

Seeing The Post Corporate World: Life After Capitalism

A review of David C. Korten's new book, by David T. Ratcliffe

Global capitalism is not democratic and it systematically violates every principle of a market economy. Which sets up an interesting juxtaposition because it points to the possibility that there really is an alternative.[1]

Living capital, which has the special capacity to continuously regenerate itself, is ultimately the source of all real wealth. To destroy it for money, a simple number with no intrinsic value, is an act of collective insanity -- which makes capitalism a mental, as well as a physical pathology.[2]

To create a world in which life can flourish and prosper we must replace the values and institutions of capitalism with values and institutions that honor life, serve life's needs, and restore money to its proper role as servant. I believe we are in fact being called to take a step to a new level of species consciousness and function.[3]

--David C. Korten, *Life After Capitalism*,
from a presentation in Canada, 11/98

Today, most people look at the world and see the devastation wrought by economic and political policies that result from valuing money over life. A deep despair accompanies this perception. Many believe there is no real hope of changing the annihilative pattern of global capitalism; that we are doomed to fulfill the claim that man is a killer at heart, biologically and psychologically wired for war and the never-ending pursuit of material self-interest without regard for the needs of others and of life as a whole.

However, accepting global capitalism's TINA philosophy (There is No Alternative) fails to acknowledge the growing number of projects people around the globe *are* engaged in. Such work is guided by the vision of building a truly sustainable civilization from the bottom up, founded on practices that give back *more* than we take from our irreplaceable home, planet earth's natural, living treasure-house.

David Korten's newest book, *The Post Corporate World: Life After Capitalism* (published March 9, 1999) is a magnificent antidote for people suffering from the TINA phenomenon. There is great need for everyone to take in the perspective and insights of books like this and let such understanding and perceptions live within and inform our own individual experiences of being and consciousness. A selection of resources has been assembled providing details about some of the book's contents[4].

We are where we are as a consequence of intentional decisions made by human beings. There is nothing inevitable about it. We as human beings can make different choices and create different economic institutions to institutionalize different values and create different dynamics.[5]

As the author writes regarding his participation as a founding member of the International Forum on Globalization (begun in 1994), "one of the most exciting and fulfilling aspects of belonging to this group has been the ongoing search for a common vision of the kind of world we *do* want." (p.237) With all the incoherent human activity to oppose and fight against at this point in the life of the planet, it is essential we devote at least as much energy and awareness towards articulation and creation of what we actually want to manifest instead.

Korten's book provides a brilliant exposition of precisely how and why unbridled capitalism has been such a disastrous failure as well as how we *can* create a post-corporate world "in which life can flourish and prosper [by recreating] our economies based on values and institutions that honor life, serve life's needs, and restore money as a means of exchange." [6] Indeed, groundwork for this is occurring on a host of levels.

The need for such forward-looking clear analysis has never been greater. Everyone who can find this book -- at the local library, borrowing a friend's copy, or from one's favorite local bookstore -- will be expanded in both heart and mind with what each of us *can do* to help manifest the post-corporate world.

The book is organized in four sections:

Prologue: A Story for the Third Millennium

Part I: A Deadly Tale

1. The Siren's Song
2. The Naked Emperor
3. The Midas Curse

Part II: Life's Story

4. The Incredible Journey
5. Organism as Metaphor
6. Embracing Life's Wisdom

Part III: Envisioning a Post-Corporate World

7. Responsible Freedom
8. Mindful Markets
9. Economic Democracy
10. The Rights of Living Persons

Part IV: Coming Home to Life

11. Culture Shift
12. The New Story Tellers
13. Life Choices
14. Engaging the Future

Epilogue: Planetary Consciousness [7]

Part I explores the extremely relevant symbolism of three myths to our contemporary world. In the past money was a useful servant. Today it is the master we serve. Korten describes the two competing attractors drawing us towards two very different futures: the money world and the living world. Each has their own compelling song -- the song of money and the song of life -- which calls out to us to "honor their values and serve their imperatives" (p.23). The song of money is quite literally a song of death since its imperatives are the antithesis of serving life and its values. "And it comes down to a fairly literal choice as to which we value more -- our money or our lives." [8]

Chapter 2. The Naked Emperor lays out in clear terms a lay person can easily understand precisely how capitalism is 100 percent the reverse of -- and in opposition to -- the market economy envisioned by Adam Smith, "the father of modern economics".

The theory of the market economy traces back to the Scottish economist Adam Smith (1723-1790) and the publication of *Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* in 1776. Considered by many to be the most influential economics book ever written, it articulates the powerful and wonderfully democratic ideal of a self-organizing economy that creates an equitable and socially optimal allocation of a society's productive resources through the interaction of small buyers and sellers making decisions based on their individual needs and interests.

Market theory, as articulated by Smith and those who subsequently elaborated on his ideas, developed into an elegant and coherent intellectual construction grounded in carefully articulated assumptions regarding the conditions under which such self-organizing processes would indeed lead to socially optimal outcomes. For example,

- Buyers and sellers must be too small to influence the market price.
- Complete information must be available to all participants and there can be no trade secrets.
- Sellers must bear the full cost of the products they sell and pass them on in the sale price.
- Investment capital must remain within national borders and trade between countries must be balanced.
- Savings must be invested in the creation of productive capital.

There is, however, a critical problem, as international financier George Soros has observed: "Economic theory is an axiomatic system: as long as the basic assumptions hold, the conclusions follow. But when we examine the assumptions closely, we find that they do not apply to the real world." Herein lies the catch: the conditions of what we currently call a capitalist economy directly contradict the assumptions of market theory in every instance. [9]

One of the false myths ideologues of capitalism use to promote the song of money is that capitalism is simply a fulfillment and realization of the principles of a market economy as defined by Adam Smith.

I want to focus here for a moment on the the central importance of an ethical culture to an efficient market. One of capitalism's many myths is the idea that by some wondrous mechanism the market automatically turns personal greed into a public good. Why? Because Adam Smith said so. In truth, the market has no such mechanism and furthermore Adam Smith never said it did. . . . Adam Smith also wrote *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* which is exactly about the foundations of an ethical culture which he clearly assumed was the cultural backdrop of the market he was writing about. Efficient market function absolutely depends on a culture of trust and mutual responsibility. To emphasize this fact, I refer in my forthcoming book, *The Post-Corporate World*, to the mindful market in order to underscore the importance to efficient market function of an ethical culture that encourages individuals to act with mindfulness of both their personal needs and the needs of the larger whole of the community, and the society, and the planet.[10]

"Business/Economics" is the topic categorization on the back cover of *The Post-Corporate World*. David Korten's background has given him a wealth of experience in this arena.

