that integral asks more of us.

All right. Well, I am terribly overtime but what fun! I hope that we can really move to the next stage of this environmental discussion. Also, I wish everybody a belated Happy Earth Day. It was April 22nd. Earth Day is the first international holiday; it was set up by the United Nations in 1970. Maybe in the sacred world to come, when everybody is world centric, it could be the biggest holiday of them all. Where little baby Gaia brings toys to all the children and to the young at heart.

Until then, let's keep it integral. This is Jeff Salzman signing off. See you next Tuesday night. Take care people and have a great week!