

openmythsources.com -

Activating the New Alchemy and Mythologies for the Sustainability Age



Book 2 – New Myth Series & Foundation Articles

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Hearing the Light

Foreword by Willi Paul

The Calling is my Journey

It's what we haven't discovered and shared that drives us on
Mythic Voyageurs

re: Contextualizing Joseph Campbell for the Sustainability Age

Are you a Shaman?

Is Sustainability like a new religion?

Save the planet or save the humans?

It's getting late. It's getting hot. Welcome to the flood zone

Come on, you have to want to be initiated, right?

Write new myths, we can live them together

Make sound, blend us into a new world

Openmythsources.com - Activating the New Alchemy and Mythologies for the Sustainability Age, Book One,

incorporates PlanetShifter.com Magazine and openmythsources.com vision and content for a living, evolving community of ideas by activating the new mythologies and alchemy. This synergy will produce a series of books and community

events, integrating online and face-to-face tools, global values and ideas. We will fertilize and grow a rich cross-section of youth, adults and seniors by re-inventing and supporting the sustainability and mythic mandate.

The selected interviews are presented from earliest (4/09) to most recent (10/10) and do not marquee any so-called celebrities – all activists, artists and green business PEOPLE in Book One the book are treated as equals. The original PlanetShifter.com Magazine URL's are listed with each interview so you can see the original and complete image, biographical and organizational information on each person. There are many more interviews at PlanetShifter.com Magazine than appear in this tome.

Generally, the interviews weave one or more of the following subjects:

- Permaculture as a new system of community values
- Power of Sound to transform us
- The alchemy of both complex and simple acts
- Nature-based spirituality
- Synchronicity, metaphor and analogy
- Light & transmutations
- Alchemy of metaphors: bees and seeds, turtles
- "From LinkedIn.com to openmythsourc! "
- Looking for corners, loving the edges

Book Two, due out in November 2010, will present Mr. Paul's New Myth Series and posts from both web sites. Book Three includes illustrations from Mr. Metcalfe and long fiction from Willi.

Let us know if you would like to collaborate on an interview for PlanetShifter.com Magazine.

Please upload your myths, songs, symbols and stories at openmythsourc.com and discuss our visions!

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the open myth source initiation

Introduction by David Metcalfe

Coming into the 21st century we have countless pressures to adjust to: Manic self indulgence rampant in our corporate culture, tensions and violence from dissatisfied groups, irresponsible individuals, crumbling ideologies, and an environment that, whether due to human causes or not, is changing in ways that will be uncomfortable for the status quo within a very short time.

The suburban life that so many in the U.S. are used to is not a viable way of living. Unreasoned industry and the illusion of technological efficiency are eating away at local communities. Old, viable patterns of understanding the world are being unraveled faster than they can be replaced. In this unstable situation we must be capable of constant change and witness to uncountable revelations to overcome, endure and build into the future.

What's it take to get people motivated for change? William S. Burroughs once mentioned that he was working on creating a mythology for the space-age. His works were allegorical tales to help guide intrepid travelers into the new age of inner & outer space.

So what about the age of sustainability? Who will be the tale bearers for our struggle to maintain a viable ecology, sustainable social structures and more intelligent and ethical business models? Burroughs and his visions of Nova are wonderful for tearing down old infrastructures, but a time comes when we've got to start building again.

Our stories are sold by pimps and pushers of culture prepackaged and inert. Poets, writers, visual artists, and musicians are left to the stale memory of commerce, but when you speak to their friends, families and those that travel with them a different story emerges. Real lives appear through the foggy words of academic analysis; tears and laughter are shared beyond biographies. It is here that the [open myth source] project begins, in the raw roots of creativity, in the alchemy of the everyday.

One of the most rewarding things about our current communication platforms is the number of inspiring folks out there who are jumping in with no reservations and getting things done. The only way things are going to get better is if we all take a step sideways from our usual routine and start looking at things in a more profound way.

"The enclosure of the commons by sociopathic corporate elites ensures conversion of inherent value into manufactured scarcity." – Chris Arkenberg, Institute for the Future

This manufactured scarcity exists beyond the physical and extends into a scarcity of meaning. Our aesthetic value, and the power that it holds, is also being encircled. Orpheus played music seducing the gods themselves, the cathedrals and temples brought down the spirit of divinity for the masses to reflect on. What's that Pepsi logo doing for you? Had any moments of sublimity with that one?

Are we so lost in the wilds of consumerism that we can't hear the hollow drums of societal collapse pounding in our ears. Look at a Kurdish Sufi ritual. Is that music there to justify an opinion, news byte or marketing scheme? No, the beat of those drums reflects the movement of life, the dancers become one with the movement of constellations and society is held together by the shared breath of their heart sung prayers.

Art and creativity used as a corporate brand device is actively manufacturing a scarcity of meaning in our society.

For all the freedom these organizations claims to foster with their crippled charity, what they truly foster is a vacant hole where a real message could be housed. This isn't about hating corporations; this is about the responsibility of the creative class.

Disenchantment is a sociological idea that Max Weber worked with, the research of George Hansen has shown that in the development of our society this process of disenchantment reflects a deep seated movement towards stasis and the death of meaning. This isn't just a matter of being "disenchanted" on a personal level, stop for a moment and realize how disenchanted the whole sloppy world has become. "What's the point of art or poetry?" we're asked almost daily by cheap newspapers run by dollar eyed manipulators. Magic my friend! The whole point is magic.

Creative folks have been seduced into thinking that their output is simply to beautify a cheap marketing scheme.

People talk about how beautiful the designs are in the caves of Lascaux. Those cave paintings weren't there to decorate the walls. The term caveman is a fictitious term, there were never any cavemen. Our ancestors weren't living in caves. The cave is a place of initiation. Go to any traditional culture and look for cave dwellers. If you find someone living in a cave it's going to be a shaman or a monastic.

Those cave paintings weren't the equivalent of cheap reproductions you pick up at IKEA to give the room some dubious class, those were painted to aid the hunt. This is the real hunt, for direct sustenance, sustenance not off put by capital where you re-buy your labor with interest so you can head to the 7-11 for some snacks and a coke.

While the creative class in the West is relegated to the socially acceptable version of designing tags for Heroin packets, we're teetering on the verge of a complete cultural transformation. Forget the BP spill, forget the burgeoning tensions in the Middle East, the narco armies in Mexico, forget every drop of weaponized Uranium floating around on the black market, even our positive progress is reaching a point that some serious thinking is in order.

Our scientists and technicians are building things that require deep thought before we put them into play. The Singularity sounds stupid to every reasonably minded, well adapted, citizen. It sounds stupid because genius is not reasonable, nor well adapted, genius is the spark of change. We need new mythologies to bring us together, new songs, new stories, built on the beauty of the old traditions.

A key note speech at the World Future Society's annual convention in 2010 brought to light some of ethical and practical concerns that the Singularity raises. The ethical implications of smart drugs, Artificial Intelligence, surveillance, cybernetics, life extension technologies and all of the other developments that define the Singularity movement need to be better understood. The surprising political ramifications that came out of the development of nuclear weapons shows us that this kind of technological advance is best accompanied by serious thought.

In a situation like this why are our creative thinkers being wasted on designing websites for businesses?

There are too many stale ideas, old habits, prudish strategies being passed around as gospel in a time when the opportunities opened up by communications technology makes a much richer experience possible. You get some crippled thinker at the top espousing ideas on making fast cash and pretty soon there's another cell phone vendor moving in where the bookstore used to be.

The [open myth source] project is an open call to all who can hear it to guide our limping society back into shape before the whole thing blows up in our face. We need some cave paintings for the hunt, our hunters are ill equipped and someone's been fattening them with potato chips.

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New Myths & Foundation Articles

NEW MYTHS SERIES (6)

Lightning washing the dream seeds [open myth source #6]

<http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1696>

walking in
indian summer souls
'round the block

nobody else believes me

falling from the trees
i was born up here

burning old quarter moons
solar flares

unplugging holes in your heart
tiny mythic mix-ups

lightning washing
the dream seeds

* * * * *

lightning washing the dream seeds

The day was heart thumping. Rising mists from the west way coast and a climbing faceful of sun over east. Muir pumped her mountain bike on Nature's back, admiring.

Slam-bang burst of green white lightning! threw her against the ground. Dazed. Guacamole and water bottles flying! The massive Redwood not 25 yards from her was split in two. A weird yellow smoke mingled in the midst with a confused Sun.

"Hey Missey!" Shouted something near the smoldering crack. "We meet again!" A filthy little human was waving his stick, his beard on fire. "Water, quick!"

Muir raced over to the knob of a man, dousing him with her Sierra Club canteen. The filtered water from her Haight Ashbury walk-up had a second, wondrous effect.

"Oh my, oh my, beeeezers," the wizard cried! Hidden in the root mass below the ground, exposed by the lightning, was a small cave full of bones, feathers and old pots and pans. And his ancient Redwood seeds.

"My seeds!" he is now way confused, like a child trying to make solar energy at night. Muir ran around and around his needle and soil encrusted alchemy ruin in awe.

"You are not the comet and this is not the year 2112!"

"We must plant the dream seeds now, her vision is clear," he said shaking. 1000 baby tree sprouts are already snaking in and around each other - weaving a bright white green mass of young roots that are now rising out of the root cave.

From the Redwoods an army of black squirrels came into the clearing, tails wagging, ready to re-forest the hillside from rocky outcrop to ocean side.

"Spirit speed to the Blackies!"

Muir had no doubt that these new trees would play a critical role in the survival of the planet.

But that's another dream....

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Sonoma Ecosystem Restoration Group and the Rainbows at Rock Dam [open myth source #5]

<http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1680>

The Rainbow Trout were gurgling in meditation, slow dancing at the base of Rock Dam when Katrina and Zeke showed up with 120 lb. packs of explosives - and festering dreams. The fish knew what they wanted; what they needed. To "Get Up Stream!"

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.

The King always grabs a serious tone when relaying the ethics of permaculture with his subjects:

- * **Care of the Earth** - includes all living and non-living things - plants, animals, land, water and air
- * **Care of People** - promotes self-reliance and community responsibility & access to necessary resources for existence
- * **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.

Permaculture is great fun. There are many festivals and workshops for all ages: The bi-annual [Seed Swap](#) helps to safeguard against GMO or toxic seeds from the bad corporations.

The Lattice Tie Party to tie-up creeping vegetables like snap peas and beans. Come on, lets' pruning the apple trees and then eat through the berry patch and take home a quart for Mom!

The King and his older friends are constantly fidgeting with the [grey water pipes](#) - filtering and watering the crops with little City reserves.

The Permaculture King loves his [solar topped cob hut](#), the seasons and the compost stains on his feet and legs. His challenge isn't in the constant weeding and planting and harvests but the struggle to get the word out, to get out of the garden and tell the planet's peeps how to do the permaculture!

Alas, we are all like the King – shining; running round and round in our local days with an Atlas-like dream.

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Cortezia and the Green Apple Chamber [open myth source #3]

<http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1648>

The ancient granny apple orchard, all 72 scaly barked limbs and yearly scars, was snuck onto the property back in the 60's, when apple trees had equal standing next to Mary Jane and the pole beans. Green apples were baked, shined and sauced each year and could be like an eco-calendar, but not one checked on them like that.

The apples never make a fuss.

Cortezia and her friends are up on the warnings from the local permaculture coop web site about Konstanto, Inc. and their GMO business practices. Cortezia's father stopped what little corn cropping he was doing instead of messing with the "DNA Kings."

But the apple trees were still susceptible to the lawyers and black lab rats from the corp. so she needed a plan to protect the apple seed. The trees pollinated and bloomed each spring and then showered the land with tiny fragrant white pedals,... a signal that apples were coming!

There is one Mother Tree living on the land that stands taller than the rest - too big to hug completely like the others - and the one that always bears more fruit than the others.

Desperate to save the virgin seed stock and her little family orchard, Cortezia looks around the barn and house for a solution. Permaculture teaches her that people and Nature can live together. The old storm windows in the basement spark an idea in her head.

Protection against the GMO grifters for her tree and a science chamber or club house for her friends!

So she builds a protective glass shell around the old tree with the storm windows and some old barn framing. In order to allow the protective armor to “breathe” - to open and close as the Konstanto winds come and go each year - she adds multiple hinges to the window frames to give the old girl access to the good winds, birds and bugs that also need her.

“How long will the dark reign of the food gene manipulators last on Earth,” she ponders?

* * * * *

The bee cave spirits [open myth source #2]

<http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1638>

“The bee cave spirits”

After the Great Organic War when the oil corporations fought and lost the fight for energy resources to the planet’s food coops and sustainability communities, the honey bees suddenly disappeared. Few flowers were pollinated and plantation crops that needed the bees went without fruit.

All bee members from all North and South American hives flew into hiding under the fertile Kentucky soil, half a mile deep in an ancient cave – far away from the wireless and honey-less above.

Buzzing bodies and shaking wings. The Four Winds danced the bees to the conclave.

Many bees needed to be cleaned at the mouth of the cave by trained workers that recognized the pesticides on their thoraxes from home works or during the many rest stops along the way.

The queen bees perched on a high ledge in the back of the conclave together, enjoying the humming discourse all around them, a permaculture sound-vision in full bloom.

This cave is a scared vessel and has sponsored all kinds of evolution for species since the fire cracked and opened the earth back in pre-history. There are human and animal markings.

The honey makers need a super gene.

The Queens announced that a cross fertilizing would begin with some of them and some of the cleaner bees.

Feeding on the warm, filtered nutrients dripping from above, the Moon dancers loved the succession of baby bee generations, watching each herd come and go.

It took years to produce young bees with pesticide shielded genes.

The bee cave spirits are ever ready to heal the next alchemic creature that needs a soft, dark belly.