Trained in economics, organization theory, and business strategy with M.B.A. and Ph. D. degrees from the Stanford University Graduate School of Business [he has] over thirty-five years of experience in preeminent business, academic, and international development institutions as well as in contemporary citizen action organizations.[11]

Part I provides many examples of how out-of-control speculation is destroying real wealth through a process of extractive investment -- using money to make more money -- rather than productive investment. *Finance capitalism* describes the current global economic system wherein ownership of capital has moved away from those engaged in actual productive activity and towards financiers and speculators who by-pass the production of real goods and services altogether. A basic perpetuator of this system is our increasing inability to understand the difference between money and wealth.[12]

Our flawed choices results in part from our nearly universal failure to distinguish between money and real wealth. The further I get into the analysis of these issues the more I come to believe that much of our misunderstanding comes from this confusion: money is not wealth. Money is a number, which by social convention we agree to accept in exchange for things of real value. Get that sorted out and you can take apart the whole global financial system and the whole global economy.[13]

The following table compares some of the major differences between capitalism and a market economy that functions in a socially optimal way.

	CAPITALISM	MINDFUL MARKETS
Dominant Attractor	Money	Life
Defining Purpose	Use money to make money for those who have money	Employ available resources to meet basic needs of everyone
Firm Size	Very Large	Small and medium
Costs	Externalized to the public	Internalized by the user
Ownership	Absentee owners	Stakeholder owners
Financial Capital	Footloose with no borders	Rooted with national borders
Purpose of Investment	Maximize private financial profit	Increase beneficial output
The Role of Profit	An end to be maximized	Incentive to invest productively
Efficiency Measure	Returns to financial capital	Returns to living capital
Coordinating Mechanisms	Centrally planned by mega-corporations	Self-organizing markets and networks
Cooperation	Among competitors to escape the discipline of competition	Among people and communities to advance the common good
Competition	Eliminates the unfit	Stimulates efficiency & innovation
Government Role	Protect the interests of property	Advance the human interest
Trade	Free	Fair and balanced
Political Orientation	Elitist/democracy of dollars	Populist/democracy of persons

from *The Post-Corporate World*, by David C. Korten, p.41 [14]

Chapter 8. Mindful Markets opens with a question posed by author Fernand Braudel:

If we are prepared to make an unequivocal distinction between the market economy and capitalism, might this offer us a way of avoiding that "all or nothing" which politicians are constantly putting to us, as if it were impossible to retain the market economy without giving the monopolies a free hand, or impossible to get rid of monopolies without nationalizing everything in sight?[15]

As Korten points out, understanding how global capitalism violates every principle of a market economy presents us with the possibility that there really is a viable alternative to the mental and physical pathology that is global capitalism. Chapter 8 points out how we can apply the rules of a true market economy to restore our species rightful place in the planet's web of life and details Adam Smith's Ten Rules for Mindful Markets:

The market is a sophisticated, but somewhat fragile mechanism for organizing economic life so that each individual contributes to the whole while meeting their own needs with maximum freedom in the exercise of responsible choice. The healthy market thus encourages diversity, individual initiative and creativity, and productive effort. It can maintain these qualities, however, only so long as its participants honor the market's essential conditions and their ethical obligations to one another. Thus the health of the market economy depends on the mindfulness of its participants.[16]

Adam Smith's Ten Rules for Mindful Markets

- Rule 1.** Use life as the measure.
- Rule 2.** Put costs on the decision maker.
- Rule 3.** Favor human-scale firms and stakeholder ownership.
- Rule 4.** Strive for equity.
- Rule 5.** Favor full disclosure.
- Rule 6.** Encourage the sharing of knowledge and technology.
- Rule 7.** Seek diversity and self-reliance.
- Rule 8.** Pay attention to your borders.
- Rule 9.** Honor government's necessary role.
- Rule 10.** Maintain and ethical culture. (pp.154-162)

A central focus of *The Post-Corporate World* is Korten's understanding that capitalism "is to a healthy market economy what cancer is to a healthy body." [17] The beginning of the Dedication page reads:

*To two leading-edge thinkers from the field of biology,
Mae-Wan Ho and Elisabet Sahtouris,
whose pioneering work on living systems inspired this book.*

Thanks to rebecca's awareness and efforts, we have hosted Elisabet Sahtouris' works here on ratical since its inception in 1995. It was while helping proof-read the electronic version rebecca was putting together of *Earthdance: Living Systems in Evolution*, that I came to know Elisabet's magnificent perspective and perceptions concerning the eternal question: "What *is* actually going on here?"

Among the many salient points from *Earthdance*, Chapter 17, A Matter of Maturation poses the question, "Why shouldn't whole human societies go through the life stages of childhood and adolescence as each individual human does? Is not our whole species, quite like every child born to it, still young and free to learn from experience?" Just as an individual person, in navigating the transition from childhood to maturity, finds challenges of unknown dimension and depth to face and be expanded by, so we are at this very point in the evolution of life on earth facing precisely the same challenge of maturing as a species. Such maturation requires accepting the responsibility that accompanies the freedom to choose.

In real life, the adolescent who strikes out with a false sense of maturity, believing he or she knows it all, can be expected to get into some kind of trouble before maturing into an adult. And the adolescence of "civilized" humanity is running true to form. Our view of nature as a mechanism to be exploited fostered great progress in technology, but we made this progress

recklessly in our belief that all nature was ours to do with as we pleased. Now we find ourselves punished by the enormous problems we have created along with our modern technology.

