



March 2012 Green Mission News

---

## External Article Links:

- Dan Imhoff: Why Is The Farm Bill So Important? (5 minutes)

<http://www.bing.com/videos/watch/video/dan-imhoff-why-is-the-farm-bill-so-important/17w0xn2rr?cpkey=8ccc2063-e427-4372-984b-1e453ac4d019%7C%7C%7C>

- The Natural Step for Communities: How Cities and Towns can Change to Sustainable Practices [http://www.4shared.com/office/zwWwwwvCe/Download\\_The\\_Natural\\_Step\\_for\\_.html](http://www.4shared.com/office/zwWwwwvCe/Download_The_Natural_Step_for_.html)

- Zero Waste of Food

[http://tw.tzuchi.org/en/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=933%3Azero-waste-of-food&catid=1%3Ataiwan&Itemid=263&lang=en](http://tw.tzuchi.org/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=933%3Azero-waste-of-food&catid=1%3Ataiwan&Itemid=263&lang=en)

- Cost of recycling: EPR gains ground in U.S

[http://www.greenerpackage.com/recycling/cost\\_recycling\\_epr\\_gains\\_ground\\_us](http://www.greenerpackage.com/recycling/cost_recycling_epr_gains_ground_us)

- DNA / RNA In GMO Foods Alter Organ Functions!!! - Mike Adams (14 minutes)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g7y6U92PBWM>

- Food Security Is Top Reason for New Gardeners to Grow Food, Survey Shows

<http://www.marketwatch.com/story/food-security-is-top-reason-for-new-gardeners-to-grow-food-survey-shows-2012-02-06>

- A Buddhist Ecology of Self

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/john-stanley/a-buddhist-ecology-of-self\\_b\\_1233551.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/john-stanley/a-buddhist-ecology-of-self_b_1233551.html)

- Lexicon of Sustainability (3 minutes)

<http://www.lexiconofsustainability.com/about/>

- Closing the Loop: Road Map for Effective Material Value Recovery

<http://www.greenblue.org/publications/road-map-for-effective-material-value-recovery/>

- I WANT ANTARCTICA'S OCEAN PROTECTED BECAUSE . . .

<http://www.antarcticocean.org/home.php>

- Zero Waste 101 | Austin EcoNetwork

[www.austineconetwork.com/event/zero-waste-101](http://www.austineconetwork.com/event/zero-waste-101)

- Glass packaging firms must be more 'nimble, innovative

[www.beveragedaily.com/content/view/print/610493](http://www.beveragedaily.com/content/view/print/610493)

- Why Keep Bees: Four Good Reasons Besides Pollination and Honey

<http://wibmagli.hubpages.com/hub/Why-Keep-Bees-The-Benefits-of-Beekeeping>

- HEALTH PER ACRE: Organic Solutions to Hunger and Malnutrition

<http://www.navdanya.org/attachments/Health%20Per%20Acre.pdf>

- Top scientists urge end to policy and governance failures to tackle social and environmental crises

<http://www.unep.org/newscentre/Default.aspx?DocumentID=2667&ArticleID=9039&l=en>

- Beyond recycling: making waste obsolete

<http://theconversation.edu.au/beyond-recycling-making-waste-obsolete-5368>

- BioMimicry 3.8: What Would You Ask Nature ?

[http://www.core77.com/blog/sustainable\\_design/biomimicry\\_38\\_what\\_would\\_you\\_ask\\_nature\\_21799.asp](http://www.core77.com/blog/sustainable_design/biomimicry_38_what_would_you_ask_nature_21799.asp)

- Beyond environment: falling back in love with Mother Earth

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/sustainable-business/zen-thich-naht-hanh-buddhidm-business-values>

- Six steps to create your own organic permaculture

garden [http://www.naturalnews.com/035038\\_permaculture\\_gardening\\_how\\_to.html#ixzz1n8XtOlep](http://www.naturalnews.com/035038_permaculture_gardening_how_to.html#ixzz1n8XtOlep)

- Genetically Engineered Salmon?

