A person's hands are shown holding a yellow-handled pickaxe. The pickaxe has a silver metal head with two sharp points. The person is wearing a light-colored long-sleeved shirt and a watch on their left wrist. The background is a blurred green forest. The text "Food Forest = New Nature" is overlaid in yellow, and "eBook #39" is overlaid in orange.

# Food Forest = New Nature

eBook #39

**When does "design with Nature" turn into "re-designing Nature?"**

# Food Forest = New Nature

## articles

Nature VR and the New Mythology

Climate Archetypes and Our Emerging Urban - Nature Artifacts

Connecting Nature with Symbols and Gratitude - Vision for Children

Nature is not a Ritual - Online Roundtable Topic

"Nature Points a Gun at Our Heads" - Drought Archetypes and Symbols

Nature is Forgiveness - Mantra

"The Tree Pod Community" - Resilience with Nature in the Permaculture & Transition Era

The Permaculture Catalyst: Nature Symbols, Songs, and Stories for New Mythologies in the Sustainability Age

Instinct + Paranoia = Resilience? Climate change, species extinction and terrorism in the Chaos Era

Garden of Eden 2.0 - The Permaculture Food Forest Mythic Promise

"Christmas Trees for Sale: Dead or Alive" - Our Disrupted Mythology

"WILDpermaculture" - Mixing ReWilding and Permaculture with Symbols. Lesson Plan

## videos

"Relentless Resistant Resilient: Exploring Sustainability in Technology & Nature" - Children's Edu-Video + Questions. New Myth #95

"Leopard Noise" - What happens when we use sound samples instead of human speak in Nature cartoons?

Permaculture Symbols 2. A Video for Kids with Eyes of Steel and Overflowing Feet!

Sedona Spells: Kid's Nature Cartoon. Video Short

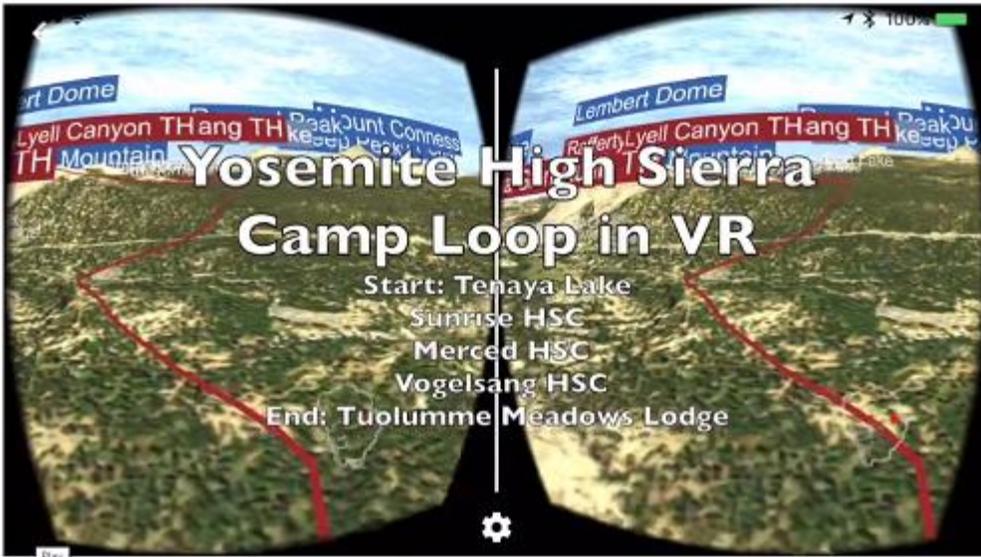
Center of the Cloud - Permaculture as the New Unifying Model for Human - Nature. Video.

## interview

"Sacred Trees and Refuges" - Interview with Rachel S. McCoppin, Author of The Lessons of Nature in Mythology

## new myths

Noah's honey rust fortress ("junk yard permaculture). New Myth #21



## [Nature VR and the New Mythology](#)

### Prelude -

"For virtual reality will certainly become less and less distinguishable from the phenomenal real world that surrounds us. If we thought TV and mass-media culture were capable of creating a distorted worldview that was sometimes difficult to uncover and resist, we've not seen anything yet." Source: The Construction of "Nature" In The Virtual World "Second Life" By Joseph Clark ([Dissertation](#))

'[Games for Nature](#) is a platform that promotes collaboration and research on the use of games for nature conservation purposes. We seek to bring closer the people developing and exploring these kinds of games. We believe games to be a critical and powerful tool in the 21st century and that feedback between people from different disciplines can allow games to be more effective.'

\*\*\*\*\*

### Definitions -

[Nature](#) - is the "natural environment" or wilderness: wild animals, rocks, forest, and in general things that have not been substantially altered by human intervention or which persist despite human intervention.

SpiritNature - A belief system where the Earth is held as a higher power, integrated as a protector, sacred and wild. A higher consciousness where humans are committed to saving Nature from human wrong doing. The opposite of greed, toxic technologies, resource exploitation and waste in general. (W Paul)

Nature VR - Refers to computer technologies that use software and special gear to generate "realistic" images and sounds that represent Nature and enable the user to interact with them in a game or trek. (W Paul)

New Mythology - one of four change agents integrated with permaculture, the transition movement and SpiritNature that support the creation and integration of new universal stories. New Mythology includes treating Nature as sacred, and the community creation of new symbols, archetypes, rituals, celebrations, and traditions. (W Paul)

\*\*\*\*\*

### Getting into Nature VR -

Most people agree that we plug into VR programs to have fun - as a solo agent or in teams.

Is there "good" Nature VR content? And negative programs? Of course.

Nature VR has many roles in edu-entertainment: as background for war games ("The Last Sniper VR"); Pre-historic learnings ("Time

Machine VR Gameplay"); as an eco-stage ("Avatar 3"); and "Post human collapse and extinction" scenarios ("From Dust").

Can Nature VR play a role in supporting the new mythology if Hollywood and Silicon Valley decide to relieve consumers of their steady state of gun barrel pornography, blood and guts and evil aliens and educate us about climate change, species extinction and fracking? Yes.

Can Nature VR help to pull us into the streets to protest against governmental and corporate wrong doing?

\* \* \* \* \*

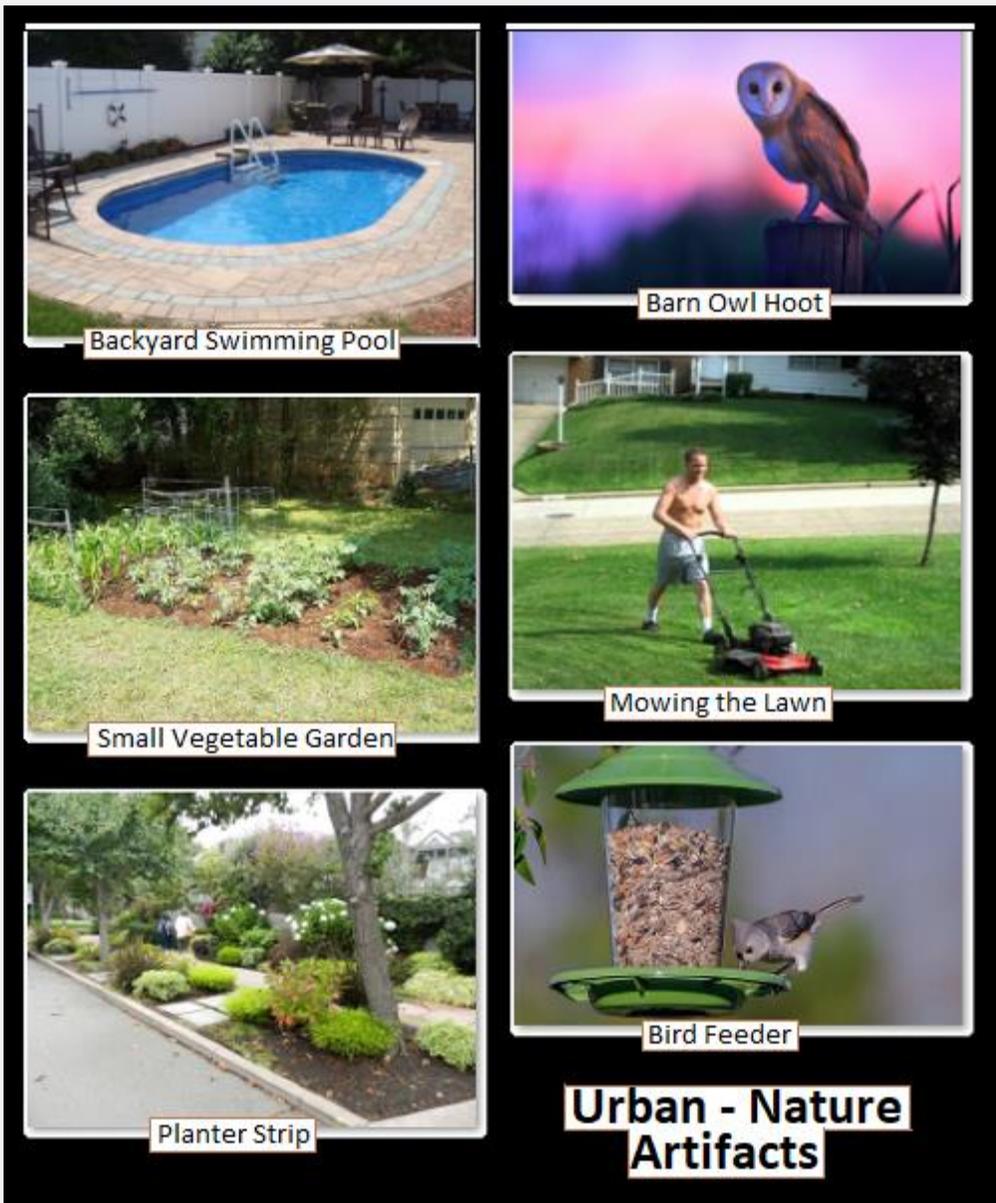
#### **A Nature VR Critique -**

- How is Nature VR deployed by the mass media for consumption? Nature VR is often a screen saver or wall paper. A supporting set or scene. A backdrop or a prop. Or a romantic mountain vista or sun set to fly through.
- Is Nature VR all hype, with its gadgets and expensive advertisements - economically marginalized? A passing fad?
- Nature VR carries with it the absurd belief in a technology age that it will educate, employ, entertain and save us from our own extinction. "Holodecking it," like on Star Trek, is for sale any moment now.
- Nature VR is prescribed, man-made. It's not about anything new. Gear are gimmicks. Playing a war game in a goggle is not a challenging or celebratory act. Not a community event. It's just "spend-tech"; an expensive race track version like from our youth where we sat and watched the cars go around and round - until your slot car stopped cold or flew off the track, and we re-started it again.
- VR is most often a private, self-driven affair; an artificially-sourced entertainment. We blast through Nature VR in our basement caves as we lust for better guns and higher scores.
- Can Nature VR battle junkies become story makers - generators of new universal myths? The current "story" is rigged, pre-set, coded; you only react and pick track A or track D, joy stick-it and then just sit there!
- Nature VR is not a substitute for SpiritNature. Like screen wall paper, Nature VR is coded, fake, 3D, flat; unresponsive and non-communicable unless you turn on the system. SpiritNature welcomes the outside world and breathes with you. Nature VR is just stream pixels and that darn upgrade.
- It's what we produce for each other - the messages and values - that are more important than the gadgets that we need to view them.
- With or without goggles, violence and sexual content often wins the eye. Enter the new mythology - with its holistic focus on community ethics.
- Nature VR will continue to help educate some of us through online trainings, workshops and scientific exploration.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### **[James Cameron](#) on VR:**

"There seems to be a lot of excitement around something that, to me, is a yawn, frankly. The question that always occurred to me is, when is it going to be mature, when is it going to be accepted by the public at large, when are people going to start authoring in VR and what will that be? What will the level of interactivity with the user be other than just 'I can stand and look around.' If you want to move through a virtual reality it's called a video game, it's been around forever -."