Like any adolescent who is suddenly aware of having created a very real life crisis, our species faces a choice -- the choice between pursuing our dangerous course to disaster or stopping and trying to find mature solutions to our crises. This choice point is the brink of maturity -- the point at which we must decide whether to continue our suicidally competitive economics and politics, our ravaging of the environment, or to change our worldview, our self-image, our goals, and our behavior in accord with our new knowledge of living nature in evolution. It is the point at which we can see our own historical evolution and decide whether to continue opposing it with old hostilities or whether to speed its evolution into a mature cooperative body of humanity by conscious choice. [18]

Global capitalism is a game being played out by adolescent spirits who do not understand the significance of the forces they mindlessly play with. This system has been a victory for central planning over markets and democracy. "Indeed, the power of the corporate head to dictate internal policy and action within the corporation's centrally planned economy would have made any Soviet planner green with envy." [19] One result of such centralization is that of the "nearly \$2 trillion now chang[ing] hands in the world's currency markets each day, . . . only about 1 percent . . . is related to trade in any sort of real goods or services. The rest of it is purely speculative money looking for quick returns when the boom is on and safe havens when the bubbles are bursting." [20]

Chapter 5. Organism as Metaphor begins with Korten describing the influence of microbiologist Mae-Wan Ho's paper, "The New Age of the Organism", "in which she forecast an emerging shift in the basic paradigm of science from the metaphor of the machine to the metaphor of the self-organizing living organism" and the thoughts she shared with him on "how such a shift in perspective might change the way we think about the design of our economic institutions." (p.103)

Looking at Universe as a dead machine mechanically operating on autopilot, one can see how gambling for the ultimate stakes in capitalism's global casino appeals to those attempting to postpone or forgo accepting the responsibility that accompanies the freedom to choose. Chapter 4. The Incredible Journey, opens with the question, "How did it happen that a planet barren of life became a living jewel in the vastness of space? A product of chance or of purposeful striving? Dumb luck or deep intelligence?" (p.87) These very different ways of interpreting *what is going on here?* differentiate the two approaches to life calling to us. Citing the work of others in the new biology exploring the latter interpretation, authors Lynn Margulis and Dorian Sagan (*What Is Life?*, 1995) assert that "Life is matter that chooses." Yet mainstream science continues to labor under the attempt "to explain a decidedly nonmechanistic reality in mechanistic terms." (p.100)

But imagine the scope of transformation possible by redefining the way we relate to each other and to the Earth that nourishes and sustains us by fashioning an economic system of exchange founded on life's wisdom!

Life creates economies for living. We, in contrast, have created an economy for making money at life's expense. What if we were to retool our economy according to the principles of a living economy? What might be its major features? From our observations of living systems, we may distill a number of principles helpful both in understanding why our existing economy is destroying

life and how we might redesign it to serve life. Living systems are, for example:

- **Self-Organizing and Cooperative** - . . . science is discovering that the body's control processes are actually highly decentralized and involve a substantial element of self-regulation at the cellular level.

The regulatory processes of biological communities are even more radically self-organizing, with no functional equivalent of a centralized planning or control system. . . .

- **Localized and Adapted to Place** - Each bio-community creates its home on a particular place on Earth. Its members organize themselves into numerous, multi-species sub-communities where, through a process of progressive experimentation and adaptation, they learn to optimize the capture, sharing, use, and storage of the resources available. . . .

- **Bounded by Managed, Permeable Borders** - To sustain itself, life must be open to exchange with its environment. Yet to maintain its internal coherence, it must be able to manage these exchanges. It thus depends on boundaries that are both managed and permeable - neither totally open nor totally closed. . . .

- **Frugal and Sharing** - Biological communities are highly efficient in energy capture and recycling, living exemplars of the motto, "Waste not, want not." Energy and materials are continuously recycled for use and reuse within and between cells, organisms, and species with a minimum of loss, as the wastes of one become the resources of another. Frugality and sharing are the secret of life's rich abundance, a product of its ability to capture, use, store, and share available material and energy with extraordinary efficiency. . . .

- **Diverse and Creative** - Life exhibits an extraordinary drive to learn, innovate, and freely share knowledge toward the realization of new potentials. The result is a rich diversity of species and cultures that give the bio-community resilience in times of crisis and provide the building blocks for future innovation. . . .[21]

Soon after meeting Mae-Wan Ho in 1997, David Korten met Elisabet for the first time. *The Post-Corporate World* synthesizes the insights about living systems both women have explored and written about, providing "the underlying principles for the restructuring of our economic institutions and relations".(p.9) Korten had been searching for just such a wholistic way of expressing these ideas since completion of his previous work, *When Corporations Rule The World* (1995).

Throughout the latter half of *The Post Corporate World*, a breath-taking range of the possibilities open to us for what life after capitalism can look like and include are presented. These possibilities are primarily based on work people and groups are currently engaged in around the world. Before listing just a few of the projects described, I want to mention what most appealed to me in the last half of Chapter 6. Embracing Life's Wisdom. The focus, **System Design for a Post-Corporate World**, lists 9 design elements presenting "one possible framework" for creating an alternative to the social and environmental collapse our present-day system is destined for:

1. Human-scale self-organization
2. Village and neighborhood clusters
3. Towns and Regional Centers

4. Renewable energy self-reliance
5. Closed-cycle materials use
6. Regional environmental balance
7. Mindful livelihoods
8. Interregional electronic communication
9. Wild spaces (pp.126-133)

Since last February when I first saw the film *Ecological Design: Inventing The Future* (1994), I have felt a tremendous upsurge of excitement relating to such System and Ecologically -focused Design. The movie revolves around the contributions to humanity's further growth and evolution made by R. Buckminster Fuller. Bucky dedicated his life "To make the world work for 100% of humanity in the shortest possible time through spontaneous cooperation without ecological offense or the disadvantage of anyone." [22] Starting out by posing the question, "Can we find a way of life which will create a harmony between nature, technology, and humanity?", the film goes on to present a multitude of different inventor-designer's explorations of exactly how they have manifested such integrations. The companion book, *Design Outlaws on the Ecological Frontier*, expands upon the wealth of insights and perspectives touched upon in the film including the complete transcripts of all those interviewed.

The Post-Corporate World explores a very similar dimension of envisioning the unknown possibilities of wholistically integrating living systems into the way we conduct exchanges with each other to a degree heretofore unimagined by present-day conventional thinking. Among the noteworthy endeavors and information sources cited in Parts III and IV, the following are a selection of some of the web-based resources listed in the footnotes (indicated by their bullet number with the "(p.#/#)" being the page where the footnote reference occurs and the second number being the page where the footnote's contents can be found) :

7. Responsible Freedom

As we awaken to life and embark on the path to a post-corporate world, we come to face-to-face with one of the most fundamental of life's lessons: we gain true freedom only as we accept responsibility for using it with mindfulness of the needs of the whole. In the living world it is the cancerous cell that seeks freedom without responsibility, and its freedom is ultimately self-limiting. Freedom, whether in economic *or* political life, comes only with mindful responsibility. . . .