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The Leatherneck Clan and the Black Sea Men [open myth source #1]

<http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1612>

Outline:

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II. Selected LinkedIn and other contributions

III. Examples of related Stories, Songs, Symbols, Spirits?

IV. Search engines and web sites

V. Mythology Generator for the Sustainability Age - Process steps or menu

VI. The Oil Spill Myth – “The Leatherneck Clan and the Black Sea Men”

x. Neil Young Song

Primer

What are some of the social and cultural impacts from the BP oil spill?

This environmental catastrophe has been a big wake up call for many people. Questions about our oil consumption and fossil fuel dependency have trickled into the mainstream conversation. People are questioning why are we drilling so deep in a sensitive and fragile ecosystem, and whether there might be other cleaner, greener sources of energy. That these questions are being increasingly debated in our public discourse is a silver lining on an otherwise extremely black and ominous storm cloud.

While it's far too early to tell what the impacts will be from the BP oil spill, they will most certainly be far reaching. Some of them will be potentially devastating, particularly for the coastal communities of the Gulf of Mexico. One third of America's seafood is produced by these communities. The indigenous tribe of [Atakap](#) have depended on the Gulf for hundreds of years. The economies of these communities are also heavily dependent on tourism. How will these people cope with the loss of their livelihoods?

Yet, in every crisis there is opportunity. Perhaps this is the time for these people to begin to build resilience back into their communities, to create a more vibrant and fulfilling localized culture that is not dependent on a global, oil-based economy.

Raven Gray, President & Co-Founder, Transition US Interview - [PlanetShifter.com](#), 6/22/10

I. Introduction by David Metcalfe

This article demonstrates the power of the Web to bring together disparate voices to build a single, multi-faceted, story. I had some intimations of what this kind of information hub could be during the 2008 election. There were a lot of independent websites where people could write up and submit their dreams about Obama. It seemed to me that beyond the curiosity factor, this could be a powerful litmus test for the nation's collective psyche. The [Arlington Institute](#) was one step ahead of me, they host a dream database that serves as a sort of collective dream journal. When I saw that A.I. was already monitoring humanity's dreamscape in order to drive forecasting reports I realized "Whoa...that's an amazing resource..." Princeton has another program called the Global Consciousness Project based on experiments which have shown that changes in human consciousness seem to have an effect on Random Number Generators. They've placed RNG's across the globe, they call them eggs, and they monitor these for abnormal patterns in an attempt to gauge changes in the "Global Consciousness". Even Google is in on the game; using data from Google Trends,

researchers Hyunyoung Choi and [Hal Varian](#) were able to produce more accurate forecasting reports in [a number of areas](#). During the H1N1 scare researchers showed that it was possible to track the development and movement of the flu based on search patterns related to flu symptoms, medications and information.

All that is a side note to what I'm seeing here with Planetshifter, here you've got this litmus test for what folks in the sustainability field are thinking, through interviews, now through the LI group. Bring that together in a directed way and that's a really nice tool for change. You want to build a Mythology Generator for the Sustainability Age? This is a great way to start.

So how do we build a story machine?

We've heard again and again that stories are the lifeblood of change. They give shape to the issues at hand, present powerful heroes and villains whose relationships help us coordinate our response to the situation and they allow us a safe place to work out solutions. Kids consume stories. Just look at what Jim Henson did with Sesame Street. He created stories dealing with everyday life that everyone could enjoy. He went from being [an ad man for IBM](#) to changing the way we relate to each other, just by telling a good story.

So where's the machine?

Some people believe that the age of myth is over. Mass media has done a very effective job of redirecting humanities innate need to share experience through stories. Using the same techniques that were once used to bind society, Mass Media strips out the meaning for pure efficiency. There is rarely any altruistic or culturally relevant message being spread, and when there is it's usually just a bit of spice to hide the bitter flavor of consumerism. With so many additives it's tempting to idealize the raw reality of pure information, to idealize the "real".

In a situation like the BP disaster it's easy to think that simply showing the reality of the situation is an effective way to bring about change. The problem with this is that real life examples provide no direction for answers. A deep analysis requires more effort than most people are willing to put forward. Rather than finding solutions they look at pictures of oil soaked sea life and get angry.

Stories encapsulate meaning, they give a structure that can not only demonstrate the problem, but a way to explore solutions as well. While there's no official group of "storytellers" these days, there is the ubiquitous proliferation of digital media platforms that allow everyone who has the slightest creative inkling to share in the task.

While reading a transcript from a talk given by Baba Rampuri at the 2008 World Psychedlic Forum in Basel this process was given a broader context. Rampuri talks about the role of the pilgrim, and the responsibility of the pilgrimage, in a way that shows how each of us traveling the course of our lives can share our stories to bring about meaningful change.

"Those who go on a pilgrimage become witnesses of mirrors. The main reason for pilgrimage is for darshan, The Beholding, and the resulting blessings. Darshan derives from drsh, 'to see', and is The Beholding, not 'the looking', as a tourist might do, but The Seeing. And, as the mirrors continue to reflect images deeper and deeper within, Analogy operates reflecting the macrocosm and the microcosm.

The World must benefit from his pilgrimage, so having had darshan, the pilgrim brings something back to his village. Pilgrims return with more than memories, something auspicious, that brings magic and prosperity home."

A website like Planetshifter focuses real events, insight from thought leaders, and an intermixing of classic myths to bring this powerful process into the hands of kids who are already hungry for answers. Tools like Google Search, the real time web and social media help bring this process into immediate play.

Teaching kids how to grab a hold of these resources can help change the way we approach building a sustainable future. Down in the gulf of Mexico BP's negligence has lead to an environmental disaster that will have lasting implications on

our world. Kids need a way to build these events into mythologies and stories that can lead the world forward into the future.

What were the myths that we grew up with? The stories that shaped our lives?

How did we share these, build on them, create the future? Stories generate emotion, but they don't stop there. They direct that emotion into patterns of behavior, new beliefs, archetypal examples. A story gives context to the event.

When people are faced with something as monumental as the Gulf situation it's easy for the mind to put it on par with a natural disaster. The human actions that lead up to the event are overshadowed by the sheer magnitude of damage. This is where stories are best suited to act as guideposts. They take the reality of a situation, where technical details blur the ability to move forward, and bring it down to bite sized pieces that are able to be realigned towards actionable solutions.

William Gibson's [Neuromancer](#) inspired a generation of computer scientists to go further than they had imagined in their development of the internet. They were limited by technical details, Gibson was free to use his imagination. His dreams became their reality as they worked to build the technologies and possibilities he described.

This process needs to become inherent in kids lives. Building advanced communications technology has lead us to a situation where we can easily reach across the globe with our ideas, but the physical reality of the world we are living in requires immediate attention. How will kids digest the BP oil spill? A round about foray of arguments, blame, finger pointing and regret? This will be based on the stories that they build for themselves around the event; even more so it will be built around the stories they are told about the event.

Delving into our mythic heritage

The BP oil spill can be seen as the many headed hydra that Hercules faces, Hercules as Campbell's 'hero with a thousand faces' becomes Siegfried slaying the dragon. Siegfried, who having bathed in dragons blood becomes immortal, the teeth of the dragon become his army. The outrage and gnashing of teeth is an impetus for all of us to raise up our collective voice to rebuild our society on a more permanent and lasting ground.

The oil spill is the beast at the initiatory gate of this century, the monster that needs to be slain, with many heads, of lies, bad business practices, inept management, political dissonance holding up the cleaning process, greedy lobbyists, etc. all the heads of the beast that have to be cauterized.

Siegfried plants the teeth of the dragon, the teeth are what bites, what kills, the issues that lead to the oil spill. These can also be "planted" to raise a new crop of heroes to face and defeat the monster itself.

The philanthropists are like the kings and princes, they must set out a bounty to kill the beast, a hall in which the heroes can gather (website/forum/events/etc.) and offer up a prize. Greek drama is accompanied by the voice of the Chorus, and here with the power of advanced communication technology, that Chorus is being realized.

II. Selected LinkedIn and other contributions

"Among our major tasks is the creation of ecologically derived human support systems—renewable energy, agriculture aquaculture, housing and landscapes. The strategies we research emphasize a minimal reliance on fossil fuels and operate on a scale accessible to individuals, families and small groups. It is our belief that ecological and social transformations must take place at the lowest functional levels of society if humankind is to direct its course towards a greener, saner world."

"Our programs are geared to produce not riches, but rich and stable lives, independent of world fashion and the vagaries of international economics. The New Alchemists work at the lowest functional level of society on the premise that society, like the planet itself, can be no healthier than the components of which it is constructed. The urgency of

our efforts is based on our belief that the industrial societies which now dominate the world are in the process of destroying it.”

[Fall 1970 Bulletin of the New Alchemists](#)

A good myth needs heroes, and right now this tragedy lacks heroes... either that or they've signed non-disclosure agreements with BP. There's only the oil.

I don't think we need to frame the Macondo Blowout in mythical terms. Its power lies in cold, sober reality. This thing is really happening. We made it happen. It will affect us. It will happen again somewhere else. It will probably get worse too, if there is damage to the well casings and the BOP collapses into the well bore.

This should be a time of profound introspection for all of us. You can't make it larger than life, it's already far too big for that. Absolute truth is a scary thing in our society. Catharsis is a frightening concept in a world where every problem is supposed to have a quick fix.

The most powerful way to use these events is to learn all you can and make sure others know the gravity of the situation, but is a lesson we must learn first before sharing it with others.

I honestly don't think stories will save us. I think that we will only wake up, only really get it, when large numbers of people suffer. That will come, possibly within our lifetimes, when we start going to war over resources. It will come when desertification, topsoil erosion, and other factors force huge populations of hungry people into urban centers that can't handle the influx. Already tenuous social orders will crumble and pressure will be put on larger nations to intervene, ostensibly for humanitarian purposes. This, of course, will provide an opportunity for them to manage the resources of their client states.

Americans, and other first worlders, will predictably insulate us, constructing elaborate cultural cysts to protect our quality of life, denying the problem until our own walls start to fall to the Malthusian firestorm.

I foresee either a massive die off or a profound shift in the quality of life for most of the world's population before 2050. This seems to be the direction we're heading unless we figure out how to live within our means with the world we're given. I say we make painful choices now so we can avoid ghastly choices later.

The myth is a bygone concept in a world lacking a storyteller class, where ideas bounce around millions of minds in nanoseconds and corporate marketing takes the place of cultural discourse. There is no historical precedent for the way we communicate now. We're moving so fast that it is becoming more and more difficult to process the rapid changes our culture is undergoing. You can't have myths in a world with Google.

Instead, I look to real life examples to describe what I see happening. Watching the rig sink and the oil pour into the Gulf is like watching a drug addict choke on his own vomit. I worked with addicts at a homeless shelter, and you don't beat an addiction by finding a closer, friendlier, more reasonable dealer. Overcoming addiction is a grueling process of introspection and self discipline.

We are all addicts to oil. As long as we keep our dealers close, we're not going to look seriously at alternatives. Like citing the disaster in the Gulf as an example of the consequences of our collective addiction to oil? Well, first, you need to make it personal. As a Floridian, I see this thing as a crime. I feel personally wronged that my beaches will be ruined, fresh seafood will be a memory, and my state will most likely slip back into a recession. Naturally, I feel threatened, violated, and downright mad. The fact that it has no end in sight makes it worse every day.

Emotion is key. Nobody cares about a story if there's no heart in it. With one's emotion, if it be true and compelling, comes empathy from another. No matter where you live in the US, you look down South and you see our lives being ruined, and you share our sorrow, our helplessness, and our anger. You recognize that what is happening is wrong on so many levels, and you share our pain.

So, what to do with all that emotion and empathy? Where does the story go now? If you can direct it towards a task, you can accomplish great things. Thomas Paine could tell you about that. Of course, read up on Joseph Goebbels to see the dark side of mass communication.

Getting back to my example, will people view the oil spill as some sort of natural disaster, an inescapable by-product of modern life, or as a senseless waste that reflects the ugly side of modern energy policy? Will we finally wake up to the unsustainable nature of our consumption? In the span of 4 days in 1979, the nuclear power industry evaporated because of an accident resulting in zero loss of life. I'd say Three Mile Island is the best example, and one whose results I would like to see replicated.

Think Green LI Group - "How can we collaborate and transform critical events into contemporary, universal stories (myths)?" (W. Paul) 6/10

Posted by Chris Robinson

* * *

I certainly believe stories can help ordinary people to understand complex problems and climate change is both an extra-ordinarily complex and extremely simple problem at the same time. Solving it strikes right at the very heart of what it is to be human and requires us to decide whether to listen to our animalistic greed instincts or our human traits of love and co-operation.

To explain where I see the possible solution, I used the myth of Hercules to provide 12 "Labours" (or "Labors") for individuals to engage with to reclaim a safe climate. You can see an outline at <http://www.hksuperh.com>

Posted by Harold Forbes

* * *

The Native Americans used stories and myths to pass on their knowledge and values. I often refer to things as "illusions" because that makes impossible for people to disagree without agreeing.

Posted by John Crockett

* * *

I was taught that 'Cowboys and Indians' is the all American myth that underpins American attitudes of 'go getting', 'fight for the prize', 'every man for themselves'. That would need a major rewrite to teach 'Together Everybody Achieves More' and 'We value the Earth more than consumer items'

Posted by Sydney Charles

* * *

What's the difference between a story and a myth? Stories have very specific characters and plot. Myths are larger than life, easier to find analogies to lots of other situations. Or myths are about larger-than-life stakes--they're particularly powerful for giving meaning to everyday events.

I disagree with the idea that modern myths have no power. People are hungry for myths--why else so many new and resurgent religious movements, or so many popular movies focusing on larger than life heroes? The fast pace of information just makes people more desperate for something that feels like a solid foundation. And modern life should be easy to mythologize, because the stakes are so much higher than they've ever been before *outside* of myths.

Posted by Ruthanna Gordon

* * *

None are so blind as those who refuse to see. Lessons of history, stories, myths and legends will never 'save' the like of these. Maybe that is a good thing - kind of a literary Darwinism?