**["Climate Archetypes and Our Emerging Urban - Nature Artifacts"](#) - Plus Study Questions**

**Prelude -**

"Vitality - is when you see vigorous signs of life. A vital community is one which you only have to walk into to see that people are engaged and active in creating resilience: front lawns growing food, shared yards without fences, housing coops, locally-owned stores offering basic services and accepting local currency, people sharing cars/tools/large appliances, "Street Repair" as in [Portland](#) with many vibrant community gathering places, food growing in public places, free health clinics, farm animals at work in the community ...."

**Source:** ["Not greed and oil."](#) Interview with Transition Albany (CA) Leader Catherine Sutton (RIP) by Willi Paul

\* \* \* \* \*

**Introduction -**

Humans and wildlife are now under increased stress, including extinction, as inhospitable weather, pollution loading, species die-off and fears concerning rising sea levels and temperatures increase. Our archetypes and Urban - Nature artifacts reflect these concerns. A parallel concern in this Chaos Era is to continue to create and share new life-enriching art and mythologies.

Artifacts are indicators of both healthy and dying civilizations.

### **Definition of Urban - Nature Artifacts (W. Paul, 2017) -**

An Urban - Nature artifact mimics (or mirrors) a natural space in an urban setting, like a pond (i.e. - swimming pool) or a farm field edge (i.e. - neighborhood street planter strip), that is designed, built and maintained by humans and supported by local utilities. A Urban - Nature artifact can also be understood as a "[eco-metaphor](#)" (i.e. - barn owl) for a specific nature - human interaction (i.e. - small vegetable garden). Urban - Nature artifacts are man-made and often unsustainable and/or cosmetic.

There are no natural or "Nature" artifacts.

\* \* \* \* \*

### **Six Examples of Urban - Nature Artifacts (see illustration) -**

1. Backyard Swimming Pool
2. Barn Owl Hoot
3. Small Vegetable Garden
4. Mowing the Lawn
5. Planter Strip
6. Bird Feeder

### **Archetypes -**

"According to [Jungian approach of psychology](#), some highly developed elements of the collective unconscious are called 'archetypes'. Carl Jung developed an understanding of archetypes as universal, archaic patterns and images that derive from the collective unconscious and are the psychic counterpart of instinct. They are autonomous and hidden forms which are transformed once they enter consciousness and are given particular expression by individuals and their cultures. Being unconscious, the existence of archetypes can only be deduced indirectly by examining behavior, images, art, myths, religions, or dreams. They are inherited potentials which are actualized when they enter consciousness as images or manifest in behavior on interaction with the outside world."

### **Climate Archetypes -**

**Climate Archetype:** Sadness as historically valued landscaping elements are abandoned and lands deteriorates

**Urban - Nature Artifact:** Backyard Swimming Pool, Mowing the Lawn

**Climate Archetype:** Fear of un-hospitable weather and the end of local resources (i.e. - self-sufficiency)

**Urban - Nature Artifact:** Planter Strip

**Climate Archetype:** Anxiety as corporations control more and more land with an increase in toxic air, water and soil

**Urban - Nature Artifact:** Small Vegetable Garden

**Climate Archetype:** Global hopelessness for Nature's dwindling diversity as species die-off daily

**Urban - Nature Artifact:** Barn Owl Hoot, Bird Feeder

\* \* \* \* \*

### **Study Questions -**

+ Can Urban - Nature artifacts (i.e. - metaphors or symbols) connect our memories to our fears?

+ Can Urban - Nature artifacts help to create design solutions?

+ Name some additional artifacts that you can see and touch in your neighborhood? When were they built? Who maintains them? Are they "alive?"

+ Why are you mowing your lawn?

+ Do you think corporate executives consider archetypes and artifacts in their profit schemes?

+ Can you connect any Urban - Nature artifacts to the human extinction crisis now underway on Earth?

+ As new artifacts emerge from our artists and into our daily experience - from the subconsciousness into consciousness living - can they change your routines and create new songs and stories?

+ Do you know any myths that incorporate Urban - Nature artifacts and archetypes?

\* \* \* \* \*



["Connecting Nature with Symbols and Gratitude"](#) - Vision for Children

Gratitude is thankfulness.

\* \* \* \* \*

As the illustration relays, it matters not what the size of the Natural spaces one is traversing, the symbolic and enjoyment of Nature remains vibrant and intrinsically powerful whether one is watering the plants on the back porch or hiking in a State Park.

Our gratitude of Nature remains steadfast - **and scales**.

Nature symbols are **connective tissues** for our gratitude of Nature.

The symbols for Nature have meanings that are **congruent and overlap**. The following symbols are offered for each type of experience in Nature:

**House Plants -**

Symbol: A living pine tree leftover from a X-mas tradition

**Backyard Garden -**

Symbol: A coiled rubber hose

**Community Food Forest -**

Symbol: A small tool and seed shack made of re-cycled materials

**City Park -**

Symbol: Grass lawns and a band shell

**State Park -**

Symbol: Trails and Parking Lots

**National Parks -**

Symbol: Huge acreages and Nature-based branding

**Heritage Sites -**

Symbol: Emotionally-charged, historical images and stories

**Wilderness Areas & Oceans -**

Symbol: Mystery and spirit for tall mountains and deep oceans

**Gaia (Planet Earth) -**

Symbol: One Heart, One Love for All

\* \* \* \* \*

How do you express your gratitude for Nature?



**nature is not a ritual.**

## "Nature is not a Ritual" - Online Roundtable Topic

### Definitions -

A [ritual](#) is a semi-regular gathering of family or community members that share a Nature-based experience, value or dream often associated with local roles and traditions.

" [Mythic imprinting](#)" is an iterative and transmutative process is grounded in the initiation, journey and hero triad from Joseph Campbell and is one way that neighborhood artifacts can help neighbors generate new songs, poems and myths. (W. Paul)

\* \* \* \* \*

### Consider three types of ritual -

#### 1. Nature Rituals

- \* Nature is not a ritual but a spirit. She teaches us about ecology, seasonal cycles, beauty, and the Sacred.
- \* Nature is best experienced as "embedded" with our families." Not inside a building but in the outdoors.
- \* Symbols drive the schedule: fall leaves, snow piles, sprouting seeds, our harvest table.

#### 2. Human + Nature Rituals

- \* Bond fires, picnics, camping, star gazing, catch and release on a trout stream.
- \* Human + Nature ceremonies are best local, decentralized experiences; consider a [pagan rites?](#)
- \* We kill, drag and then hang ornaments on Christmas Trees. Human + Nature ritual.

#### 3. Human Rituals

- \* Humans are Nature ritual digesters and morphers. Nature is a raw ritual source too often tamed and controlled.
- \* We need to build shared rituals based on love and tolerance not selfish consumption and conquest for the Popes and CEO's.
- \* Humans rituals have been devised over the Centuries to punish and control many cultures with a top-down, rules-driven "pseudo ritual" agenda.

\* \* \* \* \*

### [5 New Nature-based Rituals for the Permaculture Transition -](#)

#### **Abundance Dance (Celebrating Nature)**

##### **Winter**

Multi-stage art & music festival

#### **Compost Festival (Seed Sharing & Harvest Share)**

##### **Spring & Fall**

Planting Tools, Dirt and Food Meet-up

#### **Annual Cascadia Convergence (Concert)**

##### **Late Fall**

Big Education and Networking Event

#### **Food Forest Work Trek Weekends (Caring for the Earth & People)**

##### **Early Spring**

Multiple Community Work Actions with Evening Pot Lucks

**Resilience Expo - Practical Seminars and Clothing Share**

**4 times per year**

Local Community Education and Support for Basic Needs

\* \* \* \* \*

**Discussion Questions -**

- \* What are the connective tissues that can spawn new Human + Nature-based rituals? Is this social DNA lost?
- \* What symbols dominate our rituals now? What does that crucifixion really mean on your chain?
- \* Consider technology, sports, fast food. If such unhealthy, short-term consumption is not a ritual, how does this behavior impact the creation of new Nature + Human rituals?
- \* Is the long-practiced behavior of littering an anti-Nature ritual or more of a bad habit?
- \* Can we watch and celebrate Nature on our devices - as short-term, downloaded rituals?
- \* Offer an example of how we currently experience a common religious holiday as a ritual?



**Salmon** – An indicator species



**Empty reservoirs**



**The Sun**



**Ground Water Wars**

**Symbols of Drought - Willi Paul**

## Nature Points a Gun at Our Heads" - Drought Archetypes and Symbols

The drought in California and other places is cooking powerful, Nature-based archetypes with symbols of spiritual desiccation as well as an eminent environmental disaster. Drought conditions are spreading like hot lava with a growing cadre of farmer fights, corporate grey water and half-baked, poorly enforced rationing programs. Sustainability, and many other recent eco-community gains, and benefits to rising human consciousness, could be lost in the sand as profits - and the wealthy - dig in to save "their plots."

Drought archetypes and symbols are value portals, tools and building blocks for folk tales, rock songs and new global myths. Symbols can be the stitches between our bubbling conscious and unconscious, for new water rituals and potential changes in consumption.