Those who live in awareness have an inner freedom that transcends the limitations of their institutional setting. Their capacity to act with a critical consciousness renders them largely immune to the manipulations of propaganda, advertising, and the material incentives of money-world institutions. They have an inner freedom difficult for even the most tyrannical institution to suppress. They thereby acquire the power to change that which is not right with the world.[23]

12. www.globalactionplan.org (p.147/292)
Global Action Plan (GAP) "promotes and supports the development of environmentally sustainable lifestyles" with active programs "in 17 countries [and] combined participation of over 150,000 people."

15. www.greenmoney.com (p.148/292)
The Greenmoney Journal , "one of several excellent periodicals on socially responsible investing." West 608 Glass Avenue, Spokane, WA 99205; 509/328-1741 or 800/318-5725.

9. Economic Democracy

Property rights continue to have a rightful moral legitimacy when used to secure the right of each individual as a stakeholder in the assets on which they depend to produce a reasonable living for themselves and their families. They lack moral legitimacy, however, when used by those who have more than they need to exclude others from access to a basic means of living or to absolve themselves of responsibility for equitably sharing and stewarding the resources that are the common heritage of all who were born to life on this planet. Life after capitalism depends on a fundamental rethinking and restructuring of ownership rights to move toward stakeholder ownership and human-scale enterprises.[24]

15. http://www.newhorizons.org/ofc_21clidhock.html (p.176-7/294)
Dee W. Hock, "The Chaordic Organization: Out of Control and into Order, *World Business Academy Perspectives* 9, no.1, 1995., pp.5-18. Dee Hock founded (and was a former CEO) Visa International. "This article describes a new organizational form that carries within it the seeds of a new organizational culture -- a culture that might well spell the difference between a smooth, orderly transition to a salubrious and sustainable global society, and the chaos and anarchy that some see in our near-term future." -- Willis Harman.
20. www.fscus.org (p.180/294)
The Forest Stewardship Council "supports environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial and economically viable management of the world's forests. FSC promotes responsible forest management by evaluating and accrediting certifiers, by encouraging the development of national and regional forest management standards, and by providing public education and information about independent, third-party certification as a tool for ensuring that the world's forests are protected for future generations."
23. <http://dieoff.com/page160.htm> (p.181/294)
Cites Kenneth Boulding's classic essay "The Economics of the Coming Spaceship Earth" as the source of the frontier versus spaceship metaphor. "A spaceship civilization cannot long survive the distortions of a system of absentee ownership that gives control of the means of living on which the survival of billions depends to a few thousand people who act as though they were cowboys living on an open frontier." (p.181)

10. The Rights of Living Persons

There seems to be an iron clad relationship. The greater the rights of corporations, the less the rights of persons to live fully and well with freedom, responsibility, and dignity. To restore human rights and dignity we must establish clearly the principle that human rights reside solely in living persons.[25]

4. www.tourolaw.edu/patch/santa/ (p.185/294)
Text of the 1886 Supreme Court decision, *Santa Clara County v. Southern Pacific Railroad Company*, which gave corporations the same rights as people based on the 14th amendment to the Constitution. Key passages cited on p.185 of *The Post-Corporate World* are:
MR. CHIEF JUSTICE WAITE said: The court does not wish to hear argument on the question whether the provision in the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution, which forbids a State to deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws, applies to these corporations. We are all of opinion that it does.

The summary record includes the Court's findings that

The defendant Corporations are persons within the intent of the clause in section 1 of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which forbids a State to deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

Korten then observes, "Thus it was that a two-sentence assertion by a single judge elevated corporations to the status of persons under the law, prepared the way for the rise of global corporate rule, and thereby changed the course of history."(p.185) He goes on to point out the legal contradiction implicit in corporate personhood. A corporation is the property of its shareholders. But it is also a legal person (technically, a "legal subordinate fiction"). With such "persons" being owned by others, a condition of slavery exists which is prohibited by the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution.

8. www.publiccampaign.org (p.189/295)
Public Campaign -- Real Campaign Finance Reform provides data on state-level campaigns, tracking and supporting clean-money campaign-reform initiatives at the state level. "Public Campaign will lay the foundation for reform by working with various organizations, particularly citizen groups around the country that are fighting for change in their states. Together we will build a network of state-based efforts and create a powerful national force for federal reform."
9. www.foreignpolicy.com (p.192/295)
Foreign Policy . **Long** footnote. Cites "Stephen Kobrin's "The MAI and the Clash of Globalizations," from the Fall 1998 issue and their Internet Resources listing sites dealing with the MAI.
24. www.newparty.org (p.204/296)
The New Party is "a grass-roots citizen-led political party ... built around values rather than personalities" with the banner, "A Fair Economy. A Real Democracy. A New Party." "By starting small and thinking long-term, we're building a multi-racial, lively and creative political organization that can, over time, break the stranglehold that corporate money and corporate media have over our political process."
26. www.meaning.org (p.204/296)
The Politics of Meaning "is a grass roots nonparty ... movement ... promoting a value-oriented politics...." Foundation for Ethics & Meaning, 4620A West Kennedy Blvd., Tampa, FLA 33609; 888/538-7227
30. www.svn.org (p.206/296)
Social Venture Network "has advanced the movement for social responsibility in business and played a role in creating a more just, humane and sustainable society."

www.bsr.org (p.206/296)
Business for Social Responsibility "is a US-based global resource for companies seeking to sustain their commercial success in ways that demonstrate respect for ethical values, people, communities and the environment."

www.worldbusiness.org (p.206/296)
World Business Academy "is a global, membership-based, nonprofit, nonpolitical organization ... committed to a better understanding of the role of business in society and how to play a constructive part in its transformation."

11. Culture Shift

Although the culture of materialism has been created by the most sophisticated and highly paid propagandists, it is at its core a falsified, manufactured, and non-consensual culture. If material acquisition was truly the dominant value of the human species, then surely capitalism would find it unnecessary to spend \$450 billion

a year to propagate it throughout the world. Nor would so many of the advertising messages and images that promote these desires be designed to appeal to our longing for acceptance, love, and contact with nature. Successful as capitalism has been in creating a mass consumer culture, the fact remains that its values are largely alien to our basic nature.