<http://www.salmonnation.com/fish/gefish.html>

- Sustainable Food Trade Association

<http://www.sustainablefoodtrade.org/>

- 21 Issues for the 21st Century; Result of the UNEP Foresight Process on Emerging Environmental Issues

<http://www.unep.org/publications/ebooks/foresightreport/>

- 12 food & beverage trends for 2012

<http://community.foodprocessing.com/content/hartman-trends-2012>

- Packaging Replaces Plastic With Pulp

[http://www.designnews.com/author.asp?section\\_id=1392&doc\\_id=239198&f\\_src=designnews\\_gnews](http://www.designnews.com/author.asp?section_id=1392&doc_id=239198&f_src=designnews_gnews)

- The Lorax: Helping children to unplug and reconnect with nature

<http://washingtondnr.wordpress.com/2012/01/30/the-lorax-helping-children-to-unplug-and-reconnect-with-nature/>

- Vandana Shiva: The Seed Emergency

<http://www.indypendent.org/2012/02/12/seed-emergency>

- GMO A Round-up (Ready) Of The Current News

<http://www.bloggernews.net/127727>

- The New Anti-Science Assault on US Schools

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/cifamerica/2012/feb/12/new-anti-science-assault-us-schools>

- Bill Gates' support of GM crops is wrong approach for Africa

[http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/opinion/2017612869\\_guest28ashton.html](http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/opinion/2017612869_guest28ashton.html)

## **Full Length Articles Below:**

- If You Want to Fight Cancer, Turn Those Pink Ribbons Green

- A Redo on the Walmartization of America, Redux

- Building Sustainable Future Needs More Than Science, Experts Say

- The Natural Illusion - by Brenda Frick

# # #

Published on Sunday, February 5, 2012 by [Common Dreams](#)

## If You Want to Fight Cancer, Turn Those Pink Ribbons Green

by Jennifer Browdy de Hernandez

I'm going to make a confession. I never could stand those pink ribbons. I've never done a "Walk for the Cure" or bought daffodils for cancer victims or even picked a cancer-cure-themed postage stamp.



I'm glad to hear that the Komen Foundation has bowed to pressure and is restoring funding to Planned Parenthood, a worthwhile organization if there ever was one.

But in general, the idea of putting the energy and effort of well-meaning citizens behind "the search for a cure for cancer" just irritates me, because let's face it, we know what causes cancer, and therefore we can do better than cure it, we can prevent it! Maybe not 100%, but we can take it back to the modest rates that previous generations of human beings enjoyed.

For my grandparents' generation, a diagnosis of cancer was frightening because it was so often a death sentence, but it was rare. Not one of my four grandparents came down with cancer, and I don't believe their parents did either. This isn't due to some genetic serendipity, it's just a fact that cancer rates in the first half of the 20th century (and every century before that) were way lower than they are now.

Cancer rates are skyrocketing now thanks to the environmental toxins that humans have introduced into our air, soil and water, and thus our agricultural crops, drinking water and the very air we breathe. Rachel Carson saw the effects of DDT on birds, and gave the warning just before she succumbed to cancer.

We may have removed DDT from the US market, but it's still being used in other countries, and here it has been replaced by a whole host of alphabet-soup chemicals, each one more potent and carcinogenic than the last.

If you really want to make a difference in the war against cancer, forget about those ridiculous pink ribbons. Use the power of your wallet and your ballot to insist that the government step up and do its job in regulating the industrial agriculture sector.

Or better yet, let's allow the specter of industrial agriculture to fade away into the dustbin of the 20th century, and start a real "green revolution," dedicated to the health and well-being of our planet and all her denizens.

What color is your ribbon? Mine is green.

Jennifer Browdy de Hernandez teaches comparative literature and gender studies with an activist bent at Bard College at Simon's Rock in Great Barrington, MA and blogs at [Transition Times](#).

###

Published on Tuesday, February 14, 2012

## A Redo on the Walmartization of America, Redux Occupy? Not Until We Confront the High Cost of Cheap Stuff

by John Atcheson

Readers responded to my December 16<sup>th</sup> article, entitled [The Walmartization of America, Redux](#), with a fascinating and informed discussion about the evils of box stores.



Well, yes, but the article was meant to be a metaphor; the high cost of cheap spreads way beyond the walls of the box stores.

The fact is, the entire US economy is predicated on the notion that success is defined as getting us ever more stuff at lower prices.