Meanwhile embedded within the roughly 7000 disappearing languages spoken around the world today that are not derived from a Latin/Celtic root is a rich verbal history. Contained within this is plenty of myth, some surprisingly consistent despite vast geographical isolation, and lots of knowledge that never makes it into a Google search or appears on You Tube.

If we really want some answers it is time to take the blinkers off folks. To quote Einstein (warning, history content): "The intuitive mind is a sacred gift and the rational mind is a faithful servant. We have created a society that honors the servant and has forgotten the gift."

Chris - I hear you. As you point out the message, the moral of the story if you like, has to resonate with an audience far distant from your neighborhood. With Three Mile Island (and other nuclear accidents) there is a powerful invisible menace that can sneak into our homes and steal the lives of our loved ones while they sleep. What better mythic bogey man could you want? Trouble is, the oil spill doesn't conjure up the same kind of bogey man (though I agree it should) as the silent invisible horrible death of radiation - specially not for folks far away from the Gulf who can drive their SUV across town to buy fresh seafood flown in from... you name it. See where I'm going?

I've been trolling the dusty vaults of memory searching for a template myth for the Gulf disaster.

Posted by John Cameron

* * *

III. Examples of related Stories, Songs, Symbols, Spirits?

[Pilgrimage, story, community renewal through storytelling - Baba Rampuri](#)

[The Story of the Hummingbird](#)

[Transmedia Practice: Theorizing the Practice of Expressing a Fictional World across Distinct Media and Environments](#)

[Pervasive Games: Gaming in Physical Space](#)

[Partners in Play:"the trend of the future is experience economy"](#)

[King Midas](#)

[Leonard Cohen - There is a War](#)

[Leonard Cohen - The Old Revolution](#)

IV. Search engines and web sites

[Joseph Campbell Foundation](#)

[PlanetShifter.com Magazine](http://PlanetShifter.com)

[Society for Storytelling](#)

[Rock music and mythology](#)

[Encyclopedia of Myths](#)

V. Mythology Generator for the Sustainability Age

Process steps or menu:

1. Define current event, players, short and long-term impacts, artistic, religious, ecological, political, spiritual implications
2. ID historic, literary, mythic precedents that relate to event
3. Chart all possible paths and outcomes from event
4. List universal lessons
6. Draft myth story line using new names, place(s) and symbols from world mythology
7. Check piece for universal not local or real reference(s)
8. Simplify and finalize myth

VI. The Oil Spill Myth – “The Leatherneck Clan and the Black Sea Men”

For as long as the Sea was clean clear and full of life, the sea turtle clan and their spirit guide Slena swam and birthed for their young on sandy beaches without concern.

The turtles lived along side their ocean brothers and sisters in peace for eons, taking what the sea offered and blessing the ecosystem with the wisdom of birth cycle, stewardship and unselfishness. They often saw the land boil-up and slide hot molten rocks into the shoreline, and understand the land and sea are working together in the great building process.

A one year-old sea turtle, a from the leatherneck clan named Grassie, lives in what humans call The Gulf of Mexico. Her Mother insists that man is not their enemy and shows her the way to the white sand beaches that will one day be the birth place of her young.

A few turtle years ago, huge man-made steel skeletons with hoses penetrating the sea bed came and Grassie was confused. “This is not the way of the clan or the sea, Slena!” she said.

“This is the way of the Black Sea Men,” relayed Slena. It was not long before the leatherneck clan witnessed the pollution from the oil mining in the Gulf. Black globs of pre-fuel started killing the corral beds and choking her fish friends. Then Death came to the ocean and took the life and breath from the creatures. The Black Sea Men set the water on fire and tar balls coated the shores of the Gulf. Thick killing oil hangs under the surface like an iron curtain.

Slena asked the planet to remain calm as the devastation wrenched control over the beautiful balance.

Grassie paddled south to One Island to work on a solution. Other turtle clans were already there, safe for now from the Gulf stream now toxic with human folly.

"We need to plug that damn leak," she cried!

The turtles decided to travel under the sea floor and find the end of the drill pipe at the source. Then twist the end of the pipe to stop the upward flow of the pre-fuel. Very dangerous but time was not to be lost. Some clan will not return from this hero's task.

"May Slena be with you," one old green sea turtle cried.

* * *

The crack at the bottom of the earth is now bubbling black when once it was gentle wave. Grassie's rescue team entered the cavern and headed to the north channel. They carried strong cord made from sea wheat for the rodeo of their lives.

As fate would have it, there was an air pocket above the extended pipe and the turtles wasted no time in fixing multiple lines to the sucking pipe. Then all of the turtles swan in a counter clock wise in a slow, painful twisting motion. They could not break-off the end of the pipe!

Finally suffocated but victorious, the turtle engineers closed the pipe of the Black Sea Men and slowly swam back to One Island.

It took men 15 years to clean up their Gulf and the eastern seaboard but the turtles are the stewards.

* * *

[Neil Young: Love and Only Love](#)

Long ago in the book of old, before the chapter where dreams unfold
A battle raged on the open page
Love was a winner there overcoming hate
Like a little girl who couldn't wait.

Love and only love will endure
Hate is everything you think it is
Love and only love will break it down
Love and only love.

* * * * *

REVIEWS

Adam and Eve in 3D: Avatar - James Cameron's Mythic Source

<http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1447>

Avatar is mythic candy and glue for a dying race: us.

It must be seen, felt, shimmered and shared. Inside and out. Cameron has weaved classic mythological principles and universal values in a love story flow. As Jake the male lead and transformant seeps in his bleeding DNA bed: 'reality has become a dream, and dream reality.' Indeed, this is science fiction in 3D but to stop learning, clap and wonder off to the men's room at this point, is to keep sleepwatching in the same old Sunday AM prayer-football games - evening news mindlessness. Cameron is trying to save our world. We need to help him.

OK, I will not have you over to debate the **sci-fi vs. mythology thingee**. Not necessary. Just be at your religious and artistic best and see what resonates in your heart from the experience of Avatar:

- There is a rainbowing genetic blurr in the Pandorans. They have characteristics of both dinosaurs and snakes; humans and trees. Their connective tissue unites and spark a union with both each other and the animals and plants.
- This is a superior race, yes? A metamorphosis of Life. Danger and safety; good and devil?
- A battle between profit and sacred, an old mythological story line but Cameron has charged it by placing his epic in the year 2009. **The year the ice is melting and COP15 failed. The year-end dumpster dive by the US Congress over health care. The year we now must never repeat if we are to remain a species on Earth.**
- [Pantheism is here](#). Recall Jake's prayer at the sacred tree. Avatar welds the ancient rites with the [Brainstorm-like](#) corporate science with ease. His reverence was rewarded in the end as the Spirit called the animals in to battle and bitter victory.
- Cameron tells us that the [Mother Tree](#) is a hub and that the planet is a web. No time to tweet.
- Parker, the mining monkey and classic fall guy at one point chastens the Pandorans for their primitiveness. A classic byte of irony on his way to the end of his soul. A journey lost in [Pandora's Box](#).

Many beings die in this film, but some are initiated and return to the tribe to fight and are Heroes. The white scientist woman. This is classic [Campbell](#).

Artistically, I love the **hanging rocky islands**, ala [Roger Dean](#) and the boiling and blasting sounds of [Steve Tibbetts](#) fame. Jurassic Park shuttles our memories into this space, **a powerful National Geographic precursor** for the surreal landscape and creatures in Avatar.

The falling snow-jelly fish-like white translucent seeds from the sky are simply unforgettable. **The glowing grass wrapping and capturing the dueling bodies** in the soul transfer scenes at the scared tree.

Wow, Mr. Cameron.

Our fight lies just ahead.

I've seen you laying pined (get up, get up)

Life is rough...rough (get up, get up, get up)

I've seen you laying down (get up)

With the loving kind (get up, get up)

I know life is hard...hard (where goes your time?)

Where to turn? **Where to turn?**

Dreams they **complicate** my life (Dreams they complement my life)

This time, no escape, I wake up. (get up, get up)

REM

* * * * *

Review of Mythic Journeys - A Film from Imaginal Cells, Inc.

<http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1673>

Draconian winter unforecasted.
One solar day, suddenly you're old.
Your little envelope just makes me cold,
Makes destination start to unfold.

Our documents are useless, or forged beyond believing.
Page forty-seven is unsigned, I need it by this evening.
In the space between our cities, a storm is slowly forming.
Something eating up our days, I feel it every morning.
Destination, destination.

It's not a religion, it's just a technique.
It's just a way of making you speak.
Distance and speed have left us too weak,
And destination looks kind of bleak.

Watch the Church, [Destination](#)

I created a bunch of titles for this piece and I list them below as primer:

+ **The Soul Call!**

+ **What's in Our Mythic Tool Kit?**

+ **Making the Puppets Mouths Move**

+ **Riddles, fairy tales, mythology, oh my!**

I have been charged to translate Campbell's Code for the [Sustainability Age!](#) Charged by whom you asked? By the collective love and power of the Earth's universal consciousness, my dear friend! Telling stories and listening to yours. If you question the status of your own journey, then it has yet to begin. **Just say Yes.**

First, the film weaves many powerful **symbols** into the message including full moon, flying gargoyles, the bone orchard, tomb stones, a magical hang man demon muse, a cloaked devil, winter snow, a barren and sickly Mother Earth Tree, crows, ashes, rope, and more!

Under counter weight, academic and literary **jargon** abounds: encode, analogy, mysteries, human soul, binding us in community, the Spirit, Emergent truth, evolution and impulse. These words underscore the huge challenge in kick-starting mythology in Age of Sustainability. Symbols are too diffuse, words often too political. Paradoxically old and modern language is juxtaposed in the Boe's work. Cemetery to star stage.

I do not mention the individual stars in this film because this would be **anti-myth**: at best, we are the collective voice and one spirit.

The hero, journey and the feedback is prominent theme. In stories and in the presenters on stage J. Campbell is very much alive in this clique. **But how much is his message getting out through the established channels?**

"We are our stories." But what is the story, Dad? The destination? Our collective soul is hurting. New mythology is needed. We need deep memories not soundbytes. We have lost our connection to our ancestors and to our children. Rites of passage are crumbling; adolescence is extended – perhaps for a life time? Our birth to death with little experience in-between? **Is there a fairy tale to explore this chasm?**

We are dying from literalism. Over-belief in metaphors? The Brands? Scarcity vs. abundance – are the gears and myths of the Sustainability Age emerging? Gratitude vs. Fear. Dialogue not debate. Go deeper, deep. Create and share meaning. Feel the power of myth in your body and then the feelings of love and empathy can emerge.

The life cycles are the same as the old days but the costumes have changed. Instinct – based on what? How is this source contaminated? **Is forgiveness a mythic act?** Mythic tools must include empathy and respect.

Key: it is not about the experience but the story about **our experiences**.

What did you learn? What is your experience in Mythic Journeys?

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Hoop House Dance! A review of "Smart by Nature - Schooling for Sustainability"

<http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1356>

"Nature is Our Teacher"

Nature, having sustained life for billions of years, holds the key to helping students learn how to live and thrive in sustainable human communities. With nature as their teacher, young people learn the basic ecological principles and perspective essential to sustainable living." (Smart by Nature, p. 156)

This green rocket is a project / experience-based catalyst for change. But where is the companion web site? An online community for teachers, parents, and kids? Hmm! The more I read **Smart by Nature**, the better it is. I love the layers of spaces (campus, community, and back yards are a few here) and mantras like the 4C's: campus ecology, curriculum connections, community partnerships and collaboration. **Yes, this all rings true.**

Holistic, sensitive, well-crafted and deep with simple and supported action sets. Michael Stone's wide swath of interviews, projects and values in the ever-widening sustainability scene must be heralded green!

We have to connect the dots: architects, kids, principles, chefs, bikers and parents. **Here is the bridge to us.** We need new stories (myths?) for a survival – post survival age. Smart by Nature is a sensational well to our children and parents.

Check-out the orange pages! Groovy. "Lessons Learned" "What You Can Do." Here is a sample from the latter:

- Create celebrations
- Work projects in your local community
- Practice integrated planning
- Understand life-cycle costs
- Conduct a curriculum audit

Buy this book. Put it under your pillow at night. And take it to work and school every day. Work it!

* * * * *

SOUND ALCHEMY

Sonic Imprintation: the Shaman's Alchemic Sound Check for the Sustainability Age

<http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1697>

We've taken care of everything
The words you hear, the songs you sing
The pictures that give pleasure to your eyes
It's one for all and all for one
We work together, common sons
Never need to wonder how or why

Look around at this world we've made
Equality our stock in trade
Come and join the Brotherhood of Man
Oh, what a nice, contented world
Let the banners be unfurled
Hold the Red Star proudly high in hand

We are the Priests of the Temples of Syrinx
Our great computers fill the hallowed halls
We are the Priests, of the Temples of Syrinx
All the gifts of life are held within our walls

[Temples of Syrinx , RUSH 2112](#)

How do we become the solution to the problems of the world?

The art of Practical Alchemy provides some clues for us on a personal level, techniques and thought forms that can guide us to a better understanding of ourselves and our place in the world. The Alchemist Dennis William Hauck defines Alchemy's principle goal as the "[transformation via manifestation of intention](#)." If we intend to become active in finding solutions we need to work artfully at the things that will manifest this intention.

Dennis goes on to say that "the chance that materialization will actually occur is directly proportional to the quality of expression." So it is not just the intention that matters, but our ability to express that intention. And how do these expressions emerge?

Artists are familiar with this process through the translation of thoughts, emotions and reactions into solid manifestations of poetry, song, sculpture, drawing or painting. All of the creative arts are deeply tied to this process, and the artists who understand this are personally changed by the manifestations that they work through.

How can this be translated into the wider world?

This is wonderful for the individuals involved in the process, but what of the wider world? What spurs us to seek this process in the first place? How can someone experience it if they have no idea where to start?