Our longing for life is finding new expression in a deep world wide culture shift unprecedented in human history in its speed, magnitude, and implications. A number of important values surveys provide compelling evidence that contrary to outward appearances, the modernist culture that underpins the spread of global capitalism is actually in deep trouble.[26]

4. www.futurenet.org (p.213/296-7)
YES! A Journal of Positive Futures "is dedicated to giving voice to the new storytellers." Published by the Positive Futures Network, Box 10818, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110; 206/842-0216. Cites Paul Ray, "The Great Divide: Prospects for an Integral Culture", Fall, 1996, pp.55-58; and Paul H. Ray, "The Rise of Integral Culture," *Noetic Sciences Review*, Spring 1996, pp.4-15.
10. www.awakeningearth.org (p.219/297)
Awakening Earth "is dedicated to research and learning that fosters a sustainable, compassionate, and creative future. This site provides reports, articles, and resources in four major areas: opportunity and adversity trends, voluntary simplicity, media activism, and the evolution of human culture and consciousness." Also cites the report by Duane Elgin, with Coleen LeDrew, *Global Consciousness Change: Indicators of an Emerging Paradigm*, May, 1997, which "looks at emerging values and their implications for communications, the environment, spirituality. Includes a guide for dialogue."
16. www.newroadmap.org (p.220/297-8)
The New Roadmap Foundation is part of the Simple Living Network. Cites author Vicki Robin's book *Your Money Or Your Life: Transforming Your Relationships with Money and Achieving Financial Independence*, and its subsequent home study course.

12. The New Storytellers

Usually the story starts with a modest initiative by persons with none of the evident attributes we associate with heroic figures. Most fail. Nearly all are soon forgotten. Yet when we choose to look, we can see the numbers of those that are winning victories large and small growing to the tens of thousands. We see as well the formation of alliances, at first tentative, always shifting, creating new patterns, occupying new spaces, adding new strength, becoming more coherent. They become as dancers engaged in a grand and joyful dance in which the creative improvisation of each one adds energy and vitality to the growing, evolving, renewing coherence of the whole.[27]

1. www.hazelhenderson.com (p.225/298)
Hazel Henderson quote -- "Women and men everywhere are behaving in an unprecedented way: audaciously taking responsibility for the whole human family and the future of life on the planet." -- from *Building a Win-Win World* (1996), p.162
2. www.scn.org/sustainable/susthome.htm (p.225/298)
Sustainable Seattle "is a citizen group working to improve our region's long-term health and vitality -- cultural, economic, environmental and social." Cites *Sustainable Seattle, Indicators of Sustainable Community* (1998).

5. www.gn.apc.org/ecologist/novdec/villages.htm (p.228/298)
Gavin McCormack, "Village vs State", *The Ecologist*, 27, no.6, November/December 1997, pp.225-228.
6. <http://iisd.ca/pcdf/1996/shiva.htm> (p.228/298)
"Profile of Vandana Shiva", *PCDForum Paradigm Warrior Profile* no. 3, June 1, 1996.
Some environmentalists believe that to protect biodiversity you must exclude people. In their view you either have production or you have protection. I have seen farms as beautiful as a native forest. I feel it important to bring ecology and biodiversity into the heart of production rather than keeping it outside. . . . It has in fact taken the corporate sector many years and millions of dollars of propaganda to make people dependent on the unsustainable agricultural practices that generate enormous profits for global agribusiness. . . . [If] you create the right conditions, people will come to see the whole economic system in a different light and will chose the sustainability option.
12. www.nfwbo.org (p.234/298)
National Foundation of Women Business Owners "If present trends continue, women will soon be the majority among small-business owners and it seems likely in due course that they may become a major force for changing the rules of the marketplace."
13. www.stw.org (p.235/298)
United For A Fair Economy "is a national, independent, nonpartisan organization that puts a spotlight on the dangers of growing income, wage and wealth inequality in the United States and coordinates action to reduce the gap." 37 Temple Place, 2nd Floor Boston, MA 02111; 617/423-2148
14. www.businessleaders.org/home.htm (p.235/298)
Business Leaders for Sensible Priorities is working "to fund social needs by reducing military spending." 130 William Street, Suite 700, New York, NY 10038; 212/964-1109
16. www.ifg.org/ (p.237/298)
International Forum On Globalization "is an alliance of sixty leading activists, scholars, economists, researchers, and writers formed to stimulate new thinking, joint activity, and public education in response to the rapidly emerging economic and political arrangement called the *global economy*." 1555 Pacific Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94109; 415/771-3394
17. <http://iisd.ca/pcdf/1996/larrain.htm> (p.238/298-99)
"Profile of Sara Larrain R.", *PCDForum Paradigm Warrior Profile* no. 2, June 1, 1996.
Sara coordinates the Chilean Ecological Action Network (RENACE), a national network of 145 local environmental organizations. Most are small organizations with few resources. Together they may hold the key to changing a nation. . . . Sara's top priority is to expose the people of Chile, Latin America, and the world to the reality of the neoliberal development model as manifest in the Chilean experience. With long experience in the peace, human rights and environmental movements Sara has seen and criticized the model from numerous points of view. Now, after years of working on single issue campaigns, she has concluded that single issue victories really change very little so long as the development model itself remains intact.
Through RENACE the leaders of Chile's environmental movement hope to rebuild the Chile's civil society, which was devastated by the long years of official terrorism sponsored by the Pinochet dictatorship from 1973 to 1989. They believe that through the power of an awakened civil society it will be possible to transform the Chilean society and economy into a national model of a just and sustainable society. Sara explained the special significance of Chile in this regard.
Instituto de Ecología Política, Seminario 774, Ñuñoa - Santiago, Chile, Tel: (56)-(2) 2746192 - 2239059, www.iepe.org
18. <http://iisd.ca/pcdf/1996/perlas.htm> (p.240/299)
"Creating a National Consensus: Interview with Nicanor 'Nicky' Perlas by David C. Korten",

PCDForum Paradigm Warrior Profile no. 4, May 20, 1997. Contact the Center for Alternative Development Initiatives (CADI), 110 Scout Rallos St., Tamog, Quezon City, 1103 Philippines; Tel: 63-2-928-3986; Fax: 63-2-928-7608; E-mail: cadi@info.com.ph; <http://www.civicus.org/phillip.html>.

Nicky Perlas heads the Center for Alternative Development Initiatives (CADI) based in Quezon City, Philippines and manages Ikapati Farms, a bio-dynamic agriculture demonstration farm run as a for-profit commercial enterprise. . . . He dropped out of farming temporarily to earn a Ph.D. in economic geography. His graduate studies were interrupted when the Marcos dictatorship blacklisted him for his opposition to construction of the first and only nuclear power plant in the Philippines. He went on to become a leading international advocate and local practitioner of bio-dynamic sustainable agriculture, and an influential opponent of nuclear power plants and biotechnology. Among his many accomplishments, he has been credited with convincing the Philippine government to ban the use of some 30 pesticide formulations for which he received UNEP's Global 500 award.