The [four archetypes](#) that follow are taken from "Permaculture, Carl Jung and the New Archetypes" (+ PDF) by Willi Paul, New Global Mythology Group @ [Depth Psychology Alliance](#)

**Drought Archetypes and Symbols** (see graphic for selected symbols)

**Transition & Nature Archetype I:** A love to preserve unique landscapes for future generations. Mistrust of greedy, land and energy developers

-- **Symbols:**

Salmon - indicator species

Bad water smell and taste in East Bay MUD

Government's mandatory 25% reduction

**Transition & Nature Archetype II:** Our hope is to build sustainable systems in our local neighborhoods and towns. Fear of food and fuel shortages; fights for resources between neighbors and governments

-- **Symbols:**

Looking for water on Mars

The Sun

Empty reservoirs

Water is asked for only in restaurants

**Transition & Nature Archetype III:** Fear that global warming will destroy all life on Earth. Mistrust of business and goal of short-term profits

-- **Symbols:**

Bottled water - Private water

No rain

**Transition & Nature Archetype IV:** Mistrust of energy privatization and corrupt safety practices. Love of the system and blind faith in corporate responsibility

-- **Symbols:**

Tumble Weeds and Blowing Soil in the Dust Bowl

Ground Water Wars



### **"[Nature is Forgiveness](#)" - Mantra**

Nature teaches us stewardship and the prima mater beauty

Her reminders are gentle. Unlearned lessons often fierce

As we carve her into county parks and red wood paneling, she is without judgement

Teaching us balance and sacred in experience

how it is to live with and without her

### **Reconciliator, eroder and Friend**

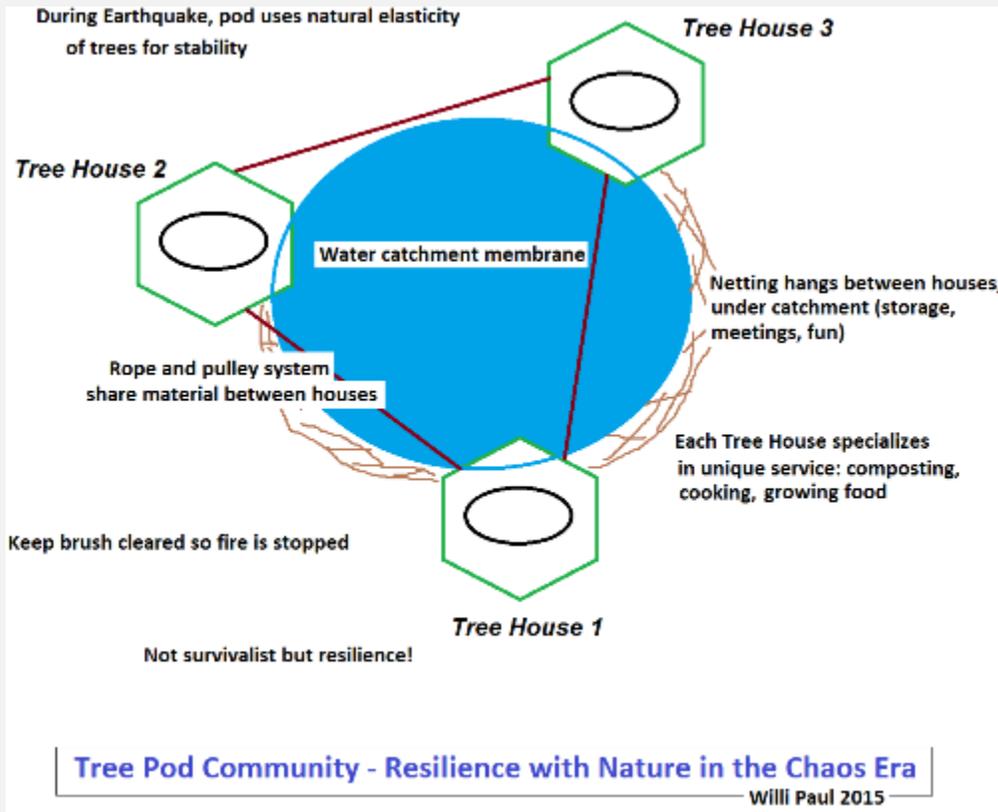
She is our blood line from the backyard song birds to planet whales

Walk under her pine branches, or in her sea salt air, and know

Nature is forgiveness, the first life

She is our code of honor

Our thunder grail heart



**"The Tree Pod Community" - "Resilience with Nature in the Permaculture & Transition Era"**

**Permaculture principles** provide a set of universally applicable guidelines that can be used in designing sustainable systems. At least three of the twelve principles apply in the trees are:

- + Accelerating succession and evolution
- + Work with nature rather than against
- + The problem is the solution

\* \* \* \* \*

Tiny houses, tee pees, yurts, trailers, back seats. Enter a sustainable and protected living family relationship - the Tree Pod Community.

**Key Specifications:**

- \*Water catchment membrane - anchored by all three houses
- \*Rope netting hangs between houses, hanging under water catchment membrane for storage, meetings and fun
- \*Each Tree House specializes in a unique service: composting, cooking, growing food
- \*Rope and pulley to share material between houses
- \*Keep brush below cleared so fire danger is minimized
- \*During Earthquake, trees have natural elasticity
- \*Not survivalist but resilience!



## The Permaculture Catalyst: Nature Symbols, Songs, and Stories for New Mythologies in the Sustainability Age

PlanetShifter.com Magazine's ongoing pursuit of the elements and relationships in the **alchemy + mythology = sacred** path vision continues with a primer to the power of permaculture as a source for new symbols, songs and stories - and mythic stories. The collage illustration reveals the earth, the circle, and the female as power symbols from this land spirit practice. The soil ~ garden ~ sun triad is also presented. **My understanding of permaculture is that this practice rises above agriculture because of a spiritual link to the land and the future /past.**

Songs for the permaculture generation are ready for download. Check out:

[Earth Stars, Songs of Permaculture](#) | [Songs Sampler](#)

Stories, the third mythic element, are often in the form of news or teaching scripts on web sites and blogs. Histories of permaculture tools and pioneers are very common. **Read Livingmandala.com:**

"The word 'Permaculture' was originally coined by University professor Bill Mollison and environmental design student David Holmgren in the 1970's and was first taught as "Applied Systems Design " in 1981. The word "permaculture" itself came from the notion of establishing "permanent agriculture" or "permanent culture"; in other words, permaculture is a practical set of ecological design principles and methods for human settlement that provide for humanity's needs of food, energy, shelter, water and other material and non-material needs in a way that is sustainable and regenerative with the Earth's natural ecosystems.

Over the last 30 years, permaculture has grown to become a global grassroots movement of healing and re-connection with the Earth penetrating many different fields, continents, and cultures. Though often thought of as just a set of gardening techniques, permaculture is in fact a whole systems design philosophy. As a methodology for whole systems thinking, Permaculture is being applied towards business, economics, government, group process, and more. It is in this spirit of permaculture as a holistic design philosophy encompassing many fields that we are truly excited to gather in one place such a diverse spectrum of teachers and facilitators and offer this course to the public."

\* \* \* \* \*

**[Permaculture is the art and science of designing human beings' place in the environment:](#)**

"Permaculture design teaches you to understand and mirror the patterns found in healthy natural environments. You can then build profitable, productive, sustainable, cultivated ecosystems, which include people, and have the diversity, stability, and resilience of natural ecosystems."

From [permacultureactivist.net](http://permacultureactivist.net) , these Ethics of Permaculture emerge:

Permaculture is unique among alternative farming systems (e.g., organic, sustainable, eco-agriculture, biodynamic) in that it works with a set of ethics that suggest we think and act responsibly in relation to each other and the earth. The ethics of permaculture provide a sense of place in the larger scheme of things, and serve as a guidepost to right livelihood in concert with the global community and the environment, rather than individualism and indifference.

**1. Care of the Earth** ...includes all living and non-living things- plants, animals, land, water and air

**2. Care of People** ...promotes self-reliance and community responsibility- access to resources necessary for existence

**3. Setting Limits to Population & Consumption** ...gives away surplus- contribution of surplus time, labor, money, information, and energy to achieve the aims of earth and people care.

**Adam Wolpert on**

[Permaculturalists, Painters and Mystery:](#)

'A landscape becomes a shimmering constellation of interconnection and relationship rather than just a collection of objects. This new vision of relationships is accompanied by visions of a new kind of form: the web or network. Everything is related and those relationships form webs which can be seen everywhere, between creatures and their environments and each other at every scale. This- leads us to a more holistic way of seeing.

Painters and shared the experience of mystery. Part of our practice has to be coming into good relationship with this mystery. Our work challenges us to set aside the arrogance of someone who thinks they know how it's all going to work out and embrace the unknown. Perhaps this is the greatest shared aspect of these two practices. Both the painter of nature and practitioner of permaculture sit in wonder before this vast ever changing miraculous world. Our fascination with our work motivates us to seek more and more knowledge and understanding and yet the more we know the more we see how small we are and how much is yet unrevealed.'



## Instinct + Paranoia = Resilience? Climate change, species extinction and terrorism in the Chaos Era

### [ 1 ] Three Definitions -

**A behavior is instinctive** if it is performed without being based upon prior experience (that is, in the absence of learning), and is therefore an expression of innate biological factors.

**Paranoia** is a thought process believed to be heavily influenced by anxiety or fear, often to the point of irrationality and delusion. Making false accusations and the general distrust of others also frequently accompany paranoia.

**Psychological resilience** is defined as an individual's ability to properly adapt to stress and adversity. It can be learned and developed by virtually anyone. Resilience should be considered a "learned behavior."

\* \* \* \* \*

### [ 2 ] First, let's consider the general impact of the equation on **three global concerns** -

**Climate Change:** Moderate public paranoia with little instinctual solutions (avoidance). Low Resilience.

**Species Extinction:** Low public paranoia and little instinctive behavior to reverse course. Low Resilience.

**Terrorism:** High public paranoia with "kill or be killed" instincts. Moderate Resilience.

\* \* \* \* \*

[ 3 ] According to **Jungian approach of psychology**, some highly developed elements of the collective unconscious are called 'archetypes'. Carl Jung developed an understanding of archetypes as universal, archaic patterns and images that derive from the collective unconscious and are the psychic counterpart of instinct.

### How does this definition of resilience influence both current and potentially new archetypes?

A. **Permaculture & Nature Archetype:** A love to preserve unique landscapes for future generations. Mistrust of greedy, short-term land and energy developers

**Symbols:** Tree of Life, Permaculture logo, Yosemite, Seeds, Amazon Rain Forest, US Gulf Coast

B. **Permaculture & Nature Archetype:** Our hope is to build sustainable systems in our local neighborhoods and towns. Fear of food and fuel shortages; fights for resources between neighbors and governments

**Symbols:** Crude oil on rails, GMO; Convergence and sharing expo events; neighborhood plans and new rituals

C. **Permaculture & Nature Archetype:** A deep love for freedom to own fire arms; fear of guns and killing.

**Symbols:** AK-47, US Flag, Scenes from mass shootings, vigils, pawn shops

D. **Permaculture & Nature Archetype:** Fear that global warming will destroy all life on Earth. Mistrust of business and goal of short-term profits

**Symbols:** Rising coastal tides, melting polar ice, coal fired power plants.

E. **Permaculture & Nature Archetype:** Mistrust of energy privatization and corrupt safety practices. Love of the system and blind faith in corporate responsibility

**Symbols:** BP, PG&E, Duke Energy

- [5 Proposed Permaculture & Nature Archetypes and their Symbols in 2014, by Willi Paul](#)