For this to happen there needs to be a catalyst, a figure that shows the way, and here we have what has broadly been termed a Shaman. There is the historical shamanism of the various regions of the world, replete with their specific patterns of imagery and symbol. Their dances, songs, costumes and ritual provide an axis for the culture surrounding them. Providing a bridge between the physical manifestation of the society and the ideologies and spirits from which the society draws its particular shape.

As we become more fractured, the centralized social structures disperse and we are left in some ways with the raw technique itself. The shamans who step forward today have gathered their spirits from all times and cultures, the diversity of symbols forming a complex of ideas that express manifestations of the forces surrounding us. From rock stars to graphic designers, the path of social transformation, and the responsibility of the task, exists hidden beneath the mundane surface of everyday living.

With music we have sounds organized to entrain the mind of the listener. Repeating forms reinforcing the neural networks forming through sensual reaction, the means through which craftsmanship and art become a tool of creation and communication. The same occurs with the visual arts, or the spoken arts, any manifestation of a thought form brings the possibility of that form taking root in other mental gardens.

In this communicative web of association we have immediate access to all levels of experience and are also faced with the responsibility of providing paths for others who encounter the manifestations towards the truth, towards responsible living and in the language of our time towards an understanding of sustainability.

If we need further evidence of this process we need only look to birds:

The best known form of imprinting is [filial imprinting](#), in which a young animal learns the characteristics of its parent. It is most obvious in nidifugous birds, which imprint on their parents and then follow them around. It was first reported in domestic chickens, by the 19th-century amateur biologist Douglas Spalding. It was rediscovered by the early ethologist Oskar Heinroth, and studied extensively and popularised by his disciple Konrad Lorenz working with greylag geese. Lorenz demonstrated how incubator-hatched geese would imprint on the first suitable moving stimulus they saw within what he called a "critical period" between 13–16 hours shortly after hatching. Most notably, the goslings would imprint on Lorenz himself (more specifically, on his wading boots), and he is often depicted being followed by a gaggle of geese who had imprinted on him. Filial imprinting is not restricted to animals that are able to follow their parents, however; in child development the term is used to refer to the process by which a baby learns who its mother and father are. The process is recognized as beginning in the womb, when the unborn baby starts to recognize its parents' voices.

If artists are to encourage those who encounter their art they need to be aware of sonic imprinting, themselves imprinted with the image of the artist as arbiter of change, holding keys that can lead to transforming not only themselves, but society as well. The manifestations they bring forth can be gates to new experiences and new relationships. Think of an art based on exploring a positive relationship with the earth and environment. These manifestations are to go hand in hand with [defining the experience we have with nature](#) and guiding us to seek that experience in the first place.

“Cornell University’s Nancy Wells, an environmental psychologist and assistant professor of design and environmental analysis in the College of Human Ecology, and research associate, Kristi Lekies, examined and analyzed data from a 1998 U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service survey. The Survey examined youth nature experiences and subsequent adult environmentalism. A sampling of more than 2,000 adult Americans, ages 18 to 90, detailed their early youth nature experiences and their present day adult behaviors and attitudes concerning the environment.

The study clearly found that “wild” nature activities in youth directly correlate to adult behaviors and attitudes to the environment. The researchers also found that “domesticated” nature activities like gardening had a positive relationship to adult environmental attitudes, but the effects of domestic nature activities did not have as strong an effect as fishing and hunting, playing in the woods, hiking, walking or camping. “When children become truly engaged with the natural world at a young age, the experience is likely to stay with them in a powerful way – shaping their subsequent environmental path, [explains Wells](#).

The Modern Shaman’s Sonic Alchemic Voice

Thankfully it seems that whether they are fully engaged in it, many artists have a notion of their role. Used as a tool for critique, change and for creating new art forms, many are actively pursuing sonic imprinting.

Please enjoy the following feedback from [PlanetShifter.com Magazine’s](#) interviews:

[Interview Two with Jacob Haqq-Misra](#) -

If a Shaman is one who seeks after spiritual knowledge, then I could be counted as one. That said, I never apply the title of Shaman to myself. Many people interested in psychedelic substances will validate their experiments by pointing to

tribal shaman leaders who also used psychedelic drugs. I think this comparison is often misguided, though, for the tribal shaman was probably the only member of the entire tribe privileged to commune with the divine in this way.

Indeed, I'd be willing to venture that the societal structure of tribes based around psychoactive plants resulted as a need to keep the power of the plants from abuse by the common folk. A shaman who carefully prepares to enter the unknown can then take the mysterious knowledge of the plant drug and pass it on in a useful form to the rest of the tribe. In today's culture, though, we assert that everyone can be a shaman. I agree that everyone can (and should) explore their own spirituality, but I would consider a shaman to be a protector of a divine mystery for the sake of a community.

[Interview with Divina Klein and Douglas Mackar of La Forza](#) -

DIVINA:

By working on consciously using different parts of our brains that allow us to be psychic and powerful, and by working on accepting other dimensions and the invisible to be as real as the world we can perceive through our five senses.

DOUGLAS:

The most basic aspect of how we are Shamans is the experience of the trance state.

All creation occurs in a trance state. In trance, your old attitudes can't disrupt creation and evolution. It's only when you release from that trance state that you fall back into your old mind state. It's always a temptation to go back to the familiar. True change- transformation- is incorporating new knowledge into your psyche and holding it there long enough for it to become a permanent part of your thinking.

Remember, Shamanic healings are almost always instantaneous. They treat time differently than we do. The old program must be replaced. That is what Shamans do. That is what instantaneous healing is. Replacing the old program with something new. And you can repeat this process indefinitely. That is evolution.

[Interview with Chris Deckker](#) -

It is more of a feeling. Most Shamans' I have experienced are the most humble, heart centered people I have met. It is not a role that is accompanied with theatrics and ego.

[Interview with PlanetShifter.com Drupal Cheth Rowe](#) -

By programming computers and by performing music I am, in a sense, a shaman, able to communicate with the secretive spirits of good and evil that wiser folk choose to leave alone. It is thrilling to have such power, to wield a well-placed object-oriented overloaded polymorphism—well, thrilling when it works. More often programming efforts fail. It is only by repeatedly trying again and again that programs slowly become usable. With musical performance it is somewhat different. Failures still occur, but they become part of the product. With live music whatever one does is. It's too late to make it any more perfect. But it is still the same channeling of the secretive spirits.

[Interview with Steve Kilbey](#) -

i wish i was a shaman
i perform pseudo-shamanistic artistic feats sometimes
but in truth i am a shrewd and intelligent manipulator of ideas n techniques
unless i have completely fooled myself
sometimes i get confused where it's all coming from
i would hate to have delusions of grandeur
yes and no about the new world
my worlds are alternate worlds
neither newer or older

much like ours but stranger and more improbably probable
i'm trying to represent these other places/other things
because.....
because...
i dont really know
its just what i have been "told" to do

[Interview with Steve Tibbetts and Marc Anderson](#) -

No. From my reading, there seems to be an historic connection between drumming and shamanism, but I don't think of myself in this way. Not on a stage. A shaman is usually someone who has gone through a wrenching life experience that evokes a spirit, and comes back to the community to heal and counsel. This hasn't happened to me. I'm a mixing console shaman! We are attempting to invoke something of course, but we're not animists, we don't give it a name. We don't (leave) offerings out. But we're certainly attempting to invoke something from part of our minds and then again on tape. Then we know we have the mix correct. We're done our "bogus shaman thing."

[Interview with Robyn Hitchcock](#) -

Jim Morrison thought of himself as one. He wrote a song called "Shaman's Blues." Ya, (all musicians) are. The guy in the pub, Prince. All performers are likely invoking something. It's not just "us and them," you know? I'm doing something on behalf of the audience, but I'm not just sure what it is. Something is activated. It's not just a freak show. But to be a focal point for a crowd is a big responsibility (and scary). And I don't really know what to do with it afterwards.

[Interview with Jerry Harrison](#) -

Yes, I've thought about this. I think that many people embrace this idea, but I don't like something that causes the audience to lose a sense of their personal identity. I like it when people get as excited as they possibly can, but I would rather that the audience feel like they are contributing to the show and not being taken over. I resist this shaman or high priest role. I'd rather be a leader to self-discovery than a controller of minds.

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Sound Mapping the Sonic – Human Interface

"Alchemy's explanatory strength lies in its capacity to toggle between the seemingly incongruous realms of practice and metaphor."

- **Transformed as if in a Dream: Alchemical Transmutation and Our Sacred Earth.** From [Interview with Michelle Ramona Silva, PhD.](#)

Innovative artists have been exploring the outer edges of sound for some time. From the [Futurist music of the early 20th century](#) that sought to embrace their vision of a world constantly in a state of action and conflict, through [Delia Derbyshire's](#) experiments with electronic sound in the 1960's, into the [various groups today](#) who take similar pilgrimages into the musical borderlands, there is a constant experiment with how sound and perception lead to a change in our visions of the world.

In the multi-mediated environment that exists today the power of sonic imprintation and alchemy are manifest in interesting ways. Artist and musicians can fully encounter the nexus of sound, vision and word. Whether it's through the combination of these elements in an album format, or if that album is expanded beyond physical dimensions in the ethereal networks of the inter-webs, the possibilities go far beyond what is offered by radio, television or print as they were previously conceived.

Avant-Garde, chaos or canvas - or just the start of the next initiation? Each listener will create his or her own experiential values as the work unfolds. My invitation is for file sharing and recombination of these raw sound experiences. As many writers have discussed in PlanetShifter.com Magazine interviews, this sound is an alchemical or transmutation process, where the recombining of elements and the interactive process is more important than the product.

"For performance art, such as rock or, indeed, any form of live music, there is a connection formed between artist and audience that transcends individuality. In a way, the audience give their souls to the performer and it is only when the music ends, in that moment of stillness before the applause, that their souls return and individual personalities are born anew. In this way, the experience of a concert is akin to a shamanic journey and, as overseer of that journey, perhaps the musician becomes a shaman."

- **Re-painting the Shaman's Trance in the Sustainability Age.** [Open Myth Source Interview with Mike Williams](#) by Willi Paul and David Metcalfe.

David Metcalfe and I will continue to exam myth as soundscape – or how the imagination of each listener both creates and recombines a story and how meaning evolves as each collaboration (iteration) changes the imprint.

Another research arena: How is soundscape no longer in the background but becomes the foreground as the sound collage drives the experience; when is sound the story that we process and interpret individually and collectively?

"The alchemical process is a physical ritual that projects an inner state onto physical elements." "Yes, I believe I understand how alchemy can work in the sound and visual arts; what's just as clear is that today's technology has definitely upped the ante."

- **Journey into Joseph Campbell Rising.** [PlanetShifter.com Magazine Interview with Stephen Gerringer](#) - Community Relations, Joseph Campbell Foundation.

More Insight: [the reservoir: rock music and mythology](#)

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Sound Alchemy Scapes: Water4 Fuel & Father Nature's Paradox

<http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1684>

Sound Alchemy Scapes

[Water4 Fuel](#)

Scape - 12.8

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[Father Nature's Paradox](#)

Scape - 13.5

Willi Paul + PlanetShifter.com Sound

openmythsources.com

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The Reservoir: Rock Music and Mythology

<http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1647>

"**Evil hearted women, man they will not let me be I love my baby, my baby don't love me...**" "Kindhearted Woman Blues" is a piece of rock music history by wailin' Robert Johnson, one of rock's mythic heroes. He helped to create a soulful magic formula today in the songs of Bono, Dylan, Clapton and other sound alchemists.

This article cooks a cross-cultural pie, as the syzygy of rock music and mythology, the popular and the ancient, collide to make music magic. This material is from my unpublished manuscript entitled: **The Reservoir, Rock Music and Myth**, and uses songs and scholars primarily from this century. My goal is to initiate you into a deeper understanding of how mythic elements empower and enrich rock's impact in our lives -- while admitting from the outset that not every band is fueled by mythology and that most groups seem to quit after a short struggle.

Would you consider the most successful albums as great books, with individual songs, or tales, as chapters?

"True stories?" Let's take a journey through a high tech, oral tradition evolution.

One major assumption is that not only are rock bands interpreting or rephrasing classic mythology, but they are also writing for a new mythic base, a nuclear age storybook, if you will. Like R.E.M.'s **Fables of the Reconstruction** or The Smith's **Louder Than Bombs**. Look at the cover of U2's "War" record, what do you see? And feel? Another key idea that runs throughout this work is that rock music shares symbols and themes from many cultures. What we have is a magic blending of influences, too complex for a feature story. African and Christian are two dominant mythologies that gave birth to jazz and the blues in America, and soon the Beatles tripped back from the mountain with Eastern myth and magic. From the Cross, to slavery, to beat crazy and the bomb, many lives are constantly guided by rock music. We find solace, angst, a consciousness and heroes in the pubs and CD's of "the business."

Andy Partridge of XTC stated In **SPIN Magazine** that: "today's pop songs are the nursery rhymes of the future."

And the **San Francisco Oracle**, a local paper from 1967, issued a credo for rock music, and offered, in part, "that rock is creating the social rituals of the future."

We need to separate this phenomenon into its parts to better understand the whole. There are four. The music is one. The sounds or the rhythms that propel everything else. Mickey Hart and other artists believe that rhythm is connected to a "mythic time keeping" that extends from our "big bang beginning," through our heartbeats, and into today's music. A collective cosmic drumming.

Album art, posters, and all of the media that rock music produces is the second component of the power of rock music and myth. These illustrations have reinforced and educated the listener, often with the musician's own designs, like Robyn Hitchcock's "post-nuclear croquet garden" painting on his "Globe of Frogs" album. While art is a transformational, or alchemical match, photographs of bands document their changes and bring us closer to our rock family. Third, lyrics say what we can't sing on our instruments. Dylan brought a folk poet troubadour spirit, to rock early on, and artists have been listening ever since. And fourth, live performance combines sound, art and words with anticipation in a mass communication dynamic, a shared ritual flow that mimics, to a degree, a religious service.