This interview was conducted on September 5, 1996, one day after the successful completion of a major national NGO Conference he had convened with the co-sponsorship of six major NGO networks on "Civil Society: Creative Responses to the Challenge of Globalization."

19. <http://iisd.ca/pcdf/1996/17barlow.htm> (p.241/299)

"Globalization and the Dismantling of Canadian Democracy, Values and Society", by Maude Barlow, *PCDForum* article no. 17, June 1, 1996. For more information contact *The Council of Canadians*, #502-151 Slater Street, Ottawa, ON, K1P 5H3; 613/233-2773 or 1-800-387-7177, inquiries@canadians.org, <http://www.canadians.org/>

To rebuild democracy we must start back at the roots-in our communities. The only way to fight is together. Across sectors, across countries, across race, gender and age lines, employed and unemployed, city and rural, we must find one another and realize that the movement we are creating is the only thing that comes between us and the global feudalism of the new economy. We must not accept the prevailing propaganda that globalization and corporate rule are inevitable. To say we have no choice is intellectual terrorism. Fair trade, full employment, co-operation, cultural diversity, democratic control, fair taxation, environmental stewardship, community, public accountability, equality, social justice: these are the touchstones of our vision and it is within our means-it is our right-to chose them.

13. Life Choices

Perhaps the solution to our present collective predicament remains illusive for the very reason that it is so obvious and familiar. We are not being called to step off the edge of some cliff into a dark and vast unknown. Our experience of what lies ahead may prove more like a returning home after a long trip that has opened our eyes to new possibilities in the deeply familiar. That which in our more mindful moments we really want, we can have, if we but muster the will to make healthful choices for ourselves and our societies that bond us with life's creative regenerative processes. In this chapter we will review some of those important choices. [28]

8. <http://iisd.ca/pcdf/meadows/farming.htm> (p.249/299)

"Two Possible Futures for Farming and Food", by Donella H. Meadows, September 18, 1997. From *The Global Citizen*, a by-weekly column by Ms. Meadows, director of the Sustainability Institute and an adjunct professor of environmental studies at Dartmouth College.

15. <http://utopia.uoregon.edu/projects/landuse/sprawl.html> (p.253/300)

Statistics on Urban Sprawl compiled by the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development.

- From 1970 to 1990, more than 30,000 square miles (19 million acres) of once-rural lands

in the United States became urban, as classified by the U.S. Census Bureau.

- From 1970 to 1990, the density of urban population in the United States decreased by 23 percent.
- From 1969 to 1989, the population of the United States increased by 22.5 percent -- and the number of miles driven by that population ("vehicles miles traveled" or "VMT") increased by 98.4 percent.

See The Oregon Land Use Information Center at

http://utopia.uoregon.edu/projects/landuse/land_use.html

21. www.rprogress.org (p.256/300)

Redefining Progress "seeks to shift the prevailing definition of progress, from one based exclusively on a growing economy, to one that resonates with people's sense of the quality of their lives." RP publishes *many* reports and maintains a searchable database with internet links to each project. For example, see

- Genuine Progress Indicator 1998: Executive Summary, by Jonathan Rowe and Mark Anielski, 3/99
- The Roads Aren't Free: Estimating the Full Social Costs of Driving and the Effects of Accurate Pricing, by Clifford W. Cobb, 7/98
- If the GDP is Up, Why is America Down?, by Clifford Cobb, Ted Halstead, and Jonathan Rowe, 10/95
- The Footprints of Nations compares the ecological impact of 52 large nations, inhabited by 80 percent of the world population and shows to what extent their consumption can be supported by their local ecological capacity.
- Community Indicators Projects Directory is a database including over 150 community indicator projects from around the United States.
- Community Indicators Projects on the Web links to over seventy community indicators projects.
- CInet Listserv is an e-mail based discussion group intended for organizations and individuals currently implementing community indicator projects (CIPs), or are in the process of developing one. Ecological Footprint: "Does Everybody Secure Their Quality of Life . . . Within the Means of Nature?"

When economists construct indicators, they center on money. When people construct indicators, they center on life. Similarly, although economists seek to reduce all progress to a single measure, people are more likely to accept the reality of life's complexity. (p.258)

22. www.sustainable.org (p.257/300)

Sustainable Seattle. See entry 12.2, above

14. Engaging the Future

Our task is no longer one of creating counter cultures, engaging in political protest, and pursuing economic alternatives. To create a just, sustainable, and compassionate post-corporate world we must face up to the need to create a new core culture, a new political center, and a new economic mainstream. Such a bold agenda requires millions of people with widely varied expertise working at many levels of society -- personal and household, community, national, and global. It requires breaking the bonds of individual isolation that leave us feeling marginalized when, in fact, we may represent the new majority. There are thousands of useful tasks to be undertaken. The following are illustrative of the possibilities.[29]

4. kabir.umd.edu/ISEE/ISEEhome.html (p.266/300-1)

The International Society for Ecological Economics "actively encourages the integration of the study of "nature's household" (ecology) and "humankind's household" (economy) through education, events, research, and outreach to address these issues and more. ISEE Secretariat, Box 1589, Solomons, MD 20688; 410/326-7414.

5. www.slnet.com (p.267/301)
The Simple Living Network "is an on-line service containing thousands of pages of information about publications and tools for those wanting to learn how to live a more conscious, simple, healthy and earth-friendly lifestyle."

- www.globalactionplan.org (p.267/301)
Global Action Plan (GAP) for the Earth offers a program for those interested in forming a voluntary simplicity support group. Box 428, Woodstock, New York 12498, 914/679-4830

7. <http://www.gn.apc.org/ecologist/> (p.268/301)
The Ecologist, c/o Cissbury House, Furze View, Five Oaks Road, Slinfold, West Sussex. RH13 7RH, UK., (441-258) 473-476

- www.mojones.com (p.268/301)
Mother Jones, Box 469024, Escondido, CA 92046-9838, 800/438-6656

- www.eden.com/~reporter(p.268/301)
The Progressive POPULIST, Box 487, Storm Lake, Iowa 50588, 800/732-4992

- www.theNation.com (p.268/301)
The Nation, Box 37072, Boone, Iowa 50037, 800/333-8536

8. www.coopamerica.org (p.268/301)
Co-op America's National Green Pages "lists a number of leading community banks." Co-op America , 1612 K Street NW, Suite 600, Washington, DC 20006; (800)58-GREEN / (202)872-5307.