And the fact is, we've bought into it, lock, stock and barrel. For too many of us, gewgaws, gadgets and gizmos an unending stream of stuff has become the primary criterion of happiness.

And it's costing us plenty. Both in terms of our economy and our political system.

Never mind that we destroyed the US's entire manufacturing capacity in the pursuit of cheap.

Never mind that we've traded in freedom, ethics and community for a 73-inch-flat-screen-3D-stereo-surround-sound-home theater, a happy meal and a smiley face.

Never mind that yesterday's fantasy is today's must have, and that we've yoked ourselves to a never ending and futile pursuit of stuff in the mistaken belief that more of it will make us happy.

The real deal is, our addiction to cheap has made us indentured slaves to the plutocratic system we protest. Their profits the very existence of the model we decry depend upon our willingness to support it with our addiction to cheap stuff.

Occupy? Not until we destroy this fantasy that chasing ever more stuff is the answer to our prayers, the wellspring of our happiness.

Fact: The [apogee of happiness in the US occurred in 1957](#), when the average American family had a smaller house with one bathroom, one car, one TV black and white no clothes dryer, no AC, no stereo, in fact, less than half the stuff we have now. Yet since then, [our wealth has doubled, but our happiness has declined](#), as psychologist David Meyers points out.

Fact: [there is only a very weak link](#) between wealth and happiness. Even the wealthiest the Fortune 100 rate themselves only marginally more happy than the rest of us.

And yet we build our lives around the Pursuit of Cheap.

It is our embrace of this de-humanizing and amoral system that enslaves our souls and empowers the plutocrats.

The good news is, we can seize back a measure of control from the plutocrats without sacrificing happiness. And no, it doesn't mean we have to eat seeds and roots and do without every gewgaw, gadget and gizmo dangled in front of us. Just some, and we just need to be a bit more selective about the ones we do buy.

Here's some specifics on how.

- 1) Use local banks and credit unions, and don't forget to transfer your credit cards, too forget Bank Transfer Day, we need a Bank Transfer Movement; a continuous, sustained and well-funded campaign to choke off the supply of cash to those who play roulette with our money for their gain.
- 2) Don't buy from companies who won't disclose political contributions and who support the agenda of the exploiters. If a company wants to give money to some truth-mauling SuperPAC or otherwise assume the rights of individual citizens then we should boycott them. Period. And if they don't publically disclose who they contribute to then assume the worst and don't buy from them.
- 3) Don't vote for candidates who won't disclose their source of funds and make it known to them. If there's too much corporate money in their coffers, don't vote for them even if they do disclose.
- 4) Support [the constitutional amendment](#) offered by Bernie Sanders to get corporations and corporate money out of politics.
- 5) Consider moving your investments to socially responsible investment funds. There are good returns to be made by doing good [and it's easy to do](#). If you participate in a government or private retirement fund, insist on a socially responsible investment option.
- 6) Exercise your rights as a shareholder, and insist on a voice in executive pay. Stockholders own a piece of the company they invest in they should have a voice in how the company uses their money.
- 7) Buy locally produced goods; the cheapest price isn't always the lowest cost. When more Americans have jobs, our economy works. Literally.
- 8) Buy food that is grown sustainably, and when possible, locally. Eliminate the corporate middlemen. Shop at farmers markets and enroll in [community supported agricultural](#) programs. Save the Earth and improve your health.
- 9) Do the same for energy. Solar energy is now [economically competitive with fossil fuels](#), which means clean, homegrown energy doesn't have to cost more. It also means communities can keep the money they spend on energy at home rather than shipping it overseas or funneling it into the bonuses of fat cats.

Each dollar spent is a vote. It endorses the company who makes the product, provides the service, and the one who sells it. We, the 99%, merely by acting in our own self-

interest, can occupy the economy and the marketplace and move the US toward a just, equitable, and prosperous society.

Or we can turn the US into one giant box store, and wander its aisles grasping at cheap until its shelves and our wallets are as empty as our souls.

The choice is ours.