As a test of the four components I've just described, two definitions of myth are offered. Do they fit together? Please try substituting rock music for myth here: Carl Jung, in **Essays on a Science of Mythology**, defined myth as a story about heroes involving the gods, and a rite or phenomenon of nature, with the capability of transformation. Joseph Campbell, writing in **The Power of Myth**, gave us four functions of myths: mystery, cosmological (or to explain), sociological, and pedagogical (or how to live).

If rock, like myth, is a road map, like writer Paul Williams insists in **The Map or Rediscovering Rock and Roll (A Journey)**, we must learn to read it. We are children of a complex, dangerous and infinite Universe. From "Starfish," The Church sing for us. Notice how all of the parts spell magic in their hit song, "Under the Milky Way": "Wish I knew what you were

looking for, Might have known what you would find, And it's something quite peculiar, Something shimmering and white...."

We hear and see symbols through rock music and art. Band names and titles of records and songs contain important cues, many political or humorous, but some for "mythic punch." Album art work is the first to be interpreted and often carries the same meaning all over the world. When musicians combine song lyrics with complimentary symbols, mythic meanings are reinforced and deepened. Symbols and metaphors are the seeds, our invitation to the feast. And many symbols, like numbers and colors, have ancient meanings and universal power.

Campbell might have asked at this point: Do we know the power of these symbols? Have we lost our connections to the mythic reservoir? Tough questions, but we do know that some symbols "work." So often, specific sounds of chords foster specific meanings or moods, like the frenetic thunder cry of Hendrix, or the unmistakable sonic wail of U2's, The Edge, or the vocal poetry of Joni Mitchell's rock signature. Do we use beats and sonic symbols from prehistory? Do we still listen to the sounds of rain and birds, like Hitchcock says? Is a thunderstorm an ancient soundtrack and a precursor to rock and roll?

Jung long studied dreams and the subconscious and discovered that certain patterns in our dreams are common to everyone. These "archetypes" often relate to the symbols that rock artists utilize to charge their songs. While many mythic symbols or archetypes come from prehistory, the Bible or the Middle Ages, many twentieth century fears are precipitating new images and symbols for folktales and myths still to be fully realized, like those surrounding nuclear destruction and global warming, AIDS or Apartheid.

New or borrowed symbols have appeared as social catalysts and glue. The peace sign, for example, is synonymous with rock music. Symbols and music, bound together in many ways - both light and dark. Archetypes bridge our dreams with our ancestors, our myth making with myth interpretation. Symbols are alchemic, meaning that they combine science and spirit, known and believed. They are dream pieces, soul windows, and assist us in seeing how the many parts rock and roll music fit together as a conscious force. There are endless examples such as R.E.M.'s name itself which refers to a sleep/dream state. R.E.M.'s images evoke the dark and demonic, like their gargoyle on Chronic Town, or their weird dash of "reality and madness" on the cover of "Document #5," or their "Green" record cover?? that isn't green at all, but orange. What does orange mean to you?

The Church, from Sydney, illustrated their first release, "Of Skins and Heart," rather simply, until a deeper meaning is gleaned through the scientific heart image and colors. They could be saying that while we have different colors of skin, we all share the same life force symbolized by the heart: a symbol of courage, strength, and of the cosmic Christ in mythology. The colors, red and blue, mean the fresh blood -- tired blood cycle in the flow of life.

Why can't the heart symbolize the earth?

David Byrne, in a Rolling Stone interview, said, "In my teens, a lot of us felt that rock was a very direct kind of communication and not just music. There was also a lot of visual things that went along with it, a lot of the things that were making very direct connections that bypassed any need for translation." Now his Talking Heads make this connection magic.

Why do the followers of the Grateful Dead do their self-affirming dance with blood red roses and skeletons? Why the devil tattoo on a Guns 'n' Roses fan? Did you know that the letter X, i.e., the band formerly from Los Angeles, is defined in part by Random House as "Christ," "Cross," and "a person, thing, agency, factor, etc. of unknown identity?" When we begin to fill our musical reservoir with understanding through these mythic symbols, then we approach what Joseph Campbell meant by The Power of Myth.

What is on Pink Floyd's "Dark Side of the Moon" album cover?

The number one symbolizes the unity, three is the Trinity. Seven symbolizes musical balance. Look at your musical collection. What numbers are used by whom and when? And what about colors? Under a "Blood Red Sky;" "Yellow Submarine!"

U2's recording entitled, "The Joshua Tree," is a famous desert plant important to a Biblical home. Do you know the Christian symbolism surrounding it? Bono's great symbols keep spinning from the Irish foursome; 21st Century sound alchemists? One song from their experience describes a dream, a desert journey "In God's Country": "Desert sky, dream beneath the desert sky, rivers run but soon run dry, we need new dreams tonight, Desert rose, dreamed I saw a desert rose, Dressed. all in ribbons and in bows... Sad eyes, crooked crosses, in God's Country...."

Often mythology incorporates two important story themes: initiation and tradition. Our history is found in our social codes and rituals of passage. As we mature, we learn how to choose, how to select the best path for success to the ends that we desire. We are initiated as we pass various institutional tests.

In short, we are products of social, political, and religious rules of behavior. Rock musicians have been sharing their passages ever since the blues banged into the electrical sixties, passing on their experiences and challenges to the new guard in the Age of Aquarius.

Jackson Browne is a storyteller from the heart, a soul who shares his passages through a folksy rock swing. He sings a song of growing pains on. "Fountain of Sorrow" from **The Pretender**, and about a journey with maps and charts on "Farther On" from *Late for the Sky*. Cat Stevens' **Tea for the Tillerman** is a classic collection of songs from the road to find out, especially his ballads "Where Do the Children Play?" and "Fathers and Sons." These tunes are adding to our growing body of rock mythology. Have you shared your life passages with your children?

As young people, we require honest feedback such as testimony and direct experience. Our traditions are now more fluid, under attack from apathy and extremists, alike. From our first day in Kindergarten, to the Girl Scout Oath, Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday, and on to our first rock concert, traditions help form our attitudes and ritual bases for adulthood. These social cues and rules are our personal responsibility. For many, rock music this provides information, guidance, and alternatives on our journey to acceptable initiation rites. Lennon demanded that we "Give Peace A Chance." Are you listening? Or just buying?

Think for a minute. How many love songs do you know? How many do we need? We all lose when the planet goes to war, divided. Perhaps it's time you sang: "Get Up, Stand Up"?

Rock music scholars D. Hibbard and, S. Kaleialoha, in **The Role of Rock, A Guide to the Social and Political Consequences of Rock Music**, wrote that, "the rock songs of the late '60's brought forth alternative values and visions on many levels. The music was in itself a bold statement with all sorts of fantastic phantasms swirling around and through it. Whether denouncing the war, celebrating drugs, or redefining love and sex, the songs declared freedom, sensation, and life. They made the young aware of themselves, reconfirmed their beliefs and acknowledged, within a positive framework, the changes taking place. The sound brought together a generation, created a 'mystical fusion' and gave the young a shared experience and an articulate, although not necessarily accurate, expression of what is and what will be. Even more important, rock music transcended dreary reality to offer America an optimistic utopian view of the future."

In **The Uses of Enchantment**, Bruno Bettelheim told us: "Myths and closely related religious legends offer material from which children form their concepts of the world's origins and purpose, of the social ideals that a child could pattern him or herself after. These were the images of the unconquered Achilles and wily Odysseus; of Hercules, whose life history showed that it is not beneath the dignity of the strongest man to clean the filthiest stable; of St. Martin, who cut his coat in half to clothe a poor beggar. And Freud referred to (Oedipus) to make us aware of the inescapable cauldron of emotions which every child, in his or her own way, has to manage at a certain age."

Our cauldron "boileth over." Late sixties rock music was protest connected, anti-war, anti-establishment, perhaps even anti-tradition (or for new traditions?). Paradoxically, Woodstock celebrated free love and global unity under a war-

angry, drug infested and disillusioned black rainbow. Punk music captured this energy after a commercial "Top 40" backslide in the 1970's.

It is clear that if mythology and rock music can guide us through a confusion of bent traditions, shooting matches at City Hall, and TV-centered materialism, must learn to distinguish between our heroes and the clowns. We are always standing at the crossroads. The Police, from **Synchronicity**, lament our faltering human baton pass in their classic song, "Walking In Your Footsteps": "...If we drop the atom bomb, will they say that we were dumb, ya ... walking in your footsteps...."

Joseph Campbell, in *The Power of Myth*, described John Lennon as a hero, an innovator who brought a new spiritual depth to popular music through the meditative powers of Eastern and Oriental music. Campbell told us that "a hero must leave the old and go in quest of the seed idea. By experiencing something for everyone and reporting back his or her findings, a broader shift in understanding is possible." Heroes speak with our symbols, to our traditions, and challenge our surface initiations. The hero is key to the power of rock music and myth.

Greil Marcus, writing in **Mystery Train**, states: "It's easy to forget how young this country is; how little distance really separates us from the beginning of the myths, like that of Lincoln, that still haunt the national imagination. We make choices . . . about what is worth keeping and what isn't, trying to create a world where we feel alive, risky, ambitious, and free . . . We make the oldest stories new when we succeed, and we are trapped by the old stories when we fail."

The shaman, or medicine man, or healer, or Buddha, is an ancient title and community role, a hero and teacher common to many world people and their myths. Are there shamans with guitars today? Both Robyn Hitchcock and The Church's Steve Kilbey in recent interviews (**Night Sites & Sound, Soundcheck**) feel that role is possible, that the rock show is more than a performance. Both felt that they were evoking and/or invoking something through their work and live gigs.

What about the electricity and the sheer noise levels of modern rock concerts? A trance generator? Is this gathering an attempt to share a common consciousness? An initiation? R.E.M. is a band that has brought many people together with a magical mixture of surrealism and pop appeal. Consider Michael Stipe a shaman on a voyage: "Take your turn,...take your fortune...." (from "Pilgrimage," on **Murmur**) and "Take your instincts, by the reigns. . ." ("Worksong," from **Document #5**).

By combining symbols from mythology and pop culture with common themes from the human experience and music from across the world, rock music seems to work a universal beat. A mass communication electric. Love. Peace. Safe energy. Farm assistance. Freedom. A template and score for a better planetary way. We are calling ourselves with music again. Rock music talks about love a lot of the time, but we all know that obtaining it is difficult.

Just as myth works through culture-based fact and fantasy, rock presents its share of broken hearts and heroes, benefit shows for the poor and the imprisoned, and psychedelic trips to the moon and beyond. Is it plausible to think that rock has kept our faith in magic in dreams and personal visions alive in a world dark with war and greed?

Rock music today is less of an escape and more a medium for understanding; more a way to check up on the powers that be. The music soundtracks our own initiations and brings the emotions of racism, environmental destruction and war into our headphones.

Carl Jung, writing in **Aion**, stated that, "The present age must come to terms ... with the facts as they are absolute opposition is not only tearing the world asunder, politically but has planted a schism in the human heart. We need to find our way back to the original, living spirit which because of its ambivalence, is also mediator and uniter of opposites."

The theme of all mythology (is) that there is an invisible plane supporting the visible one."

Isn't the magic of rock music an ideal auger for communicating new ideas and shared consciousness?

We learn how man has treated this planet through the myths and folklore of our ancestors. And now we rework them for our children. Jung and Campbell might be saying that we should combine the forces of good and evil into a unity (or understanding); nurture and share all sources of world spirituality; and begin to work for a healthier planet. William I. Thompson explains, in **The Time Falling Bodies Take To Light**, that "the effort to displace the female seems to be at the archetypal foundation for civilization, for mankind has been at it for ages. Whether he is challenging Mother Nature in flying away from her in rockets, or changing her on earth through genetic engineering, man has not given up the attempt to take away the mystery from the Great Mother . . ." Does your mother, sister and/or daughter share and contribute equally in the patriarchy?

What myths are you buying for your iPad?

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Sound as Myth: Initiation and Journey at the Sonic – Human Interface

<http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1667>

"Alchemy's explanatory strength lies in its capacity to toggle between the seemingly incongruous realms of practice and metaphor." **Transformed as if in a Dream: Alchemical Transmutation and Our Sacred Earth.** [Interview with Michelle Ramona Silva, PhD.](#)

"The alchemical process is a physical ritual that projects an inner state onto physical elements." "Yes, I believe I understand how alchemy can work in the sound and visual arts; what's just as clear is that today's technology has definitely upped the ante." **Journey into Joseph Campbell Rising.** [PlanetShifter.com Magazine Interview](#) with Stephen Gerringer - Community Relations, Joseph Campbell Foundation.

>> **Play [landing.mp3](#)**

Avant-Garde, chaos or canvas - or just the start of the next initiation? Each listener will create his or her own experiential values as the work unfolds. My invitation is for file sharing and recombination of these raw sound experiences. As many writers have discussed in PlanetShifter.com Magazine interviews, this sound is an alchemical or transmutation process, where the recombining of elements and the interactive process is more important than the product.

I also will be examining myth as soundscape – or how the imagination of each listener both creates and recombines a story and how the meanings evolve as each collaboration changes the forces. These files can be re-mixed and thus made even more alchemic as each new layer is added.

Differing from other music, here soundscape is no longer the background but the foreground as the sound collage drives the experience; sound is now the story that we process and interpret individually and collectively.

A series of segways or glimpses into in the **Sonic – Human Interface.**

>> **Play [Scape5.mp3](#)**

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PlanetShifter.com Sound Elements

Inputs:

- PC Stereo: Streaming Internet or local mp3 library
- Viola: bowed, plunked or banged
- Audio-Technica Artist ATM350 Cardioid Condenser Clip-On Microphone
- Boss ME-25 Multiple Guitar Effects
- ZT Acoustic Amp
- 100.00 electric guitar
- Voice

Recording:

- iPhone Video
- Sonar and/or Audacity -> mp3

>> Play [Scape6.mp3](#)

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COMMUNITY BUILDING

Re-splicing the Tribe Myth in LinkedIn

<http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1482>

[Meet Me on the Equinox [by Death Cab for Cutie](#)]

Do you share my malady of the Future? A strange hang-time for greener values and some mysterious Tribe?