10. www.wald.com (p.268/301-2)
Working Assets Long Distance, "Founded on the belief that building a business and a better world aren't mutually exclusive, Working Assets has been helping busy people make a difference since 1985. It's a belief that's generated over \$16 million in donations to nonprofits working for peace, equality, human rights, education and a cleaner environment."

11. www.rprogress.org (p.269/302)
Redefining Progress. See entry 13.21, above

13. www.futurenet.org/2Money/Yes2TOC.html (p.270/302)
www.ic.org/market/money/
For more information on community currencies and how to create them see the Spring 1997 issue of *YES! A Journal of Positive Futures*, featuring the theme "Money, Print Your Own!" See also Thomas H. Greco Jr., *New Money for Healthy Communities*, available for \$19 from Thomas H. Greco Jr., P.O. Box 42663, Tucson, Arizona 85733; and Edgar Cahn and Jonathan Rowe, *Time Dollars* (Family Resource Coalition of America, 20 N. Wacker Drive, Suite 1100, Chicago, IL 60606 312-338-0900).

- [See also the Community Currencies section at http://www.ratical.org/many_worlds/cc/ .]

15. <http://www.progressivepubs.com/goinglocal/>
Michael H. Shuman, *Going Local: Creating Self-Reliant Communities in a Global Age* (1998) "lays out the nature and importance of community self-reliance strategies and provide a useful sixty-eight-page resource directory as an appendix." For further information, see The Sustainable Communities Program, Institute for Policy Studies, 733 15th Street N.W., Suite 1020, Washington, D.C.; 202/234-9382, www.ips-dc.org

- www.iclei.org (p.271/302)
International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI), World Secretariat, City Hall East Tower, 8th Floor, Toronto, Ontario M5HG 2N2, Canada; 416/392-1462

17. www.newparty.org (.271/302)
The New Party. See entry 10.24, above
18. www.publiccampaign.org (p.272/302-3)
Public Campaign -- Real Campaign Finance Reform. See entry 10.8, above
- www.commoncause.org (p.272/302-3)
Common Cause, 1250 Connecticut Ave., NW #600, Washington, D.C. 20036; 202/833-1200
- www.citizen.org (p.272/302-3)
Public Citizen, 1600 20th St. NW, Washington, DC 20009; (202) 588-1000
- www.crp.org (p.272/302-3)
The Center for Responsive Politics "reports current data on funding sources of national political candidates". 1320 19th St. NW, Suite 620, Washington, DC 20036; (202) 857-0044.
- www.netprogress.org (p.272/302-3)
The Progressive Challenge a joint project of 100+ citizen groups combined with the U.S. Congress Progressive Caucus that has been hammering out a multi-issue program called The Fairness Agenda for America. Contact Karen Dolan (kdolan@igc.org) at 202-234-9382.
19. www.afd-online.org/index.htm (p.272/303)
The Alliance for Democracy. Contact the National Council (office: 781/259-9395, peoplesall@aol.com) via the listing: <http://www.afd-online.org/contacts/council.htm>; Local Groups listing: <http://www.afd-online.org/contacts/local.htm>
- www.meaning.org
Foundation for Ethics & Meaning. See entry 10.26, above
- www.sierraclub.org
Sierra Club, 85 Second Street, Second Floor San Francisco CA, 94105-3441; 415/977-5500
20. www.tradewatch.org/ (p.273/303)
The Public Citizen Global Trade Watch, 215 Pennsylvania Avenue S.E., Washington DC 20003; 202/546-4996.

At the end of the Prologue we are urged to engage this book to enhance the prospects for making a positive choice as a species to reconnect with the song of life and overcome "the temptation to sacrifice the spirit for a handful of silver." (p.16) Envisioning what life after capitalism in the post-corporate world will be like is a practice providing *many* opportunities for a more meaningful experience of being and existence.

Of late, volunteering time to help in Gary Fredrick's piano classes (see Discovering Mister Fred's Magic Kingdom in the March Equinox ratiator's corner), I've been learning much from another New Story Teller. In Shoreline Middle School's term just ending, there were approximately 140 kids learning to play piano in the four classes Gary teaches 5 days a week. Public schools don't tend to provide such expansive opportunities to learn about being turned on to life. But Gary has never let that kind of inertia get in his way. Working with him has bestowed me with a great deal more of this "*let's get **on** with it!*" vibrant energy. At the beginning of Chapter 7. Responsible Freedom, a quote by Rabindranath Tagore helps establish the perspective:

I slept and dreamt that life was joy.
I awoke and saw that life was service.
I acted and behold, service was joy.[30]

Gary repeatedly thanks me for my help. For my part, I repeatly express my gratitude to Universe for its magnificent gifts and abundance of blessings. Working with Gary teaches me anew how truly service *is* joy.

The New Story Tellers are intrinsically Engaging the Future. Paul Goodman's quote at the beginning of Chapter 14 captures well the fact that to help birth a sustainable civilization, we cannot wait upon others to "make it so".

Suppose you had the revolution you are talking and dreaming about. Suppose your side had won, and you had the kind of society you wanted. How would you live, you personally, in that society? Start living that way now! Whatever you would do then, do it now. When you run up against obstacles, people, or things that won't let you live that way, then begin to think about how to get over or around or under that obstacle, or how to push it out of the way, and your politics will be concrete and practical.[31]

We are now each being called to accept the responsibility inherent in freedom to become our own leaders. When one starts to wake up, look around, and see just how dangerous global capitalism's current course is, the initial response is feel great rage towards the magnitude of such human folly. The temptation is to rail against others who appear to be the primary perpetrators of this crisis. Far more challenging *and constructive* is to engage our intuitive and instinctual wisdom to see how those we scorn are in fact so much more *just like us* than not. A second quote at the start Chapter 14 captures this essential insight.

We encourage others to change only if we honor who they are now. We ourselves engage in change only as we discover that we might be more of who we are by becoming something different.[32]

Change is a fundamental process of Life. Life's gifts, its energy and intelligence, are constantly present here with us, inviting us to participate in the furtherance of its unfolding. And "all we have to do" is once more listen to the song of life and let it teach us how to honor and serve life's needs.