*[John Atcheson's writing](#) has appeared in the New York Times, the Washington Post, the Baltimore Sun, the San Jose Mercury News, the Memphis Commercial Appeal, as well as in several wonk journals. He is the author of a fictional Trilogy that centers on climate change. The first book will be available on Amazon in January. Atcheson's book reviews are featured on [Climateprogress.org](#).*

# # #

*Published on Monday, February 20, 2012 by [Inter Press Service](#)*

## **Building Sustainable Future Needs More Than Science, Experts Say**

*by Stephen Leahy*

VANCOUVER - Contrary to popular belief, humans have failed to address the earth's worsening emergencies of climate change, species' extinction and resource overconsumption not because of a lack of information, but because of a lack of imagination, social scientists and artists say.

At a conference for the [American Academy for the Advancement of Science](#) (AAAS) here in Vancouver, British Columbia, experts argued that the path to a truly sustainable future is through the muddy waters of emotions, values, ethics, and most importantly, imagination.

Humans' perceptions of reality are filtered by personal experiences and values, said David Maggs, a concert pianist and PhD student at the Institute for Resources, Environment and Sustainability at the University of British Columbia (UBC).

As a result, the education and communication paradigm of "if we only knew better, we'd do better" is not working, Maggs told attendees at the world's largest general science meeting. "We don't live in the real world, but live only in the world we imagine."

"We live in our heads. We live in storyland," agreed John Robinson of UBC's Institute for Resources, Environment and Sustainability.

"When we talk about sustainability we are talking about the future, how things could be. This is the landscape of imagination," Robinson told IPS. "If we can't imagine a better world we won't get it."

This imagining will be complex and difficult. Sustainability encompasses far more than

just scientific facts it also incorporates the idea of how we relate to nature and to ourselves, he said.

"We haven't yet grasped the depth of changes that are coming."

Because human decisions and behaviour are the result of ethics, values and emotion, and because sustainability directly involves our values and ethical concerns, science alone is insufficient to make decisions about sustainability, said Thomas Dietz, assistant vice president for environmental research at Michigan State University.

Information plays a much smaller role than we like to think, Dietz explained. In order to truly address big issues like climate change or sustainability, we need to talk at a society-wide scale about our values and reach mutual understanding about the values needed for sustainability.

"When we talk about sustainability we are talking about the future, how things could be. This is the landscape of imagination... If we can't imagine a better world we won't get it."

--John Robinson of UBC's Institute for Resources, Environment and Sustainability

"However, we don't like to talk about our values or feelings, because it threatens our personal identity."

Engaging the public

Treating nature as an object, separate and distinct from us, is part of the problem, said Sacha Kagan, sociologist at Leuphana University in Germany. The current environmental crisis results from technological thinking and a fear of complexity that science alone cannot help us with, Kagan said.

The objectification of the natural world began during the Age of Enlightenment about 300 years ago. People saw the world and their place in it in very different ways before that, said Robinson.

Today, he said, sustainability will not be achieved without "engaging people in numbers and at levels that have never been done before".

New social media tools like Facebook may help with such a monumental task, as "people certainly don't like to come to public meetings".

Current approaches to help the public understand the implications of climate change, such as graphs or iconic pictures of polar bears, have limitations and are ineffective, said Mike Hulme, a climate scientist at the University of East Anglia in the UK.

"We need to find new ways to think about the future under climate change," said Hulme.



Art could be one such approach, suggested Dietz. It would serve not as propaganda but as a creative way to engage our imaginations. "Art can provoke thinking and actually change people's perceptions of the complex issues associated with sustainability science," he argued.

"When we're considering questions about preserving biodiversity versus creating jobs, art can help us examine our values and have a discussion that's broader than just scientific facts."

It is tempting to believe the arts can help by softening and 'pretty-fying' the message and bringing it to a wider audience, said award-winning photographer Joe Zammit-Lucia.

"We need to go much further to provide a different worldview that can help us re-frame the issues," said Zammit-Lucia.

Society's choices are driven by people's cultural perceptions of reality, which in turn are based on their values and their cultural context, he said. While helpful, scientific knowledge and experts are also part of the problem: by dominating the sustainability discourse, they narrow people's visions of what's possible.

"I also don't buy in the idea we need to make the right decisions. What we need is the right process, ways in which the public can fully participate," he concluded.