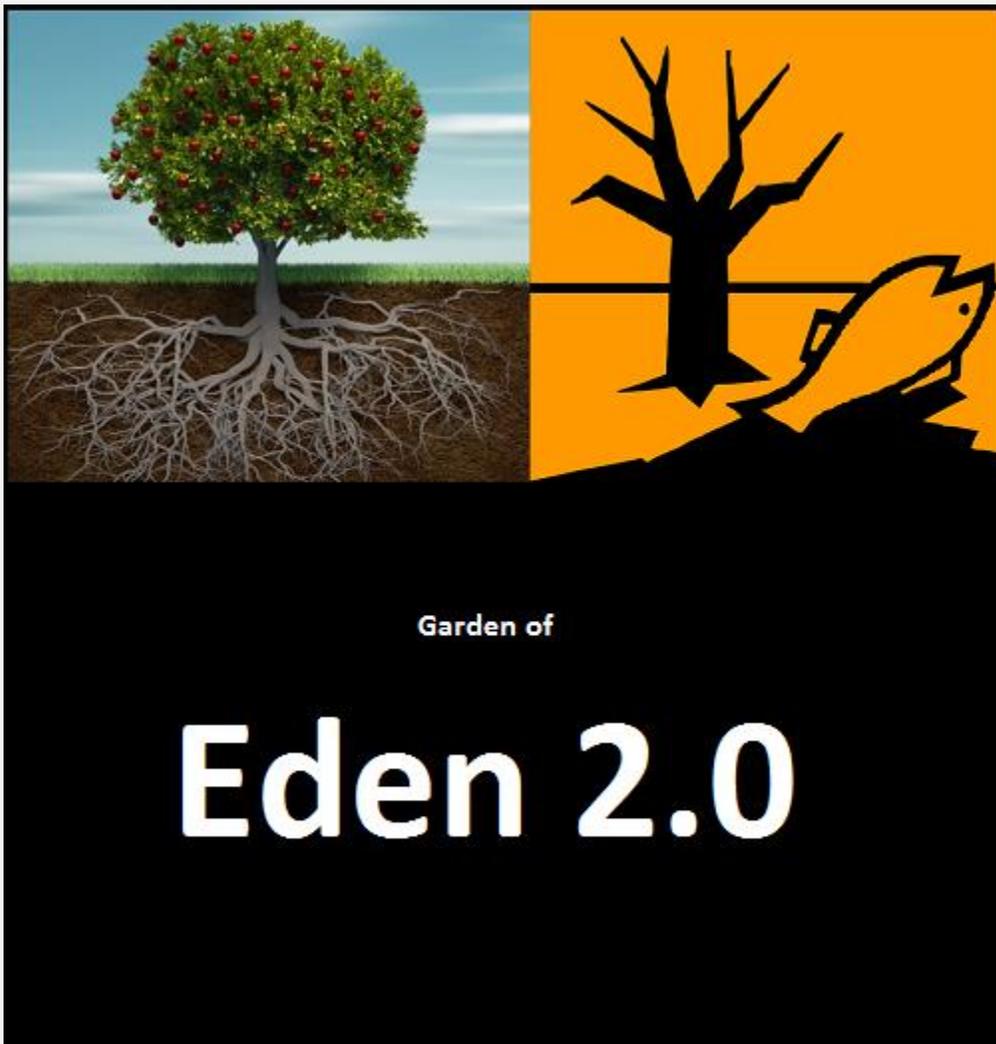
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#### [ 4 ] Study Questions -

- + How to change paranoia behavior to instinctive behavior?
- + If we update our global symbols, what are the possible benefits?
- + Is paranoia a necessary trigger or stimuli for adaption and evolution? Can we teach it?
- + How is [duck and cover](#) expressed, taught and implemented now?
- + Is instinct a [mythic trigger](#)?
- + Is paranoia is the gut or check of an individual or social movement?
- + Is [surveillance](#) increasing paranoia and weakening resilience?

#### [ 5 ] Next Step -

How would a "resilience app" work?



## [Garden of Eden 2.0 - The Permaculture Food Forest Mythic Promise](#)

### Prelude

#### The Garden of Eden Myth 1.0 -

Much like records of the great flood, creation story and confusion of languages, [the story of Eden](#) echoes the Mesopotamian myth of a king, as a primordial man, who is placed in a divine garden to guard the tree of life. In the Hebrew Bible, Adam and Eve are depicted as walking around the Garden of Eden naked due to their innocence. Eden and its rivers may signify the real Jerusalem, the Temple of Solomon, or the Promised Land. It may also represent the divine garden on Zion, and the mountain of God, which was also Jerusalem. The imagery of the Garden, with its serpent and cherubs, has been compared to the images of the Solomonic Temple with its copper serpent (the nehushtan) and guardian cherubs.

God created the first man Adam and then created the first woman, Eve. God put Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden to care and nurture the land. He told Adam and Eve that they could eat from any fruit from the trees except for the tree of good and evil. God warned them that if they ate from the tree they would die.

[Eden 2.0 is a working sanctuary; a new myth machine. Sacred. A mythological and spiritual forest temple with thousands of similar sites all over the world. The food forest is the dawning spiritual body of Human + Nature.](#)

[I asked Scott Wells in our recent interview](#) if there a place in the present age that is like the Garden of Eden? Is this place just a fading metaphor for Mother Nature? His reply:

*"When we speak of the "garden" in our mythology we are referring to the garden of Eden which is a metaphor for when we lived within a simpler range of awareness before we were able to conceive of duality. Being able to question our own nature is an*

*expansion in awareness. So, eating the apple is actually symbolic of the growth in our mental ability to ask if we are inherently good or evil. What we are arriving at now collectively is to see beyond good & evil, to see that polarity is created from one source. Our challenge is to remember that we are one with this source."*

While I agree with Arthur George from our July 2014 [Planetshifte.com interview](#) that "the Eden story is really about the elevation of our consciousness, which is a continuing historical process," I do not support his assertion that "any attempt to recreate and live in any new "Eden" would be regressive. Rather, human consciousness must move forward and upward, further from Eden. It would be best for modern myths to be oriented in this direction, as was the main line of the original Eden myth in my interpretation."

Permaculture (and its agents) are far from regressive. Just ask us. Eden 2.0 is a vision fueled by resilience and spiritual rebirth; a community creation story.

\* \* \* \* \*

### **Elements of a Permaculture Food Forest: SpiritNature and Community**

- [Permaculture Courses](#), Plans, Ethics and Values
- Sun and Rain
- [Seeds](#)
- Fruits and Vegetables for the Harvest
- Home and Food for Animals
- [Fire Circle](#) - Alchemy and Spirit
- Tool Shack
- [Compost Piles](#)
- Enriched Soil
- Water Source
- Gardeners and Teachers
- Food Sharing Systems
- [Rocket Stoves](#)

\* \* \* \* \*

### **Mythic Elements and the Search for Garden of Eden 2.0**

Campbell's classic mythological vision has now evolved to emphasize the community over the individual: community initiation, community journey and the community hero (W. Paul, 2017). Today, there is more resources and power in the group and often too much short-term gaining and corruption with individuals. Remember: "Power to the People?"

[Permaculture & Nature Symbols](#) are key elements in our archetypes, story building and our values and practices:

- **Shovel** - turning, renewal
- **Cob bench** - community
- **Pond** - water birth, diversity
- **Sun flower** - Nature Steward
- **Moon** - magic, Nature wisdom
- **Bees** - togetherness, eco-business
- **Lightning** - ecoAlchemy - transmutation
- **Cob feet** - dance, new Nature rituals
- **Broken concrete** - reuse - recycling
- **Butterflies** - metamorphosis, freedom

**Archetypes** impact the age that they persist in. Archetypes morph and fade. "According to [Jungian approach of psychology](#), some highly developed elements of the collective unconscious are called 'archetypes'. Carl Jung developed an understanding of archetypes as universal, archaic patterns and images that derive from the collective unconscious and are the psychic counterpart of instinct. They are autonomous and hidden forms which are transformed once they enter consciousness and are given particular expression by individuals and their cultures. Being unconscious, the existence of archetypes can only be deduced indirectly by examining behavior, images, art, myths, religions, or dreams. They are inherited potentials which are actualized when they enter consciousness as images or manifest in behavior on interaction with the outside world."

[Archetypes](#) support and challenge our life journey through the stories, births, deaths, celebrations, trials and tribulations. Consider the following:

A. **Permaculture & Nature Archetype:** A love to preserve unique landscapes for future generations. Mistrust of greedy, short-term land and energy developers

**Symbols:** Tree of Life, Permaculture logo, Yosemite, Seeds, Amazon Rain Forest, US Gulf Coast

B. **Permaculture & Nature Archetype:** Our hope is to build sustainable systems in our local neighborhoods and towns. Fear of food and fuel shortages; fights for resources between neighbors and governments

**Symbols:** Crude oil on rails, GMO; Convergence and sharing expo events; neighborhood plans and new rituals

C. **Permaculture & Nature Archetype:** A deep love for freedom to own fire arms; fear of guns and killing.

**Symbols:** AK-47, US Flag, Scenes from mass shootings, vigils, pawn shops

D. **Permaculture & Nature Archetype:** Fear that global warming will destroy all life on Earth. Mistrust of business and goal of short-term profits

**Symbols:** Rising coastal tides, melting polar ice, coal fired power plants.

E. **Permaculture & Nature Archetype:** Mistrust of energy privatization and corrupt safety practices. Love of the system and blind faith in corporate responsibility

**Symbols:** BP, PG&E, Duke Energy

In addition, [consider the following sound archetypes and their role in the Four Seasons:](#)

**Spring:**

Symbols - Planting Seed Crops, Cool Rain, Digging the Rows

Archetypes of Procreation: Renewal, Prayer

Sound Archetypes - Digging in the Soil

**Summer:**

Symbols - Weeding / Irrigating the Fields

Archetypes of Gestation / Incubation: Growth, Watching the weather as Crops Grow

Sound Archetypes - Channeling Water

**Fall:**

Symbols - Harvest Basket, Compost Pile

Archetypes of Community: Collecting, Celebrating, Soil Building

Sound Archetypes - Women Celebrate Harvest

**Winter:**

Symbols - Cracking Ice on a Frozen Lake, Canned Foods, Dried Fish

Archetypes of Transition: Decay, Meditation, Repair, Hibernation, Preparation

Sound Archetypes - Ice Breaking on Rive

**Conclusions**

Psychologists and mythologists often see the world through the power of opposites. Dark - light; sane - insane, etc. There are numerous examples of this in the Chaos Age. Destroying Nature for short-term corporate profit as Bayer-Monsanto is doing is the evil opposite of a green, locally-nurtured Eden.

**The opposites are stark:**

**Bayer-Monsanto** = GMO - poison fruit - toxic seeds - killing-off small farms -

vs.

**Permaculture** = Caring for Nature and building healthy communities -

One group is growing a healthy space - the other is tearing it down. Permaculture is about expanding our consciousness; Bayer-Monsanto rules through capricious capitalism, a dark force that only cares about resource privatization and legal control.

**God is warning us again.**

**Which Eden 2.0 is next?**



"Christmas Trees for Sale: Dead or Alive" - [Our Disrupted Mythology](#)

**O Christmas Tree (O Tannenbaum)**

O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree,  
Thy candles shine out brightly!  
Each bough doth hold its tiny light,  
That makes each toy to sparkle bright.  
O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree,  
Thy candles shine out brightly!

O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree,  
Much pleasure dost thou bring me!

"[O Tannenbaum](#)" is a fir tree and a - traditional folk song, it became associated with the traditional Christmas tree by the early 20th century and sung as a Christmas carol. The lyrics do not actually refer to Christmas, or describe a decorated Christmas tree. Instead, they refer to the fir's evergreen qualities **as a symbol of constancy and faithfulness.**"

\* \* \* \* \*

A [ritual](#) is a semi-regular gathering of family or community members that share a Nature-based experience, value or dream often associated with local roles and traditions.

### **The Christmas Tree Ritual Then: Connecting with Nature's Cycles**

Dating back [centuries before Christ](#), cultures brought evergreen trees, plants, and leaves into their homes upon the arrival of the winter solstice, which occurs in the northern hemisphere between December 21st and 22nd. Although the specific practices were different in each country and culture, the symbolization was generally the same: **to celebrate the return of life at the beginning of winter's decline.**

In the mid 1500's, **Germans began using evergreen trees** as a symbol of hope for the coming of spring. This practice is likely to have gradually evolved from pagan rituals of past, and merged with the celebration of Christmas leading to the tree's **Christian beginnings.**

Bethlehem, PA appears to have had the [first decorated Christmas tree](#) in 1747 at the German Moravian Church settlement, however it was made by putting evergreen branches on a wooden pyramid!