Although applying life's lessons to human economies may seem an idealistic exercise, those lessons are backed by life's accumulated wisdom of 3.9 billion years. They are not beyond the means of single-celled bacteria and neither are they beyond ours. Their application does, however, require a major culture shift and retooling of our institutions. (p.125)

NOTES

1. "Life After Capitalism," Transcript of a Presentation made during a speaking tour of Alberta and Saskatchewan Provinces in Canada, November 1998 by David C. Korten (mirrored from the People-Centered Development Forum website). http://www.ratical.org/many_worlds/capitalism.html#GlblCap

2. *Ibid*, http://www.ratical.org/many_worlds/capitalism.html#Lcap
3. *Ibid*, http://www.ratical.org/many_worlds/capitalism.html#servLife
4. The following articulates some of the elements that the book explores:
 1. "The Post-Corporate World" (ASCII text format)
Lead article for the Economics as if *Life* matters (Spring 1999) issue of *YES! A Journal of Positive Futures* by David C. Korten.
 2. Life After Capitalism (ASCII text format)
Transcript of a Presentation made during a speaking tour of Alberta and Saskatchewan Provinces in Canada, November 1998 by David C. Korten.
 3. *The Post-Corporate World: Life After Capitalism*, by David C. Korten, (mirrored from the People-Centered Development Forum website, the entry point for this book is at <http://iisd.ca/pcdf/post-corporate.htm>):
 3. Table of Contents/Book Excerpts (ASCII text format)
 4. Readers Comments (ASCII text format)
 5. About the Author (ASCII text format)
5. *Ibid*, http://www.ratical.org/many_worlds/capitalism.html#notInevitbl
6. *Ibid*, http://www.ratical.org/many_worlds/capitalism.html#forLife
7. *The Post Corporate World: Life After Capitalism*, Table of Contents (and excerpts), http://www.ratical.org/many_worlds/PCW excerpts.html
8. "Life After Capitalism," http://www.ratical.org/many_worlds/capitalism.html#moneyORlife
9. *The Post Corporate World*, Chapter 2. The Naked Emperor, pp.38-39.
http://www.ratical.org/many_worlds/PCW excerpts.html#2.NakedEmperor
For a richly expansive perspective on Adam Smith's interpretation of all the greed and scarcity he saw in the world around him, see "Beyond Greed and Scarcity, Bernard Lietaer and Sarah van Gelder Dialogue," *YES!*, Spring 1997
http://www.ratical.org/many_worlds/cc/Lietaer.html
10. "Life After Capitalism," http://www.ratical.org/many_worlds/capitalism.html#ethicalCulture
11. "The Author", http://www.ratical.org/many_worlds/PCWauthor.html#background
12. For a lucid elaboration of this see *Money versus Wealth*, by David Korten, *YES!*, Spring 1997
http://www.ratical.org/many_worlds/cc/Korten.html
13. "Life After Capitalism," http://www.ratical.org/many_worlds/capitalism.html#moneyIsANumber
14. Reproduced in "The Post Corporate World," by David C. Korten. Spring 1999, *YES! A Journal of Positive Futures*, http://www.ratical.org/many_worlds/postCorpWorld.html#p41
15. Fernand Braudel, *Civilization & Capitalism 15th-18th Centuries, Vol. III. The Perspective of the World* (in French, 1979; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), p.632.
16. *The Post Corporate World*, Chapter 8. Mindful Markets, pp.151-2.
http://www.ratical.org/many_worlds/PCW excerpts.html#8.MindfulMarkets
17. *The Post Corporate World*, p.17. http://www.ratical.org/many_worlds/postCorpWorld.html#capitalism=cancer
18. *Earthdance: Living Systems in Evolution*, pp.193-4. <http://www.ratical.org/LifeWeb/Erthdnce/chapter17.html#maturity>
19. "Life After Capitalism", http://www.ratical.org/many_worlds/postCorpWorld.html#CtrPlning
20. "Life After Capitalism", http://www.ratical.org/many_worlds/postCorpWorld.html#GblSpec

21. "The Post Corporate World", *Life's Lessons*, pp.14-17.
http://www.ratical.org/many_worlds/postCorpWorld.html#LLs
22. Quoted in *Design Outlaws on the Ecological Frontier*, by Chris Zelov and Phil Cousineau, V3.0, Knossus Publishing, 1997, p.xvi
23. *The Post Corporate World*, p.138, http://www.ratical.org/many_worlds/postCorpWorld.html#7.ResponsibleFreedom
24. *The Post Corporate World*, p.170, http://www.ratical.org/many_worlds/postCorpWorld.html#9.EconomicDemocracy
25. *Ibid*, p.184, http://www.ratical.org/many_worlds/postCorpWorld.html#10.RightsOfLivingPersons
26. *Ibid*, pp.213-214, http://www.ratical.org/many_worlds/postCorpWorld.html#11.CultureShift
27. *Ibid*, p.226, http://www.ratical.org/many_worlds/postCorpWorld.html#12.NewStorytellers
28. *Ibid*, p.244, http://www.ratical.org/many_worlds/postCorpWorld.html#13.LifeChoices
29. *Ibid*, p.226, http://www.ratical.org/many_worlds/postCorpWorld.html#14.EngagingFuture
30. Quoted in Duane Elgin's and Coleen LeDrew's *Consciousness Change*, (San Anselmo, California: Millenium Project, 1997), p.ii. 1970), p.302.
31. Quoted in John Holt's *What Do I Do Monday?*, (New York: Dell, 1970), p.302.
32. Margaret Wheatley and Myron Kellner-Rogers, *A Simpler Way* (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 1996), p.50.

To participate in these densely interconnected communication networks of people who care deeply for the places where they live and the future of all life -- is to experience a new way of being and relating that is at once grounded in every person and every place, yet transcends both individuals and geography. The many physical and cyberspace forums in which we gather serve us as learning centers in which we hone our capacities for mindful choice and participation in highly democratic processes as we reflect, think, share, and deepen our sense of the creative possibilities that lie ahead. We learn as we participate, growing in confidence in our ability to function as part of a conscious self-organizing, life-serving planetary whole. Having lived a quarter of my life in Asia, I find special meaning in what I experience as a melding of the Western emphasis on the individual and the Eastern emphasis on the collective as we rediscover life's profound wisdom that the power of the individual depends on the health and integrity of the whole as the potentials of the whole depend on the individual's exercise of the creative initiative that flows from mindful freedom.

Epilogue: Planetary Consciousness, p.279