I find myself working in a future time and place that doesn't exist
It's hard to collaborate with an empty feeling

Living in an apocalypse tends to warp the present and the past with dreams of a better day:

I drag the end of the world myth around like Linus and his blanket
My teeth marks bleed my spirit

My psycho-nightmare-DNA warp drive:

I'm rushing to the gate
Gotta build the gate

Giving life support to as yet unborn Being. Earth 2. Weird:

Diaspora in wires
Messy stuff, my cause

Where is this global cultural augur loving the science of sustainability?

Life in a used car lot is getting really old, guys
Got that emotional dangle gamble green?

2/4/10

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Are Your Online Communities Just a Front for Green Products and Soft Porn?

<http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1595>

BEWARE: The sustainability revolution is now dogged by dumb ass **profit takers and cross dressers** whose only aims are click-thrus, percentages....

Paddle us? Let's do it in LinkedIn....

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The Junto Matrix. Vision Protocol and Interview with community developers

Gabriel Shalom and Ishan Shapiro

<http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1662>

Introduction by [Emergent Design](#)

Guidelines for Engaging in Generative Dialogue (a.k.a. The Conversation) -

Believe you can make a change

We often believe that our experience or capabilities are not enough to make a change. The truth is that we don't need to be academic luminary or have super powers to make an impact in the world. What we need to do is set the example and take action. If you read the Heath brother's last book Switch (here's a review from Chris Brogan) you can see some examples of people that make change without political power or extra developed brains. In order to make a change we just need a couple of things, the firm believe we can make it happen and the energy to work towards it.

Build Trust

A interaction where everyone is comfortable sharing their opinions or construction a solution for a problem can't be achieved instantly. The process of creating trust takes different amounts of time for every person and we need to be patient and interact until it's built. When new members join our conversation we should welcome them, introduce ourselves and let her integrate at her own pace.

To create trust there needs to be a fair amount of interaction between the parties or group. This interaction will provide many social events where the parties involved can demonstrate their honesty and fairness and be granted access to further information.

Building trust means that there needs to be a shared belief in the honesty and fairness of the other party. This is why sometimes seeing each other's faces is required. The Internet allows for this to happen and the trust building process never ends, as a minor misstep can bring down all the trust we've built through years of interaction.

Always have a goal

If we are gathered together we should have a clear perspective of what we want to achieve with the conversation we are having. Setting up a goal is good even if we don't know what to achieve yet. Maybe what we are trying to do is to find out what questions to ask so that could be the goal. An example could be, "find out what points we need to figure out to fix the economic inequality" which is basically finding out set of questions on how to challenge the current free market model. That should start other conversations that will make an impact.

Never Assume

The biggest misunderstandings come from assumptions. The best practice is to ask people to clarify their point. Chances are they really meant another thing. Many of the great problems that rise within communication are because one party assumed something about the other, instead of asking.

The main problem with assumptions is that we assume according to our background, thoughts, beliefs and context. Usually, and specially on the internet, comments are made in totally different backgrounds and from people with diverse experiences which mold their beliefs in a different way. For this not to be a problem we need to sit and try to understand every point of view and from where it comes from. Empathy is a key social skill to stop assuming and understanding that your community is very diverse.

Just ask. A simple "Can you explain me that idea in more detail?" can make a huge difference.

Never stay "Not Sure"

Many times when we have conversations we end up "not sure of what he/she said". Never stay like that. In order to understand and enrich your experience it's key that you get all the message as it was intended. This could help prevent future misunderstandings. When you feel you're not sure about something just ask for the clarification of that point. Rather than slowing the conversation this will help make it go in the right direction quicker and without needing to go back if the misunderstandings develop more.

Create a No Judgment Zone

Sometimes even if we understand someone else's context we may disagree or have diametrically opposite opinions on one subject. The Conversation environment needs to be 100% non judgmental. For this it's imperative that we understand that there is a myriad of faiths, religions, philosophies and ways of living. For us to understand each other and get to the point where we can answer the questions we've asked we need to incorporate all the possible point of views and encourage people to share them.

In order for all the point of views to be shared we need to create a space of tolerance where no point of view will be diminished or mocked so that the person sharing feels safe to express herself.

Remember always accept there's more point of views than ours. We should embrace the idea that there is the possibility for two views to live together without colliding. Why does it has to be one way or the other? Can it be both?

People that seem confused or to not be getting it need some patience. Remember this is a no judgment zone so don't rush on making conclusions and rather than that try to understand the point of view and find points of agreement. Being tolerant will lead to more openness and to a better understanding on foreign points of view.

Know yourself

Knowing ourselves, our points of view and goals in the world is key to stating where we are now and what limitations do we have in our areas of interest. Knowing what we believe in implies giving a test run to what we believe. For example, Jason Fried has a different approach to making business and he tests it within his company 37 signals. After testing it he writes about his experience and looks for feedback, he then adjusts his way of doing business according to what it works and the feedback he gets.

Knowing exactly why we do something is a key point to be prepared to accept criticism and make points clear. If we know the reasons why we do it we can give a clear explanation and set the context properly to avoid unproductive criticism of our point of view.

Part of knowing yourself is know where you stand in many of the points of the conversation. What your opinions are and how they relate to the current state of things in what you want to make an impact. Remember it's fine to be the one that doesn't fits in.

Be an example of what you say

If you endorse or support a way of living that you think could have an impact in changing the world and making it a better place be sure to live by what you say. It's very common to find people that preach certain point of view but live by other. Being an example is a better way to lead as you can inspire other people, share the results and assess what is not working. Part of our contribution to the conversation needs to be our experience and for that to happen we need to experiment what we think it's right.

Solve yourself first

When trying to help other people figure out the answer to a question or help them in the search of their higher purpose make sure you've solved this questions for you first. This by no means intends you to have definitive conclusions, but at least have a clear approach to what you think and what steps are you going to follow. If you find out that some minor arrangements could be made to your plan, do them, but the core needs to be defined so you can also help others find their own path. If you're joining the conversation to seek more information or broad your perspective make sure to enter informing people of your goals. Knowing each other's purpose and intent is key to letting other people know how to help.

Be a guide – Help People Get there

When having a conversation we usually try to convince people to accept our proposals, goals and points of view. Instead we should try to help each person to figure out by themselves what their answer is to the question they're asking. Whether it is their goals, objectives or purpose everyone needs to find this by themselves. What we can do is provide guidance.

Being a guide requires that we don't try to push our point of view, but rather take into consideration the initial mindset of the other parties and put out our point of view so the others can gather from it.

Don't give advice. Give the tools so people can figure the answers for themselves.

When solving a problem, find the bright spots

Usually when we see a problem we focus on what's making it wrong instead of on the small isolated cases where things are working fine. These are the bright spots. For example, what's working so well in cities like Hong Kong and Shanghai that is making them work so well compared to rest of China. The answer to that question is the rise of charter cities. Focus on the things that are working well and try to replicate them. And as the Heath brothers say on Switch, finding the origins of the problem is a waste of time because it's information that it's true but useless.

Challenge the status quo

As part of the conversation we need to be able to challenge what's established in order to change it. Questioning every single process that is blocking our efforts in making a change is key to understand what new approaches we need. Questioning the set of fundamentals by which our societies are driven is also a good thing, because it's the only way we can develop. Take Umair Haque's Betterness Manifesto which is a call to change the fundamentals of life and economy in order to achieve the a higher goal of improving life quality. No matter what the main purpose of the conversation is we should not be afraid to question the status quo in order to succeed in making an impact.

Make a Call to action

When closing a chapter of the conversation make sure to leave a clear call to action so the participants can engage and spread what's being said. Whether it's a invitation for the next stage of the conversation or a specific action that they can perform in the online or offline world. The conversation will be useless if it didn't inspire action so make sure you have a call to it that is designed so that people can go there and get feedback on what they do. Let's make sure you get people moving. An idea that we fail to execute won't help us make a change in the world.

When it's time, move on

The conversation can't last forever. When you've reached a point where you have found your path and can't go any further either at finding your answer (or question) or helping others find theirs, move on.

Move on to new conversations where you can gain deeper understanding of new fields and move on to act on what you've been discussing. Let's say you found your purpose in life, go and live it.

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Interview with Junto by Willi Paul

So, boil this down. Are you advocating tools first or values first?

@notthisbody - #Junto is not a platform. Junto is an intention of collaboration and the modeling of cooperation. I'd like the community using Junto to be flexible and agile, and change between different tools for different purposes. The technology will evolve - it's the process and interaction that's important.

@gabrielshalom - Junto is a process but the platform that supports a Junto is a form; Junto is not necessarily software. The open video platform that could be built to support a Junto could also support numerous other open video business models.

Give us 5 principles that generate connections between member / participants at Junto?

This is a rough sketch of some of our principles. There are probably more than five ;)

- 1. telepresence.** emotions, sound, faces, gesture and energy. these interactions will become more sophisticated as technology progresses (especially with advancements to wearable computing).
- 2. shared language .** defining terms, agreeing on equivalencies, visualizing interaction, removing basic barriers for communication by rendering motivations explicit.
- 3. shared interests .** coming together around our passions and enthusiasm
- 4. mapping & archiving .** documenting conversations, social patterns and workflows to make them a resource for the community and each other
- 5. mutual respect .** giving each other the floor. being tolerant of diverse opinions. opening the dialogue to the world and listening to the response with compassion.

Do you belong to other online communities? Which ones and why?

@notthisbody - I mostly stick to twitter, because i love the flow and salience of the information flowing around me. I'm not an avid facebook user, perhaps because I prefer a more serendipitous network for discovery. For me the controversy about privacy is more to do with the commoditization of our personal data. I want tools that enable me to find the patterns in my own personal data.

Services like Quora and Kreeo are interesting as knowledge repositories. I was a large fan of Twine in its early days because of the social dynamics of linking information and perspectives, and the ability that has to strengthen a group of collaborators, and was sad to see it go.

@gabrielshalom - Aside from regular use of Facebook, Twitter and Vimeo, I also dabble in Flickr and SoundCloud. I gravitate towards communities which enable me to do what I want with my data and which have members that I feel will be responsive to my contributions. I have recently been posting less and less personal information to Facebook in light of recent privacy controversy. I also am active in several group blogging efforts, including Augmentology 1[L]0[L]1, Emergence Collective, and Space Collective. Incidentally, many of the members of the first generation of Junto enthusiasts met via Space Collective, as well as via Venessa Miemis' blog Emergent by Design.

@notthisbody - I'd second the use of Vimeo for video posting. We also use flickr for sharing of photos, delicio.us for bookmarks, as well as using the Freesound Project and Archive.org for sound and media. I blog at Metamaps and contribute to Emergence Collective, and my cyber residency is with Space Collective - an online think tank and collective blog which has been developing a conceptual philosophy for the evolution of mind and consciousness with technology. I think it's less about the platform that's important but the manner in which that allows you to interact with a network.

Is voice more important than face in generating trust? Why or why not?

@notthisbody - Each have their different qualities. It's the medium of interaction that changes the dynamics, and there are qualities to both, and preference changes person to person. What I see as the crux of interaction online is the ability to identify conscious or subconscious intention of interaction and becoming literate and aware of our intentions and those of others'.

Trust itself is something that I am still defining. Are we talking about a trust based on reliability, authority, integrity, dependability, and confidence in cooperation? does that differ from a respect that includes an etiquette, constancy, and coherency - solid narratives?

We're heading towards empathic, telesynaesthetic, emotional agreements with one another. Mirror neurons in the brain also address the empathic interconnection we have with the world around us.

@gabrielshalom - It's important not to split the senses apart from one another. The ears and eyes both pick up critical subtle cues which help determine whether we can trust somebody. One issue which will need to be resolved in the future is the fact that current webcam designs do not enable genuine eye contact, but rather the feeling of observing your conversation partner. In a multichannel video experience, this sousveillance phenomenon is exacerbated, as our eyes flick around from frame to frame follow the conversation. What actually builds trust is long-term engagement, shared values, and confirmations/recommendations from people in our existing circles. Some members of the Junto community have written more extensively on trust issues.

What is a "trust-based profile structure?"

@notthisbody - You might want to ask @openworld more about that.

Can you tell us more about the pending "emotional/intuitive symbol language?"

@notthisbody - The Metacodes project is an effort to collect, create and discuss an sort of folks-ontology of interaction, taking the form of annotations and tags to attach to ideas, thoughts and information. It's inspired by Ebon Fisher's work on visualizing network ethics and I'm looking at the correlations that can be made between the project and Pierre Levy's IEML (Information Economy Meta-language).

In collaboration with @gavinkeech, Metacodes have manifested so far into metaicons for synchronous collaborative concept mapping - examples of which can be found here and here. We plan to implement these in conjunction with twitter annotations.

Is Junto a collective, a movement, a revolution? A fun thing to explore on the weekend? Help!

@gabrielshalom - Junto is a discussion format originated by Benjamin Franklin which we have generously remixed into a contemporary meme for collaborative telepresent dialogue. At the same time, you can have a Junto in physical space, or over Skype. Junto is platform independent.

The open video infrastructure our community envisions, however, would be revolutionary! Imagine a global, live video conversation as diverse as the Twittersphere! You could theoretically just dive into any of literally millions of parallel conversations, interacting with fellow enthusiasts on shared topics of interest. What's truly radical is the potential of such a platform to enable us to create entirely novel business models based on telepresence.

@notthisbody - "junto" in spanish means "together", and for me that's its essential meaning of the Junto initiative - the desire to cooperate, share wisdom and collaborate towards common aspirations, hopes, intentions and actions.

How does "Twitter backchannel" work there?

@gabrielshalom - The intention of the Twitter backchannel is to enable people to participate in a conversation via tweets without streaming their video signal into the mix. We think it's interesting to enable participants the ability to engage with a given conversation on multiple levels; video, audio only, just listening/watching, tweeting occasionally, or just investigating the maps/documents/recordings afterwards.