### **The Christmas Tree Ritual Today: The carnival tent in a make-shift market square -**

The modern ritual has four parts: I. Growing the trees for Christmas sales; II. Selling the trees; 3. Decorating the tree for the home, and IV. tree disposal.

#### **I. Growing the trees for X-Mas sales**

[Tree farming](#) is the process of planting a large number of saplings and waiting for them to grow into trees. These trees are then harvested for wood and more saplings, which can be used to grow another generation of trees. This can be repeated indefinitely, yielding a regular supply of logs without the hassle of covering large areas of terrain. A secondary benefit of tree farming is that it allows conservation of the surrounding environment. The use of bone meal can speed the process, or you can just plant your saplings and go do something else while they grow.

#### **II. Selling the tree -**

We had the large carnival tent at El Camino @ Trousdale Drive under casual surveillance for a several weeks before parking next to the [christmas tree sales lot](#). Not a bad choice for a location - the hospital and a mall are across the street. There were about 75 trees on display, all on [gallows-like](#) stands of two-bys and steel straps. A worker was releasing the travel netting (see picture #1) or binding that helps to compress and ship the trees without damage; another guy was spraying 6 footers with white paint. A cheesy coating for the indoor snowless. I took pictures then left.

After years of opting for live trees at Christmas, we fell for another [best friend: a robust, deep-green Norfolk Pine](#), at Orchard.

#### **III. Decorating the tree for the home (a menu) -**

\* Select a tree at an urban tree lot or cut a tree down in Nature and drag it to the car and tie it to the top  
Or put a living tree carefully in your car for the trip home

\* Insert the cut tree into a stand and water or water the living tree in its container then pile presents under the tree

\* Lights on the tree, ornaments old and new, with meaning and without, hang on the tree; a star or a plastic angel on top

\* The needles fall and the tree is a mess in January

Or the living tree is placed outside, to rejoin Nature

The cut tree gets undecorated and put out on the curb for pick-up

#### IV. Christmas Tree Disposal -

[2015/2016 Holiday Tree Recycling Guide](#) -

##### - Rules and Regs -

- Flocked trees cannot be composted at all facilities.
- Do not bag your tree. If you do, it will not be recycled.
- Place trees at the curbside on your regular yard waste or compost service day.
- Remove stands, lights, tinsel, ornaments and other decorations.
- Cut them into shorter lengths if they are larger than the lengths specified below in the how to prepare column.
- Multi-family residents must call Customer Service to arrange a location on site for tree pick up.

\* \* \* \* \*

##### What does a Christmas Tree symbolize today?

What the does the tree symbolize? A winter time; a holiday focus; good will; sharing; getting; over-eating.

Ask yourself, are the lights - not the tree - the real focus of our gaze? Bling bling. In your living room, Nature succumbs to the LED blinking bulb massacre, that white flocking, the coating, and the extra charges.

Is the tree protecting the presents underneath? Like a bear cuddling its young? Or keeping them warm like eggs of a sitting penguin? Neither?

What does the **tree size** symbolize? How about its girth and height? Any *treemen* out there?

Then there is the fire in the fireplace. More competing symbols. Yet another: those over-stuffed red socks?

##### Two Christmas Tree [Archetypes](#) -

Here the power of opposites, an ageless Jungian idea and archetype fuel, is in play:

**Tree is masculine (penetrating the ground) vs. -  
Decoration is female (her sexy dress)**

A second dominant archetype source and opposite is the source of the tree:

**The living tree, to be returned to the wild vs.  
The cut tree, Dragging the kill. Killing the sacred.**

##### Consuming Christmas Trees: A Disrupted Mythology -

*"I've never seen the term "disruptive mythology" before (neither has google), but I'd say each generation's or age's mythology could call out the hypocrisies of the previous'. Depending on how attached or entrenched the previous mythology is, this could be seen as disruptive. To give a more interesting answer, the etymology of the word 'disruptive' comes from rupture, or rip. Meaning to break apart. I think any good myth should break down some of the core ideas and challenge them. - A good proto-symbol for this would be: if a myth is to be remembered, it must first be dismembered or dismember us while in it. Then later it should re-member and stitch us back together in a meaningful way." - Richard Schwab, email to WP, 2016*

The trophy symbolism of the modern Christmas Tree and ritual in the larger X-Mas myth has indeed desensitized and dismembered our values surrounding Nature. We are dulled by blind faith rituals, dumb pet tricks and goofy Trump stares.

"Slashed Open" - What happens to the cut tree when the season passes? Cut trees will dry-out and become a severe fire hazard. That's bad alchemy. Is the cutting of trees ethical? Sustainable? Loving? The cut tree, grown for 5 years, is then dried out after 3 weeks of fun and then burned, abandoned curb-side or chipped to bits.

"Dismembered" and illogical - killing trees because your father did it and because your neighbor is doing it. Hey, Joe - "It's on Facebook."

Planting and harvesting trees in bad soil, in neat rows, like in a killing field; a commoditized cemetery to come. "Killing trees - and our souls - in a ritual slaughter."

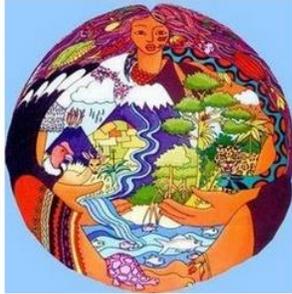
I call for healing: to return to the fir's evergreen qualities as a symbol of constancy and faithfulness. To end the holiday of forced giving, the green carcasses, and the meshed body bags on our annual sale.

**Some ideas on creating a new Christmas Tree ritual -**

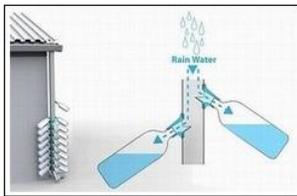
1. Raise a lot more food instead of trees in 4 - 5 years.
2. Trim your own local branches and bows, and place the creation on a wooden frame (as mentioned above).
3. Make wreaths (and jobs) - using green materials and for an "alt-spirit" for your dwelling
4. Celebrate in community settings (parks) to maximize resources and minimize cutting trees
5. Create new stories and myths by learning from other rituals and festivals from global cultures.
6. See: [Lake County Gifting a Tree Project](#) -

Buy a live, potted Christmas tree at one of 10 participating nurseries in Sonoma, Lake or Mendocino counties. Return it to the nursery after you're done. Volunteers will then pick them up and distribute them to homeowners whose land was blackened by the fires. Residents who would like the trees should sign up by emailing the organizers or messaging them through the Lake County Gifting a Tree Project page on Facebook. Trees will be picked up from nurseries in January and made available in mid-February for pick-up by their new owners.

## Rewilding Symbols



## Permaculture Symbols



## ["WILDpermaculture"](#) - Mixing ReWilding and Permaculture with Symbols. Lesson Plan

### Introduction -

**Willi** - *Tell me about your experience with Joseph Campbell's initiation, journey and hero process?*

**Dan** - *As I searched and worked through his wisdom teachings, audio lectures, online materials, I eventually found a circular diagram of the hero's journey around the same time I was working with a shaman of the Peruvian Quechua tradition. I found the deep significance that the medicine wheel of the Quechua, north American shamanic, and Joseph Campbell's conception all showing the growth of life through the 4 directions of the circle, and that indeed we never return. And, because it is a spiral, not a circle, we keep moving forward never to "return" to the same exact place of the past, but indeed there are similar themes of season, time, age, and location.*

-- ["Kids, Rewilding and the New Mythology"](#) - A conversation with Dan De Lion, ReturntoNature.us and Willi Paul,

\* \* \* \* \*

### Definitions -

**Symbols** - Pieces of a grand puzzle; metaphors; sensory converters; emotional visual cues; soul scaffolding. Combinations of symbols and narrative reveal old and new patterns and pathways.

**Permaculture**: a system of cultivation intended to maintain permanent agriculture or horticulture by relying on renewable resources and a self-sustaining ecosystem.

**Rewilding** means to return to a more wild or natural state; it is the process of un-doing domestication. The term emerged from the green anarchism and anarcho-primitivism political theories, in which humans are believed to be "civilized" or "domesticated" by industrial and agricultural progress. Supporters of rewilding argue that through the process of domestication, human wildness has been altered by force.

*Rewilding is considered a holistic approach to living, as opposed to skills, practices or a specific set of knowledge.*

\* \* \* \* \*

### Interpreting the Rewilding Symbols -

**Trekking** - hiking with, not on top of, the Land

**Minimalist Shelters** - temporary, light impact on Nature housing

**Instinct** - opposite of "technology will save you"

**Gaia** - Nature as a partner and Holistic Spirit

**Native Indian Traditions** - going back and staying with ancestors

### Interpreting the Permaculture Symbols -

**Fire Circle** - flame shared is soul kindled

**Old Garden Tools** - 14 fingers on two knees

**Water Catchment** - reservoirs in your hands

\* \* \* \* \*

### WILDpermaculture Values -

- (a) Science-based design becomes Nature Lore
- (b) Live with the land vs. engineering the land
- (c) Land as Spiritual Experience and less as survival

### Conclusions -

1. Using symbols can create hybrid ideas - even movements - that stir-up the imagination and challenge the status quo.
1. We need to (re) combine permaculture with other movements to see what elements can best support human survival.
2. We have a set of time-worn, politically damaged religious symbols and stories. New symbols are desperately required to drive community causes and community heroes.