# # #

*Monday, February 06, 2012 12:05 PM*

## **The Natural Illusion - by Brenda Frick**

*written for Organic Alberta*

<http://organicalberta.org/news/the-natural-illusion>

How many animals of each kind did Moses put on the ark? When asked this question, most people simply answer 2. They know that Noah was the ark-meister. They just don't notice that Moses has been slipped into Noah's place in the question. They are focusing on number of animals.

In psychology, this is referred to as the Moses Illusion. It is the most well-known example of a general concept called the semantic illusion. People often don't notice word substitutions if their focus is elsewhere, especially if the changed item is similar to the one for which it was substituted.

People have busy and stressful lives. It is not surprising to find that our focus often is elsewhere while buying food perhaps on the kids, the mortgage and the politics at work. Even if we do have our eyes on the prize, it is probably chicken and carrots and breakfast cereal, rather than organic chicken, organic carrots and organic breakfast cereal that holds our focus. So it's not surprising that natural foods, usually prominently displayed and easy to find, end up in our baskets.

It's also easy to see why people accept the word natural as being in the same category as organic. Both terms imply that the product is grown and raised and made in collaboration with nature, without poisons or other additives.

In a national survey done by the Hartman group in the USA, consumers identified 6 attributes that they associated equally with organic and natural labels. These qualities were all things that were absent: pesticides, herbicides, growth hormones, artificial flavours/colours/preservatives, genetically modified foods and antibiotics.

To consumers natural and organic mean pretty much the same thing: healthy, whole and real. But is this perception correct?

First let's look at the natural label. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) has guidelines for natural food. For them it's all about post-harvest handling. Natural foods should not contain food additives. They should have nothing removed except water. They should be minimally processed, or left unprocessed. Natural foods should contain only natural ingredients.

In this definition of natural, what happens before harvest or slaughter doesn't really matter. There is nothing here about pesticide use, synthetic fertilizers, hormones, or antibiotics. If you want to avoid these things, the word natural is not an indication of what you want. When you buy a natural product, the ingredients were grown or raised under conventional production methods. Plants were likely grown with synthetic fertilizers and were sprayed with pesticides.

And as to the type of processing, there are guidelines. However, even CFIA suggests that the word natural is often misused on labels and advertisements. There is no regulation to prevent this. Manufacturers and producers may use these terms without any restrictions.

What about natural meat? Consumers expect that the natural product is raised without growth hormones or antibiotics, without cages, with a diet of grass and forage. What is the truth behind natural meat? As with plants, CFIA suggestions only apply to processing. The animals were raised in conventional production systems and likely were given antibiotics, and feed that was treated with fertilizers and pesticides. Beef

animals likely received growth hormones.

As the term natural is unregulated, the integrity of the claim depends on the integrity of the seller. If you talk to the producer, you can ask. If you deal with a retail establishment, most staff are woefully misinformed. According Consumer Reports, there is no guarantee that [grocery store consumers] will receive the correct information about the products they are buying.

Now let's consider the organic label. The organic claim is regulated in Canada. Products must be certified to the organic standard to bear the organic label. This means that the farms and factories are inspected, and actually meet the regulation.

The Canadian Organic Regulation mandates that crops are grown with methods that restore and sustain the environment; provide soil fertility using biological means, not synthetic fertilizers; and manage pests with biological, mechanical and cultural techniques, not toxic chemicals.

Under the Canadian Organic Regulation, animals must be provided with living conditions and space appropriate to their behavioural requirements; with organic diets; and healthy, reduced stress conditions. Antibiotics, hormones and genetically engineered products are forbidden.

Organic processing is also held to a strict standard that maintains the organic integrity through all processes from farm to the point of sale. The way processing is done and the products that may be used are regulated. Food additives are minimized, and are largely limited to those of organic origin. Even cleaning, storage and packaging is regulated.

From this it is clear that organic and natural are not similar claims. As consumers we need to be more vigilant, to pay attention, and not substitute natural for organic. Ironically, if we want to be sure we are getting the qualities of natural grown, handled, processed in ways that value nature and respect the consumer we need to pass over the natural product and reach for the organic one.

*Brenda Frick, Ph.D., P.Ag. is an Organic Research and Extension specialist. She welcomes your comments at 306-260-0663 or via email at [organic@usask.ca](mailto:organic@usask.ca) .*

*Thanks to Amanda Bristol for telling me about the Moses Illusion.*