We've even had some people report that they left a Junto open in their browser and listened to the participants like it was a talk radio program. There is no limit to how creatively people can use the various channels of the system.

Ultimately we'd like to see tighter integration in the platform so that each conversation space is tied to specific Twitter hashtags, enabling more refined text-based searches for conversations.

Is your project open source?

@gabrielshalom - The short answer is that Adobe's SDK is open source but the server setup requires a paid license. The long answer can be [found here](#).

Sharepoint, Basecamp? Please compare and contrast with Junto.

@notthisbody - Basecamp's looking to enable people to collaborate and manage projects together. We have a vision for Junto in which different collaborative, social networking, and knowledge management extensions/plugins can be chosen and tailored towards specific idea/discussion/project/action frameworks. I do see the Junto project going in this direction, but being much more flexible and modular in its creation.

@gabrielshalom - I am not too familiar with either of these services but the major obvious differences are that we're trying to promote a process of collaborative knowledge exchange and a platform for live open video. It's pretty clear both Sharepoint and Boot camp have other objectives. While they each have their own strengths and weaknesses, these are some other platforms that have elements of functionality we'd like to see in Junto. Ultimately all of them fall short in some way or another of the ideals we envision for a platform:

- Apple Facetime for iPhone 4
- Kinect for Microsoft Xbox
- Skype Beta Group Video Chat
- Cisco Telepresence
- Supercool School
- Dimdim
- WebEx
- Tiny Chat

- Tokbox
- Evo

Of course, it may be possible to attempt a Junto using any of the above systems, but the architecture and intentions behind these platforms may dilute/constrict the experience towards a more corporate or business objective.

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On Survival, Survivalists and the New Community Cook-out. Group Interview from the Sustainability Age with Rachel Kaplan, Jan Steinman, Catherine Walker, and Pride Wright

<http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1657>

"Transition US is definitely NOT a survivalist group!" Raven Grey, Co-founder & President, Transitions US

Introduction: Jan Steinman, EcoReality.org -

"I think Homo sapiens, although currently the climax species of the entire planet, is an endangered species. We want to work toward the sustainable, long-term survival of humans in harmony with nature.

"Survival" seems to have a "Mad Max" implication, of wide-spread insurrection, rioting, looting, etc. I think humans are just as likely to go out with a whimper, rather than a bang -- "boiling frog" syndrome. I would like to see EcoReality serve as a pool of knowledge and resources that can out-live a long, slow decline as well as a quick, chaotic one. The former is actually much harder to cope with than the latter!

Fear is certainly a bigger enemy than anything tangible that may come down the road. EcoReality is currently at a nexus, a precarious point between giving up our dreams while suffering a huge financial loss and being able to carry on in a way that will serve humanity. That is a fear I constantly battle.

Fear is perhaps the biggest enemy. **President Roosevelt** said, "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself," and **Paul "Muad'Dib" Atreides** quoted the **Bene Gesserit** mantra, "I must not fear. Fear is the mind-killer. Fear is the little-death that brings total obliteration. I will face my fear. I will permit it to pass over me and through me. And when it has gone past I will turn the inner eye to see its path. Where the fear has gone there will be nothing. Only I will remain."

This is the path I constantly struggle with. At each decision point, I ask myself, "Which choice is furthest from fear? Which choice is driven by fear?" And then I strive to take the fearless path. But it is difficult. **Richard Feynman** said, "The first principle is that you must not fool yourself -- and you are the easiest person to fool." The easy path is to fool yourself into making a fearful decision by denying the fear factor in it.

In summary, I think "survival" is not a term I like to use nor to identify with -- if for no other reason, the associations with fear that you cite."

Survival, survivalist or just plain surviving? Such a can of compost!

We asked folks connected to DailyActs.org who recently did solo interviews for PlanetShifter.com Magazine to dive into this critical subject. Click on their names to read their solo interviews.

(RK) - [Rachel Kaplan](#)

(CW) - [Catherine Walker](#)

(PW) - [Pride Wright](#)

"Our vision is to create a healthy, just and reverent human culture, one act at a time. By providing inspiring sustainability education and media, we empower people to harness the significant impact of simple daily actions rooted in care for people and planet." dailyacts.org/about

1. Is DailyActs.org a "survivalist" group? Why or why not?

RK: "No, absolutely not. DailyActs.org is a group of people who are committed to a positive, generative future. We are not bunkering down with our canned goods and our guns, fearing others. We are reaching out our hands and our hearts to bring the new world into being. I think of survivalists of people who are thinking first of "saving" themselves, and who are not particularly socially generative. Me first and all for me, kind of thinking."

CW: "I do not consider DailyActs.org a survivalist group, as the premise of a survivalist is based on distrust, fear and paranoia. The polarized perspective of 'us vs. them.' Daily Acts' premise is based on trust, inclusiveness, openness and generosity of spirit that inspires empowerment."

PW: "Survival may be a byproduct of the DailyActs.org vision, were it to be implemented on a large scale, but "survivalist" obviously connotes camo and firearms. I haven't seen Tra in camo, so for the moment I'd have to say no."

2. What intentional or sustainable communities can you suggest as good examples of transitional community values?

RK: "I think many intentional communities are good examples of transitional community values. Mariposa Grove in Oakland is a small urban intentional community where people share and conserve resources, help raise one another's children, befriend one another, activate social projects together, etc. All of these are transitional community values. Co-housing in general reflects transitional community values, in so far as co-housing communities cut down on resource use in building, sharing of food, chores and tasks of living, growing gardens together, etc... There are other intentional communities of which I am aware that also have transitional community values--Kayumari (well, now defunct, but still...) was a spiritual community in the Stanislaus forest. Residents were committed to a spiritual path that reflected at the deepest level transitional values--a renewed earth, and peace with creation.

There are undoubtedly many more, both here in the Bay Area, and around the world. The best way to find them is through the Communities Magazine folks based in the mid-West.

I think living in community is one of the best ways to challenge our ingrained notions of private property, what we think we need as individuals, and the hegemony of the nuclear family (which is a freaking disaster, let's face it)."

CW: "[Earthsong Eco-Neighborhood](#) in Waitakere, New Zealand.

PW: "In my experience, Arcata comes pretty close, although I haven't spent much time up there in the last few years. The "voluntary lower middle class" thing has been prevalent up there for a long time. (Lower per capita consumption.) Buying local is a religion. No chains. Purely as an economic construct, it's the closest thing I've seen for a community of that size. Culturally, art (including music) is a participation sport, not a spectator sport. Pedestrian friendly. Tolerant in the extreme. Strong land stewardship ethic. All of the hallmarks."

3. When we consider survival, it can bring up things like fear for our children and property, media control, isolation, government policies, revolution? What does the term mean to you at DailyActs.org?

RK: "I can't really speak for all of DailyActs.org, but I would say that for myself the idea of "survival" or more specifically, a THREAT to survival doesn't make me feel particularly sanguine. I tend to worry most about my daughter, and what she and her peers will experience as living on planet earth gets ever more sketchy. But that's a story I tell myself, and not a definite reality. I don't know what's going to happen in the future. Maybe the work we are doing now will pave the way for a better way for people to live together.

Many people and creatures on the planet are already in "survival mode." The emergency is already happening. And we already have children and their parents being sacrificed to media control, social isolation, fascist government policies, and in some parts of the world, revolution.

I have more fear about the degeneration of social systems and the continued unwinding of the social code: i.e., i fear the bad behavior of people more than anything. I think we live in a country where people are largely conditioned to have what they want when they want it, are not schooled in compromise or sharing. We are largely bought and sold by the high quality of our material lifestyle. As this slips away, how will people respond? That's my fear."

I am sure that everyone at DailyActs.org would have a different read on this question, so please do not represent this as a DailyActs.org position."

CW: "From my perspective as both a spiritual practitioner and a Daily Acter, the term 'survival' reflects the most rudimentary aspects of living on earth. That human beings require clean water, healthy food and a form of shelter are the most fundamental of corporeal life. A focus on corporeal survival doesn't address the most generative need of all human life ~ that of love—of loving and being loved. The Beatles weren't kidding when they said 'all you need is love.' How far does one's love extend without inner work?"

What is the difference between one who loves only himself and his immediate possessions and one whose love extends to all living creatures of the earth and perhaps beyond? The quintessential challenge of our time is not actually about how to survive—it's about how to evolve. Humanity must evolve beyond survival to include all living things that share this planet with us. It is about developing the inner capacity to personally experience that all of nature is alive and therefore alive WITH us. As Colin Tudge of the London School of Economics said, 'If we get food right, everything else we need to do can fall into place. But first, we have to re-think the world.' So, what we're doing at Daily Acts is about Quality of Life for all living beings. It is an evolutionary, generative perspective."

Ref: journeytoforever.org/bflpics/feedingpeople.pdf

PW: "Can't speak for DailyActs.org, but in my opinion, the words "survival" and "survivalist" are ones we should steer clear of. And I say that as someone who believes a Cormac McCarthy-esque future in my lifetime is entirely plausible, if not probable. While fear can be a catalyst for action, and in some cases productive action, the undertones and harmonics are completely counter-productive. We need extreme engagement, not withdrawal."

4. Is Transition US as "survivalist" group?

RK: "I think Transition US is a realist group, but I imagine there are survivalists in its ranks."

CW: " In that Transition US is involved in more political dances in its work to re-engineer existing systems, there is inevitably some element of survivalism. Transition US is essentially about transforming the way people think and re-envisioning the world through socio-economic localization. Tapping on the edgy vein of peak oil is sure to stir up quite a lot of deeply-rooted survivalist perspectives. That's exactly what it's supposed to do."

PW: "Not in my view."

5. Don't we all have to experience a transition before the green values can take root?

RK: "No, green values are already taking root. I just almost got hired to write "The Complete Idiots Guide to Urban Homesteading." Green in mainstream. It would be great if people could experience a real transition, like understanding and working for a "new world order" that is based on less resource use and abuse and an understanding of the finitude of the globe. For now, we are stuck with people trying to "keep up with the greens", without necessarily changing their relationship to personal economy, stuff, or their use of time, but it's way better that people continuing to "keep up with the Jones'", just buying shit they don't need and wasting resources right and left."

CW: "Yes. The transition is an inner experience. When one places one's attention on the extended connectivity of an 'aha moment' of let's say, the intrinsic value of eating organically, it is in that moment that one actually begin to evolve beyond the isolation of survival."

PW: "If we're talking about individuals, "awakening" might be the word I would choose in this context. (Hackneyed, I know.) At some point there has to be an examination of some long held assumptions (in our culture) about consumption and its alleged relationship to well-being. We have also become far too comfortable with acquiring at the expense of others. So to me, it's likely to be more of an epiphany than a transition for the individual, and the word "transition" is perhaps more appropriate in a community or institutional context."

6. Can you give me some current songs or stories that bolster the DailyActs.org path to a better world, beyond survival?

RK: "Here, i am going to give you something I wrote for DailyActs.org a while ago. It's also going to be in my book. It's long."

Bee Haven

My partner Adam is called to the bees, and holds a vision of a beehive in every yard. Spring is the glory time for beekeepers, as one swarm after another races across the sky in search of a new home. Last weekend, Adam was getting the mail when he heard a loud buzzing sound. He looked up and noticed the cloud of bees overhead. He came running, gleefully shouting, "A swarm, a swarm!" We all piled onto the street to watch the bees until they settled on the branch of a Monterey pine across the road. The neighbors who own the tree weren't home so Adam hesitated to start gathering the bees, but another long-time neighbor said, "Go ahead. They won't mind." Adam took out his ladder, his bee veil and brush, and began.

Beekeepers generate interest wherever they go, because of current concern about the plight of the bee and because bees are fascinating creatures. Most of us never get to watch a bee colony in action, but if you do, you'll notice that the bees form an integrated, non-neurotic, cooperative mass. Every bee knows its purpose, and wastes no moment wondering about its career choice, its "soul's code". Compared to bees, we have a lot of problems working together and figuring stuff out. We can look to bees as a great model for rising to our purpose (be it: Worker, Drone or Queen) to get the job done. The bees remind us that each role is important, every task part of the whole.

As Adam methodically moved about his beekeeping tasks, neighbors from up and down the road began clustering like a human swarm. Some were nervous, but most were curious to watch the bees. The air was full of their buzzing, and everyone stepped closer to see them hanging in the early evening twilight. It was dinnertime, and soon a picnic table had been dragged to the edge of the road, a bottle of wine opened and people began to share an impromptu dinner. All the while, Adam's climbing slowly up the ladder and carefully brushing the bees into his swarm box. Eventually, the bees gathered together, Adam came down from his perch, gratefully accepted a glass of wine, and the adventure was complete. After dinner, everyone drifted back home, satisfied and newly connected.

When we answer to the call of the earth, surprising conjunctions of love and possibility happen. A spontaneous conjunction of bees and people came together to bring us a moment of true conviviality and friendship. The bees teach us that we have a purpose, a role, in making what is already sweet—life—even sweeter. Who knows what kind of collective solutions to our current dilemmas we might find as we set ourselves with a good will to the task? All I know for sure is: it's time to find out. Look around your own neighborhood—what can you grow with the people you share it with? Like the bees seeking the right place for their colony, it's time for us to claim our own place. Maybe that means swarming to a new spot where there's room to spread out, but I think it's more likely that it means settling into where you already are and learning to work with your neighbors, your own human swarm."

CW: "Michael Jackson's 'Heal the World'"

PW: "The song that's running through my head in association with these questions and images is CSN's Wooden Ships. I'm old, so it's still current.

Stills: "Say, can I have some of your purple berries?"

Crosby: "Yes, I've been eating them for six or seven weeks now."

Stills: "Probably keep us both alive....."

7. Localization is all about surviving - and then redefining social principles and tools to a better space. Yes?

RK: "Localization, at least at present, is more about thriving than surviving. I think of localization really in terms of reclaiming the means of production which has been stolen by corporate America, so I have a bit of a Marxist take on it-- we have to reclaim the means of production or we will continue to be bludgeoned by corporations that do not hold values you can live with. I think the process of localization holds within it the redefinition of social principles, as well as the evolution of physical, personal, emotional and communal tools we will need to live a local life.