3. The [New Mythology](#) is the symbol-driven tool kit that fosters new stories, rituals and traditions.

4. New archetypes and alchemies are possible as new symbols support global creativity in our hearts and minds.

\* \* \* \* \*

[Emerging Archetypes 2015](#) (proposed) -

**New Archetype:** Anxiety to Integrate Nature and Agriculture for Survival

**Mass Movement:** Permaculture

**Symbol:** Large tree roots to canopy next to farm field and settlement

**New Archetype:** Reverse engineer corporate control through localizing resources

**Mass Movement:** Transition Movement

**Symbol:** Neighborhood Sharing Event

**New Archetype:** "Back and Forward" to build a Global Nature

**Mass Movement:** Rewinding

**Symbol:** DIY huts and living off the land

**New Archetype:** A new spirituality driven by Reduce / Reuse / Recycle

**Mass Movement:** Sustainability

**Symbol:** Green Earth with 3 R's Triangle

**New Archetype:** Community as Hero

**Mass Movement:** New Mythology

**Symbol:** City Repair Project Logo (PDX)

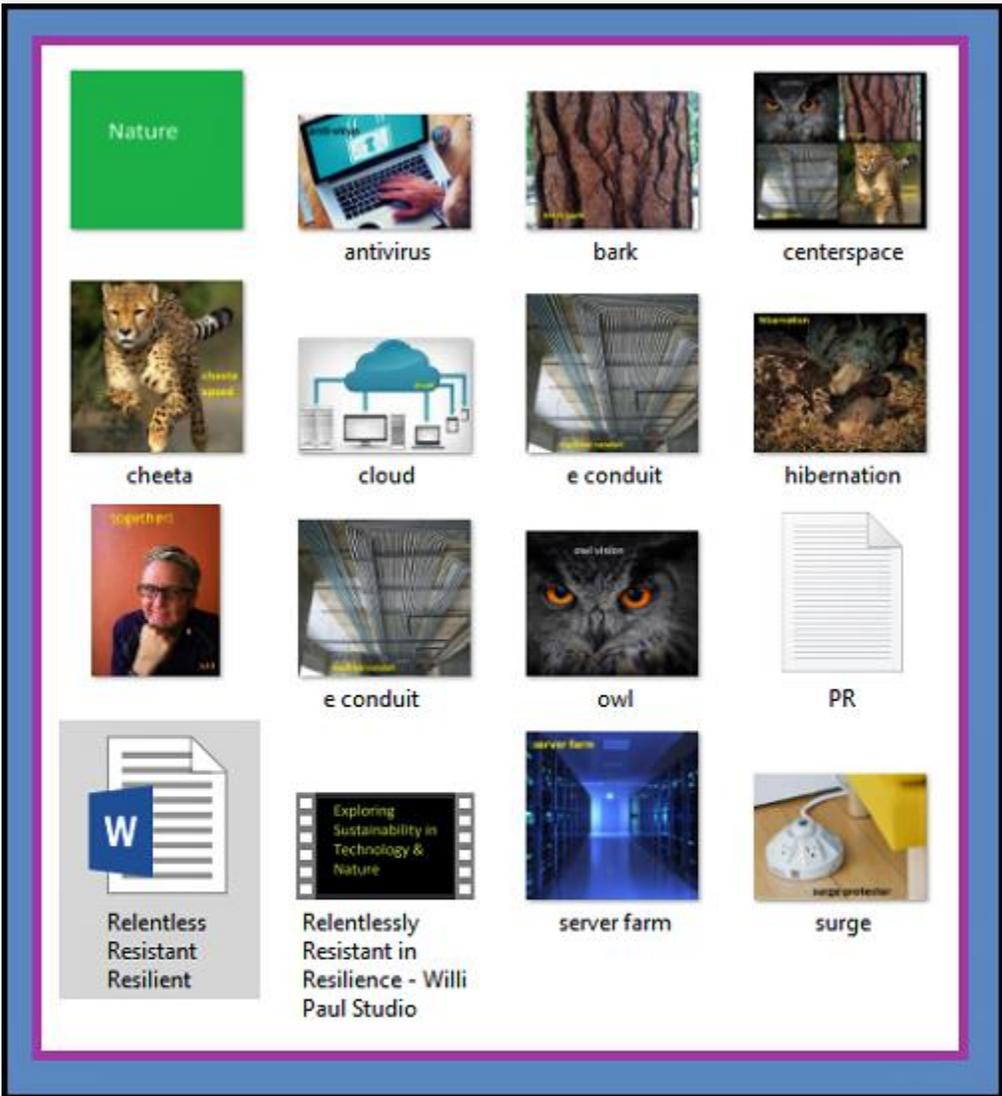
\* \* \* \* \*

**Questions --**

1. How would you interpret and connect the 8 symbols in the illustration?

2. How would you design and test your own symbols?

3. Where do Re-Wilding and Permaculture not mix well?



# kid's video

"[Relentless Resistant Resilient](#): Exploring Sustainability in Technology & Nature" - [Children's Edu-Video](#) + Questions. [New Myth #95](#)

Hey Folks - The video is [right here](#)!!

\* \* \* \* \*

**You are Relentless!**  
not quitting; maintaining the course

**You are Resistant!**  
pushing back under pressure

**We are Resilient!**

your family responds to changes together and recovers quickly

\* \* \* \* \*

### **Technology Sounds -**

#### **Server Farm**

BerberFarmyard2.wav  
acclivity

#### **Electrical Conduit Electricity**

deleted\_user\_7146007

#### **Cloud Data Storage**

Wind in a tree in the Mojave Desert (California, USA)  
felix.blume

#### **Anti-Virus Protection**

boxing with bag  
alebrujo

#### **Surge Protector**

Fog Horn.wav  
CGEffex

### **Nature Sounds -**

#### **Thick Bark - Thick Skin**

Scfi\_Electric\_Hum\_01.wav  
xixishi

#### **Owl's Night Vision**

Evening Glade.wav  
NLM

#### **Cheetah Speed**

Fast Car Drive  
produktes

#### **Hibernation - Grizzly Bear**

Growl (CDistorted).wav  
djfroyd

#### **Lightning Burns** - fire creates conditions for new growth

Lightning Strike  
Turrus

[ Thank you [Freesound.org](https://www.freesound.org) sound artists ]

### **Questions -**

1. Break into small groups and come up with your own definitions of:

- + Relentlessness
- + Resistance
- + Resilience

2. What helps you learn new material the best?

3. Are the captions helpful?
4. What doe tree bark feel like?
5. Should the accompanied sounds make literal sense?
6. The key production elements are text, picture and sound? Want to do you a voice over for a future Studio project?
7. Are you doing "the sustainability" around the house and yard? At school?
8. I suspect that grizzly bear hibernation involves a lot of snoring. Agree?
9. Compare the noise and security of a barn yard to a server farm!



**"Leopard Noise" - What happens when we use sound samples instead of human speak in Nature cartoons?**

"Presenting animals to children in ways that are similar to how humans act and behave is likely to be counter-productive for learning scientifically accurate information about the biological world and to influence children's view of the biological world." - Patricia A. Ganea

\*\*\*\*\*

View the [video at YouTube](#) -

**Introduction Issues -**

What happens when we replace human voices with photo stills?

What do the sound samples symbolize?

"A Nature Sound Cartoon?"

Disney - Animates with human voices and behaviors with animals in Nature

What are we teaching our kids? To what effect?

\*\*\*\*\*

**Anthropomorphism** is the attribution of human traits, emotions, and intentions to non-human entities and is considered to be an innate tendency of human psychology.

**Personification** is the related attribution of human form and characteristics to abstract concepts such as nations, emotions and natural forces like seasons and the weather.

*Both have ancient roots as storytelling and artistic devices, and most cultures have traditional fables with anthropomorphized animals as characters. People have also routinely attributed human emotions and behavioral traits to wild as well as domestic animals. (WIKI)*

- FreeSound.org Sample Credits -

Hide  
Heart Beat  
thenudo

Strech Scan  
metro-copy-machine-close.aif  
alienistcog

Smell  
Car drive by 05.WAV  
luminadii

Hunger Explore  
Borborygmi  
bone666138

Stealth  
Undercover.wav  
furbyguy

Movement Prey  
Dark Ambient Music 3: Hunted  
Xanco123

Pounce  
free hip hop sample 11.wav  
Halima Ahkdar

Fight Bite  
Jumping On a Bed  
deleted\_user\_7146007

Capture Drag  
Alien message capture.wav  
vumseplutten1709

Feast  
Chewing Gum.aif  
nextmaking

Sleep  
Sleeping giant.wav  
vumseplutten1709

THANK YOU! - WOX



turning, renewal



cob bench community



water birth, diversity



Nature Steward



magic, Nature wisdom



togetherness, eco-business



ecoAlchemy - transmutation



dance, new Nature rituals



reuse - recycling

Permaculture  
Symbols #2  
Willi Paul  
[openmythsources.com](http://openmythsources.com)

New Songs, Poems,  
Art and Myths



metamorphosis, freedom

## Permaculture Symbols 2. A Video for Kids with Eyes of Steel and Overflowing Feet!

[Watch the Permaculture Symbols 2 video](#) by Willi Paul and read along!

\* \* \* \* \*

### Permaculture Symbols 2 -

Here is a tool kit from Nature so you can create new songs, stories, poems and smiles. Can we grow new myths for the Permaculture Age together?

**Shovel** - turning, renewal

**Cob bench** - community

**Pond** - water birth, diversity

**Sun flower** - Nature Steward

**Moon** - magic, Nature wisdom

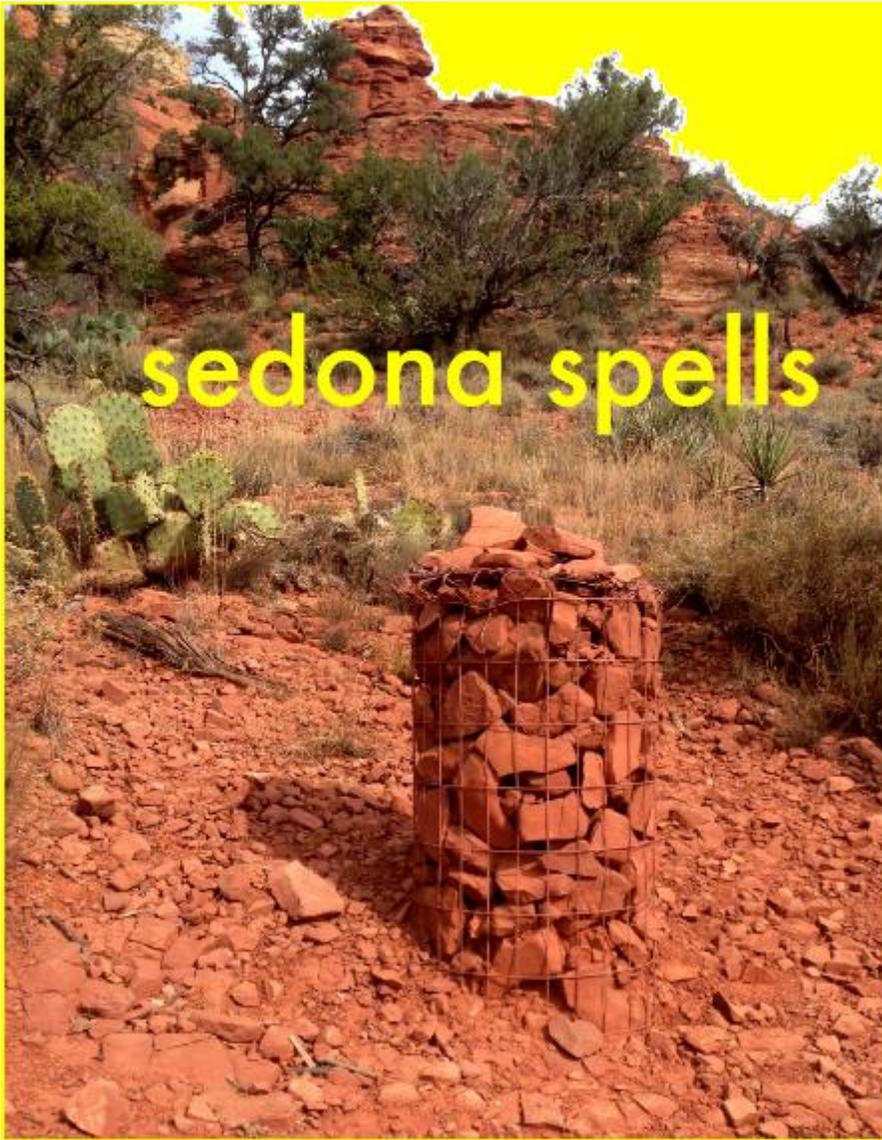
**Bees** - togetherness, eco-business

**Lightning** - ecoAlchemy - transmutation

**Cob feet** - dance, new Nature rituals

**Broken concrete** - reuse - recycling

**Butterflies** - metamorphosis, freedom



["Sedona Spells: Kid's Nature Cartoon."](#) Video Short

\*\*\*\*\*

### The Spell

sedona spells

vortexhaze

124

cactuspotions

prick

streambanks

redsaints

ha!

you!

upsideowntree

beanestnow!

sun's

soulful

arch

uptoourknees

floatingforestkeys!

ultraterraspawn

roots

oldwings

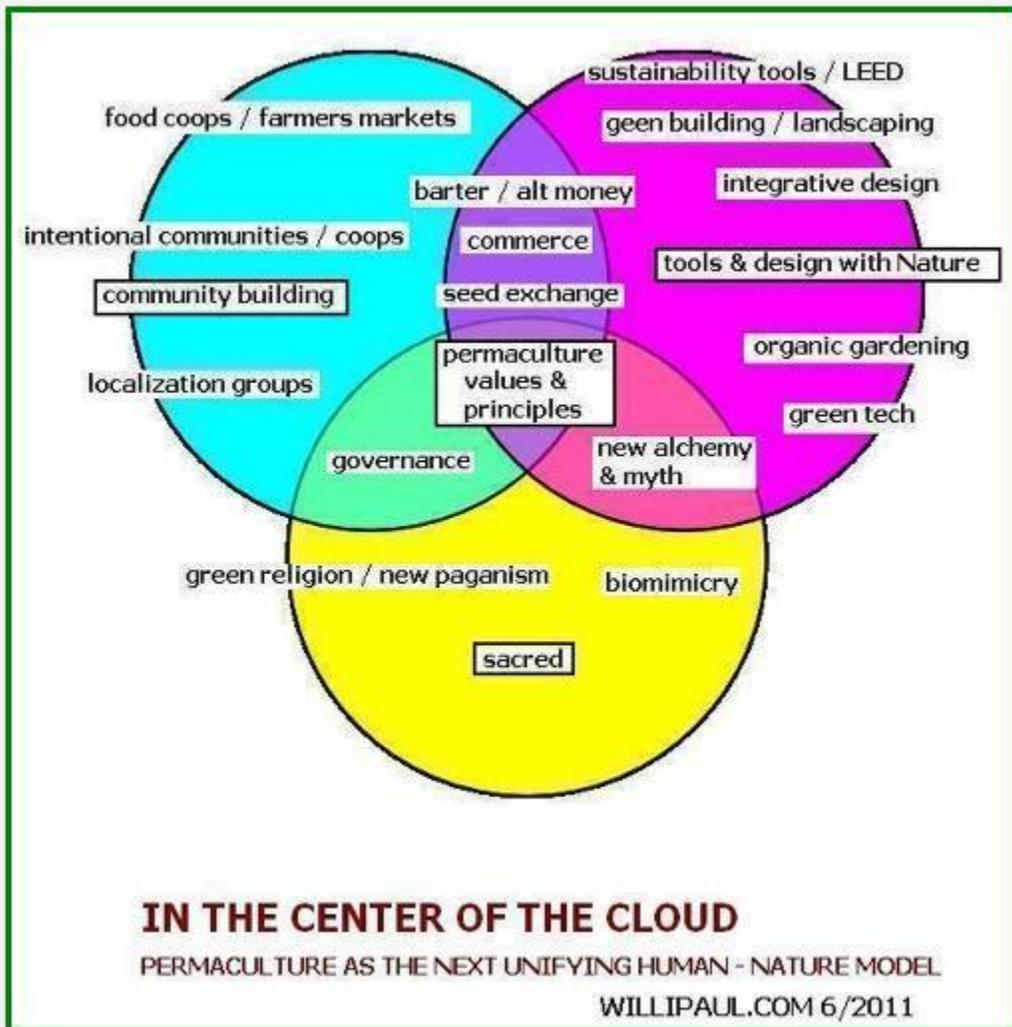
towerskies

tunnelboys

circleclocks

releaseus

twinea



Center of the Cloud - Permaculture as the New Unifying Model for Human - Nature.

Watch the video by [clicking here](#).



"Sacred Trees and Refuges" - Interview with Rachel S. McCoppin, Author of [The Lessons of Nature in Mythology](#)

'The Lessons of Nature in Mythology reveals the important role of nature in mythology: from creation myths, myths that present the necessity of the harvest for survival, myths that tie humans to wild aspects of the environment, and finally myths that reveal the human life cycle as no different from the cycles of the seasons.' (McCoppin, p. 16)

\* \* \* \* \*

**Interview with Rachel by Willi**

**Who controls myth today? Can people write new ones (mine are [here](#))?**

This is a really good question - ancient mythology was often the sacred stories of a people. Mythology provided humans with answers to some of humanity's most difficult questions, about morality or mortality for instance. Therefore, many scholars have questioned what happened to the powerful role of myth in contemporary times. I think that myths how they were intended in ancient times, especially in nature-dependent cultures, have largely been forgotten in our times, but I do believe that there are many instances in contemporary culture that still shows remnants of mythological concepts. Your question asks "who controls the myths today" - I would say that we certainly see mythological concepts in popular culture, as well as the media.

I think this use of these concepts can be good, but I also think it is mostly detrimental; for instance, definitions of a hero in contemporary film, like the many films of superheroes, often present stunted versions of the heroic journey where the heroes of today represent unattainable versions of heroism. They are shown as stronger, braver, etc. than the average person, and so audiences admire them, but do not relate to them. I feel that ancient myths, conversely, often portrayed heroes that audiences could relate to-the heroes often failed their journeys, were overcome with doubt and confusion, etc. Again, the myths were sacred stories, so when audiences related to the heroes, they could find meaning in the stories that might help them in their own lives.

**How do define [archetypes](#) in your book?**

I define archetypes in my book according to many themes addressed by mythological scholars as common archetypes, but I specifically focus my book on natural themes as important archetypes within myths, such creation and destruction archetypes, divine and mystical beings as personifications of nature, etc.

**Here are my elements of modern myths. Your feedback?**

1. Para-normal
2. Universal struggle
3. Journey, Initiation, Community as Hero
4. Symbols
5. Alchemy
6. Nature is Sacred
7. Threat of apocalypse
8. Digital - Non-Digital Collision
9. Future/ Sci Fi-based
10. Permaculture and Transition

**There are many examples of man's [destruction of Nature](#) and the seasonal cycle. Monsanto's toxins and the world [drought](#) are examples. Are there new myths surrounding this phenomenon?**

Yes, your examples here are great, and when I look at them, I see many archetypes that exist in myriad world myths from ancient times. Many myths present mystical elements in their tales, such as the para-normal, or examples of alchemy; often these elements are presented to encourage audiences of the myths to embrace aspects of the world that are difficult to understand by only using logic. Again, in heroic myth, the hero often must enter upon a phase in the heroic quest where he or she becomes confused; sometimes this occurs in a mythical otherworld, where often there are para-normal characters or mystical elements serving to push the hero into embracing a world view that is different from the one held by the hero before his or her quest began. I think these elements in contemporary times might serve similar purposes as we see them in more ancient renditions of mythology.

The format of "universal struggle" or the archetypal hero's journey that you mention are topics that fascinate everyone I think. Many scholars look towards these tenets that seem to appear in myriad myths, and so they wrestle with how this came about. Many, like Jung and Campbell

for instance, declare that we see these tenets again and again, even in modern tales, because they are human elements. We, as humans, conceive of our lives following patterns that existed since the beginning of human history. We face struggles, and view the effort to overcome these struggles in terms of a quest; we relate to stories where a protagonist has learned something valuable because of their quest. It gives us purpose when called to venture upon our own journeys.

Your examples of the presentation of nature in modern myth is interesting. I think there is a tendency to present "nature as sacred" as you say, but in contemporary times, it seems we do this, but in a way that is profoundly removed from how this message may have been portrayed in ancient myth. Nature-dependent cultures, such as those in the Neolithic period, were of course intimately involved with nature; they depended upon the environment for their survival. The cycles of the seasons, the success of the harvest, etc. were elements that Neolithic people were highly aware of; therefore, their perceptions of divinity, and what was constituted as sacred, was firmly intertwined with nature. Many nature-dependent cultures conceived of humans as inseparable from the natural world, as equal to other living beings, and believed that time was cyclical, not linear, because death in nature, was something that appeared temporary.

Therefore, many myths from nature-dependent cultures focus on the message that death for all living beings is only one moment in an endless, natural cycle-in spring and summer botanical elements thrive, but in fall and winter they wither and die; however, in spring, these same elements appear to be reborn. When myths present humans as also adhering to this natural cycle, the message of the meaning of life and death is arguably a very different message than the ones our contemporary culture offers. By showing that nature as sacred today, I feel we do this without sincerity, without an understanding of what that really means or what it meant to many nature-dependent cultures. Nature, today, for instance, is often presented as a sacred place of respite, where we can go to escape our busy lives, but after we do this, we leave nature to enter again into our busy lives; we seldom define our lives, or ourselves for that matter, as firmly a part of nature. We certainly, in contemporary American culture, seem not to hold nature as superior to ourselves, so this changes the portrayals we offer of the natural world.

## **What are of few critical initiations and rituals in Nature and modern-day myths?**

We, in contemporary culture, have many old rituals that we continue to perform that have been in some way connected to the rituals of ancient times—the celebrations surrounding May Day, or the solstices, bringing in a tree at Christmas, dying eggs at Easter, dressing up at Halloween. All of these practices come from more traditional celebrations of the seasons of nature. I think, though, that often we might not know or recognize the important connection to nature these rituals might signify, so we perform the actions without embracing the intended meaning. For instance, solstice or May Day celebrations often have people erecting a May Pole and dancing around it, but internalizing the great need for spring to again resume in order to propel the harvest season, so that the people can prosper, is not really an aspect of the ritual today as it was in more traditional times.

## **I do not live in Greece and see very little of the old myths in Silicon Valley or elsewhere. There is no Mt. Olympus. Money is King. Help?!**

I live in Minnesota, and for me, I do have to be close to abundant nature to feel fulfilled. I spent many years living near Detroit, and I struggled to find the solace that nature provides me today. I became fascinated by myths because of seeing the patterns of nature in more intimate terms in a remote environment. When I started to visit places like Greece or Ireland, I was struck by how much the landscape at these places seemed to fit the myths so well. The land seemed to be the myth in many ways; for instance, in seeing the landscape that birthed the famed Greek Herakles, rugged mountains, sparse brush, it fit the conception of this hero who wore a lion skin and carried a club. Mythology for me, when I started to reexamine the myths I had always loved, took on a different meaning.

I started to see that so many myths followed patterns evident in nature each day. Multiple myths strove to define divine beings, heroes, quests, in terms of natural elements or seasonal change. Then, for me, the myths really came alive; they helped me look out at the nature around me in Minnesota and find meaning in my own life. This isn't to say that people in more developed locations cannot also find mythic meaning in the nature that still exists around them. Near Detroit, I remember finding a single tree that for some reason moved me; I remember looking forward to the intersection where this tree stood because seeing it, I could firmly see the changes of the seasons, when I might have missed them living my busy life. I think wherever you are, once you internalize the natural mythic messages that were so sacred to people for millennia, you view mythology, but also nature, differently.

## **When you write "natural elements" are you including pagan practices and mythology?**

Yes, but I view the term "pagan" was a definition later articulated by cultures that labeled the existing belief systems of a people as "pagan" because these beliefs were different from their own. Often many cultures with very different belief systems would be labeled "pagan". The practices and rituals of a culture undoubtedly affect the myths of the culture, and so striving to understand these cultural elements is important when studying mythology.

## **How do you interpret Nature and mythology in places like wildlife refuges and zoos?**

I think that, as I spoke above a bit, how we define nature as a culture shows how nature is depicted in our modern myths, our attempts at preserving places as refuges, etc. I think all attempts preserving nature as it is, is of course wonderful. Encouraging people to get out into nature as often as possible is an important thing. But, again, reflections of the importance of nature often seems like a passing whim. To destress, we seek nature, but only for a few moments. Also, the nature we seek is often cultivated. We want parks with paved paths; nature then becomes a tool that humans have tamed for their benefit. In myths from many ancient and/or nature-dependent cultures, this view of nature is not only absurd, but it is a dangerous view. We have multiple myths that showcase mythic characters who believe they can control nature, and they end up destroyed by nature. Many myths speak towards the importance of embracing all aspects of nature, not only the pleasant elements.

## **Can you speak to the recent rise of [rewilding](#) life style? Is this movement capable of creating new myths?**

I think that all attempts at immersing oneself in nature is going to be beneficial for the individual, but from my perspective, I'm not sure if by doing this, we will create new myths that mimic what we see when a culture as a whole is fully dependent upon nature for survival. We can always invent new myths; literature and film has provided us countless examples of "new" myths, but the purpose behind the myths I think is of vital importance if we are ever to come close to the intention of the cultures that created their respective myths. If we create a myth as a tale that captures something that is sacred to us, then it becomes a myth. If nature is viewed as vitally sacred by a people, then it too can become part of a new mythology in a way that might at least come close to the way I see it often being presented in ancient mythology.

## **It seems obvious that science and technology have over-taken Nature as cultural game changers and myth limiters. Your thoughts?**

Yes, for sure, as I spoke above, I firmly think that when a culture forgets their tie to nature, it places people at an unrealistic place where they feel falsely superior to the elements of the natural world. If we forget our place within nature, as only one part of nature, then we abuse nature, and of course end up abusing ourselves.

**What the "land reveals" sounds like a [permaculture](#) process that asks the designer to study the "lay of the land" and come up with a holistic plan.**

I think ancient myths are largely created from people's perception of the landscape and the processes of nature. Again, mythology consists of the sacred stories of a people, so portraying an understanding of nature, or at least a reverence of nature in myth, makes it understood that nature is sacred to the people creating the myth. I have traveled to a few ancient locations, in Greece, Italy, Spain, Ireland, Scotland, etc., that were held as sacred to the cultures that created some of our most beloved myths, and to me the locations chosen for the sacred temple, sanctuary, etc. seems to have been precisely chosen according to a holistic plan that in every way incorporated the landscape - seeing this also, for me, helps me understand the myths that are connected to these important places.

**Can the soil still be a catalyst for myth making today?**

This is an interesting question - I would say that the soil played a fundamental role in ancient mythology. The soil was often viewed in myriad cultures as birthing the first elements of nature, as well as the first human beings. Many cultures also envisioned the land, and especially the soil, as alive, so myths were created that explained all life emerging from the soil as well as returning to it upon death. Womb-like imagery of a Mother Earth Goddess emerges from this in many cultures, so it is interesting to think of the myths that might come from contemplating the soil today. Again, though, the soil in Neolithic communities for instance, would probably have held much more significance to people than most would attribute to it today. And myths only become sacred if they truly speak to what the audience hold as sacred.

**When are [Nature sounds](#) elements in myth?**

This is also an interesting question - I think that all elements of nature have at some point become tenets found within myth: rivers, trees, flowers, even fleas. Often single aspects of nature become personified, as nymphs in Greek mythology for instance, or even as divine beings, like the Hawaiian Pele. But, thinking about "nature sounds" makes me think about one's perception of nature while immersed within it - the sounds one hears in nature within myriad myths identities for the audience of the myth exactly how the mythological character perceives his or her natural environment.

**Please define holy, sacred and [sacrifice](#) in modern day mythology?**

What is deemed holy or sacred today might be more connected with abstract concepts, rather than the concrete conceptions of the sacred in many ancient myths, especially in terms of reverence for the environment. I think the concept of sacrifice has profoundly changed in many contemporary renditions. Many films for instance show sacrifice in terms of something a hero does that is so profound it deserves high acclaim, but many myths from nature-dependent cultures present sacrifice in terms, again, of the patterns of nature. If many nature-dependent cultures view life as cyclical, following the seasonal patterns of the environment, sacrifice becomes something that is portrayed as less monumental than it is in contemporary versions of myth. The American Indian Penobscot myth of the Corn Mother, shows the divine Corn Mother asking her husband to kill her and drag her corpse over the land, so that her body can produce the staple crop of corn to enable the survival of her children and community. This is certainly a sacrifice, but in this myth, it is presented as mundane, as the Corn Mother doesn't really die; she merely dies for a moment, but is reborn as corn. Today mythic sacrifice in films often show the character as a hero who deserves fame for his or her sacrifice because it is viewed as an ultimate end.

**What are some "end of Nature" myths - old and new? Is environmental destruction also mythic creation?**

Many ancient myths of destruction exist, in Indian, Norse, Greek, Roman, etc., mythology. Though, often myths that showcase the end of the world do so in a way that is similar to the myth of the Corn Mother. The world is viewed as adhering to the same patterns of the seasons as humans must adhere to, so death for the world is required, as it is required for all living beings who live upon the earth. But, again, like the myth of the Corn Mother shows, death in a culture that views time as cyclical, is only one momentary stage of nature's patterns; therefore, when the world is destroyed by a flood, or cataclysmic event, a new world always emerges, as everlasting life, in natural terms, is a promise of the environment.

The Norse myth of Ragnarok shows the world, and all the beings who exist in it, including the divine Aesir, as dying, but a new world

will be born from the destruction of this world, so yes, mythic destruction is viewed as always mythic creation when viewed in the terms of nature. However, what happens when we as a people have destroyed the environment, so that its promise of renewal, which is such an integral aspect of so many ancient myths becomes threatened? I think the myths change, but as with the contemporary myths of the hero who is misrepresented and therefore may not provide audiences with meaning in their own lives, I worry that our many filmic depictions of destruction might present a possibility of this ancient rebirth coming from destruction when the health of the environment depends upon its ability to assure this cycle.

### **Myth arises out of Nature only? Would there be myth without humans?**

I love these questions - I label the introduction of my book, and also conclude it with a statement that is connected to your questions here. I feel, as I discussed above, that the land or nature really is the focus of the myth. Herakles is the rugged mountains of Greece, Demeter and her daughter Persephone are the harvest. You ask "would there be myth without humans"; since I view so many myths as just a human attempt to capture their understanding of nature, I think that we would just lose this attempt at conceiving what nature is, but nature would of course continue its patterns, if it has not been destroyed to a level that it cannot perpetuate these patterns.

### **Can Nature be the Hero? Can the community be the Hero?**

I do think that nature is the hero of most heroic myths; in fact, next year in fall 2016, I have another book being published by McFarland entitled *The Cycles of Nature in the Hero's Journey*, which focuses on precisely showing heroes in this light.

I also think that the community is always a part of the discussion of myth, but the way we define community is important. For me, the community of the myth is the audience, and yes, I think that the point of telling the myth, especially myths of the heroic quest, is to teach the audience how their lives are connected to the lessons of the myth, which for me are natural lessons.

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### **Bios -**

Rachel McCoppin, Ph.D. is a Professor of literature at the University of Minnesota Crookston. She has published articles in the areas of mythology and comparative literature. She has published a scholarly book by McFarland: [The Lessons of Nature in Mythology](#) (2015). Her work has appeared in journals including: *Symbiosis*, *Studies in American Humor*, *Studies in the Novel*, and *World Literary Review*. She has also published articles in many scholarly books published by Palgrave Macmillan, McFarland, Atlantic, and Greenwood Press.

Willi Paul is integrating the permaculture, transition and new mythology movements. He has published articles, interviews, eBooks and new myths at Planetshifter.com since 2008. Please see his [portfolio](#) and collected works at [academia.edu](#).

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### ["Noah's honey rust fortress \("junk yard permaculture." New Myth #21](#)

"Have you ever sat near a roaring brook and felt refreshed, been cheered by the vibrant song of a thrush or renewed by a sea breeze? Does a wildflower's fragrance bring you joy, a whale or snow-capped peak charge your senses? You did not take a class to learn to feel these innate joys. We are born with them. As natural beings, that is how we are designed to know life and our life. Dramatically, new sensory nature activities culturally support and reinforce those intelligent, feelingful natural relationships. In natural areas, backyard to back country, the activities create thoughtful nature-connected moments. In these enjoyable non-language instants our natural attraction senses safely awaken, play and intensify. Additional activities immediately validate and reinforce each natural sensation as it comes into consciousness. Still other activities guide us to speak from these feelings and thereby create nature-connected stories. These stories become part of our conscious thinking."

### [On Connecting with nature: An Interview with Mike Cohen](#)

\* \* \* \* \*

"Are you the resistance or the enforcer?"

"Depends on what you have to loose, girl."

"Up periscope, Noah?"

"Yepper. Now where is that darn critter?"

\* \* \* \* \*

### **A circuit of safe huts**

Noah's shiny green donut hole of rusting cars and trucks from the occupation world now rings his psyche and permaculture visions like a boa constrictor wrapping around a freaked-out chipmunk. Some folks call the place "D-Troi."

His particular version of the safe hut concept is just one of many designs that were established to help keep leaders and vendors safe as the Transitionites continue rebuilding the people and towns in Cascadia. Zeek and Molly's tree house and vertical garden is next on the path, 12 miles north, fit with pulleys to get up and the across the Blue river.

"None of them dark light bastards can get into my place but that raccoon sure can, he is an egg thief to beat all."

"There he is!"

Noah never meant to be part of the Transition, it just sorta fell on his head. Strange people just started showing up with food and seeds and he bartered his security. He had to make a choice between bad times and better values. His junk car collection is now a 14' high ring of old gas guzzlers, tires and dead chrome. One has to know where the tunnel is to access the place. He considers

himself the king of sheet mulch. The soil in the space is long gone toxic from the rust of old times and technologies.

He trades in honey, wire and hub caps, batteries, fabrics, wind shields, tires and salty stories.

Noah's camp is more like an ameba, built with multiple rings: gnarly steel and mashed-down upholstery; a food forest ring, junk cars, then the commons. A semi-chaotic, semi-integrated / biodegraded ecosystem with bees and honey.

Herbs dangle in old pots and starter plants are snuck into tires. The cob oven smokes up on one end of the commons and solo tents ring the other. Noah can pull a patch work awning over the space if rain wets the place.

**Junk yard permaculture - with a sacred twist.**

\* \* \* \* \*

**Tires are beat drums, hub caps percussion**

While the coon waddled back to his own hole in the woods, other humanoid creatures arrive around dusk for the new Moon ritual. The cob oven is repurposed this night as the heart torch for Nature visions.

The center space is kickin' with dust and whirling ankles.

Chanting, arms entwined in a circle, the howls and imaginations of the dancers boil into One.

A time to revolve, give thanks and spin some Love.

To share the story of future now.

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WOX



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