Keep in mind that many people involved in the transition movement are comfortably well off, and are making changes because they can and because they feel a sense of urgency about the world situation. This is different than survivalism, where people change because they literally, materially, **MUST.**"

CW: "Actually, the truth is that localization is a reflection of self-reorganization—which is activated by an inner recognition of a better way for all life forms. The cocoon the butterfly emerges from is a place of self-reorganization. It creates the perfect environment for the caterpillar's imaginal cells to morph into the butterfly. Without these imaginal cells being activated, the caterpillar would not transform into the butterfly—an entirely new life form whose purpose is to pollinate. In pollinating, the fructification of the future of food is established.

Self-reorganization has the potential to transform the individual to a higher state of consciousness. It actually depends on what one imagines; in other words, what one would like to see be."

PW: "I would contend "surviving" is at the very least a strand, if not a stated goal, in all social, cultural and political movements. I might substitute "rediscovering relationships" for "redefining social principles". I'm not sure what a "social tool" would be! Is that like a Facebook thing? So I'm still resistant to the "survivalist" imagery, but I know what you're getting at, and I'm in general agreement."

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Online Community Providers must Step Up and Create Trans-Global Channels for Green Business Sponsors, Innovation Teams and Activist Campaigns

<http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1575>

The best Internet strategy and competitive advantage at this point in time is to build top-down and cross business and activist partnerships in a global socially mediated build. But how? Consider the power of facilitating work groups and/or activism campaigns with visionaries and rank and file members **in say: China, USA and UK/Europe.**

There are competitive advantages to gain both members and sponsors in Asia for online community platform providers. Ads and sponsors from firms and NPOs in different countries only support the global network. Discussion seeders and evangelists alike will be required with multi-cultural experience and passion. Online communities will need to be more value-driven and proactive with heir marketing lights and how they finesse borders – electronic and political.

I see multi-directional synergies between China, US and UK/European business and NPO in the online community industry. While the US online community providers are in tight competition for market share with non-profit and for-profit online communities, the future is not market share but "hearts and vision" share.

Visit Greenwala.com, then WiserEarth.org. Competitors? Can green media productization trump saving real dolphins? Na.

China is in desperate need of green technology and global communication channels. Look at the current LinkedIn Groups dedicated to China? I just created one for my consultancy at LinkedIn.com: [China - Global Sustainable Business](#).

Yes! Trans-Global business innovation and activist teams can benefit from the right online community platform. The Chinese government can only embrace the positive effects in the green movement and education and business leaders there are looking for IT options that get past the **Google debacle**.

Why would a Chinese city government official want to place their online sponsorship ad next to a logo for a Silicon Valley Solar R&D firm?

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Is LinkedIn.com the Wal-Mart of the online business communities?

<http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1403>

A growing percentage of the world's educated and wired souls now have profiles on LinkedIn.com. Not that this is an online community in the sense, scale or virtue of say: Craigslist.org or greenwala.com. Fair to say that the competition for dollars and the redundancy in posts, discussions and end games are starting to chafe?

The zillion's of LinkedIn.com Group Gate Keeper's are protecting their turf daily but obviously must contend with the daily barrage of their member's self-promotions, quick fix webinars, used cars and ePolls.

But hey! I'm re-posting this missive on LinkedIn.com, right? And I am a member of 34 Groups here. But what great value are you getting out of the occasional "join my network" pleas on LinkedIn.com? Please raise your hands!

Of course I understand my "tongue in mouse" here and that it is easy to bash an organization that has grown big in part from our fear of losing main street for good and that yellow pillow we call greed in a dangerously down and "bank shark" economy.

In my case, I am pleased to relay that LinkedIn has brought both new exposure and members to both my projects and my LinkedIn.com Groups. And yes, I have been asked to take a hike and tone down my spirit.

So what are my hopes for LinkedIn.com and its electronic numbers?

I propose we:

- **Create much more cross-over and exploration between groups.**
- **Dive into each other's way, meet someone new.**
- **Break into each other disciplines, ask hard questions!**
- **Run amuck online. It's time to flip the paradigms.**
- **Pursue all of the above an attempt to find new questions, ideas and solutions. We need'em now.**

Have you been kicked-out of a LinkedIn.com Group yet?!

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SUSTAINABILITY AND THE NEW MYTHOLOGY

[The Green Movement, Power Grids and Global Consciousness?](http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1665)

<http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1665>

Where is the green movement headed? Many say to the same old corporate greenwash bank and China bent productization that got us into this economic and spiritual chaos. The system is broken. And separating your trash will not create a new world for our global family. Composting is just an inch. We need a mile. Explore how new sound and artistic alchemy and Nature-based mythologies can greatly assist us now toward a transition to a truly sustainable community.

We have collected four responses from the recent Activating Myth, Alchemy & Sustainability - [Fall 2010 Planetshifter.com Magazine Survey](#) to champion these new tools, images and stories to spark your consciousness and bring us together in more powerful ways.

Although for some it seems that mythology is something that no longer applies to life, for many every day encounters with mythologies, old and new, are sources of inspiration. As unique points of reference, mythological themes, often emerging from surprising places, can become powerful drivers for creative thinking.

[R.1] I think of myths as very old stories. New mythologies sounds odd to me. I read Greek, Roman stories that contain mythological figures. I am familiar with other traditions too, Norse stories, Celtic, African storytelling, some Asian traditions, but not as much as European. There are many overlaps in the stories told, which is always so interesting, inspiring.

[R.2] At this time, mythology appears to describe transpersonal themes, chaotic attractors that act out as fractals, within our bodies, individual relationships and culture at large. Gods manifest as impulses, synchronistic themes within awareness and as broader social movements.

I do encounter new mythologies. The works of Burroughs, Kirby, Crowley, Grant, Morrison, Frank Herbert, Alexander Dumas, Evola and Ballard all particularly inspire me to think in mythological terms. The music of Marilyn Manson, Rush, Deltron 3030, Sun Ra, Eminem, Wu-Tang all also have led me to meditations on mythological elements.

[R.3] Every day I find myself deferring to mythology, my understanding of symbols and archetypes. As far as new mythologies, they emerge from new dynamics. I seek out comic books as sources to inspire me to think in mythological terms.

[R.4] Sub-systems within the context of past or current events, places, and regarding groups or individuals on either small or large scale, that are imbued with a resonating "theme" or story. For example, columnists, essayists/bloggers, entertainment media, etc., are all purveyors of new mythology.

Many are searching for new clues and can offer some symbols, songs or stories that speak in mythological terms for the Sustainability Age. Look into your mp3 library.

[R.1] Creation stories are always humbling. Usually we arise from mud/earth. The notion that we need to return to earth is suggestive of useful cycles...maybe inevitable cycles that we can't escape. There is also the recurring image of the hero needing to go to the underworld in order to prevail, reach a higher level. We are not a society that wants to spend much time in the underworld facing some ultimate challenge. If more people were willing to be so inconvenienced, we probably wouldn't have the natural disaster that is looming.

A bit less mythological, but relevant for me and ecology is the notion of reverence. This was a historic virtue that required the powerful to not harm those under their control. This was particularly in war, but it relates to modern day power players (money) who have not sense of reverence for those less powerful, or the earth that deserves care.

[R.2] Ghost of Chance, Burroughs; Gaia, Alex Grey[the Geodesic dome

[R.3] Ideas of rebirth and renewal are so prevalent in myth. The symbol of the tree of life, the idea that superheroes pass on their mantles, the belief that nothing ever dies, cosmic consciousness, and the internet and all it encompasses are relevant for the "Sustainability Age."

[R.4] Earth Day: the big globe, bouncing about the heads of happy, healthy children.

- The color green.
- The term "green."
- The recycling symbol, along with the green and blue bins.
- The Prius.
- The Baby Harp Seal Image.
- Jacques Cousteau and Greenpeace: as icons of "pure" intentions toward life systems.
- Wall-E.

One of the best ways to encounter mythology is through music and books. Many bands or authors stir our imagination these days.

[R.1] I've been reading Homer and Virgil lately. I can't think of contemporary music or books that tap into this dimension. I can think of some poetry that reaches to mythological figures to ground it, bring the message to a wider sphere, but this is not generally contemporary poetry. I could try to notice this more, but not much comes to mind at the moment.

[R.2] Theodore Sturgeon, Rudy Rucker, Don Webb, Bruce Duensing, Mark Pesce.

Fleet Foxes, Secret Chiefs

[R.3] I've recently delved into Rudy Rucker, whose depictions of robots in archetypal situations are thought provoking. In comics, it has to be hands down Grant Morrison, who tears apart and rebuilds archetypes and mythology word by word. Musically, it's harder to say.

[R.4] There are so many. World music is certainly one media that inspires me and intrigues me. The expression of different cultures through the translation of their literature: "The Incredible Lightness of Being;" UK Building's Sustainability News Section (<http://www.building.co.uk/technical/sustainability/>); the Harry Potter books. Unusual travelogues such as Bill Bryson's "Notes from a Small Island"; Georgeanne Brennan's "A Pig in Provence"; Edith Wharton's various travel essays, etc.

And interesting explorations such as Kelley's "The Ten Faces of Innovation"; and Friedman's "Hot, Flat and Crowded."

We live in a rapidly changing world, the ancients had a practice that sought to investigate the process of change in a way that coordinated with their ideas of universal harmony. They called this study alchemy. The new alchemy intrigues us.

[R.1] Sounds like making gold out of cheap ingredients. Sorry I'm not more sophisticated than that on the subject.

[R.2] Very much so. I consider my own ethnobotanical process a red-headed stepchild of the alchemists. Hearing about Israel Regardie's accident, alongside space constraints, put me off traditional alchemy though.

[R.3] Absolutely. I've studied modern alchemists extensively. Guys like Jack Parsons who melded science and magic seamlessly.

[R.4] Yes, as it is innovation, science, and myth all wrapped up together.

Everybody has something that really sparks them, something that gives them a focal point for their creativity. What activities inspire your creativity?

[R.1] Being exposed to new things. Travel can do it. I'm looking forward to a trip to Europe this fall and I hope to be energized by that. I track the internet for new input. I read a lot, and lately have been reading more poets. I spend a fair amount of time attending to nature. I live in a small place and have the luxury of being in nature quite a lot. I also have a long history in environmental studies, work in the field, so many memories of natural surroundings and what happens there.

[R.2] The ethnobotanical preparation process. Engaging in narrative space online.

[R.3] Play.

[R.4] The study of beauty in the familiar and unfamiliar, through all the senses, in both the built and unbuilt world. I love observing people and soaking up the "moment." There is nothing more wonderful to me than just sitting in a pew in St. Peter's basilica, listening to the whispering penitents, watching the play of light as it moves over the sculptures and architecture, smelling the mustiness of the place, and feeling the coolness offered by the thick walls that protect the occupants from the hot, Roman afternoons. It's all the dimensions of the place that inspire me.

Recent news has seen no end to stories of global issues that demand immediate attention, and in an interconnected world we're finding out quickly that even local issues can cause global challenges. Can you give us the top three global issues that need to be repaired?

[R.1] A UN negotiator in an interview once said the three barriers to peace are poverty, ignorance and hatred. Since the environment is inextricably linked to issues of peace, I would stick with that fellow's intuition.

[R.2] Housing distribution, elimination of resource depleting occupations (busy work, for money), psychosomatic armoring

[R.3] Fear of neighbors, fear of god, fear of running out.

[R.4] The premise that consumption is the basis for economic strength. The reconciliation of the individual and community - restoring the social contract and a sense of civics. The expediency of supporting inhumane regimes for political gain and position - the world needs to revisit its sense of ethics. We can't be living in a sustainable world where people are being tortured and killed so that another group of people can feel more powerful, or become rich at the former's expense.

Alchemists used their physical experiments to focus their meditations on the nature of the universe. Musicians and artists very often do the same thing through their creative efforts. Many experience the process of alchemy through sound and visual art. Some examples include:

[R.1] Well, I write poetry right now and hope to link to something larger, some kind of universal, but to say I do is sort of premature. One can hope, and try, but it is a pretty big mystery. Might be something like grace, or luck, or chance...even to talk in these terms is probably on the road to ruin. Best to lean into it, do what I can and move along to the next thing.

[R.2] For a period of time I felt compelled to bring images from dreams into manifestation. When I enter the low-range of the DMT trance, aspects still related to me personally present music that I'm interested in learning to approximate within consensual space.

[R.3] Absolutely. For me writing and creating is an art of channeling. Maybe it's a higher consciousness, tapping into or acting from an altered state, or relating to others' perception of reality. Creating a space and consecrating it, experimenting with chemicals (ahem), and using the scientific process are all integral parts of the use of alchemy to create art.

[R.4] Absolutely. Music transports me. It can shape my mood.

The intimate processes of nature played a strong role in the alchemical arts, and mythologies often find the central themes in natural processes. Can permaculture be defined in alchemic or mythological terms or processes?

[R.1] I know some folks using permaculture as a model for their land/farm. I have not heard them talk about it in mythological terms. Certainly working within natural cycles is a good thing, and perhaps there are synergies that can be developed on a piece of land. I think the variables of weather (heat, cold, rain or not) as well as the history of the land/economics of the farmer might overshadow natural cycles this type of cultivation pursues. I don't think overall I'm negative on the concept, but wonder if reaching for myth is helpful.

I also know some biodynamic farmers here, who have many concoctions and preparations they use to make changes on their farms. These folks might fit the mythological model better. I don't know if what they do makes a difference in how things grow, but I do know what they grow tastes really good. Really good.

[R.2] Of course it can. The New Alchemists provide a historical example of this. John Michael Greer has a ongoing series at The Archdruid Report along these lines as well... I believe the term he uses is Green Wizardry.

[R.3] I look at the ambitious work of Paul Laffoley here. A modern magician, alchemist, artist, and protean, he has explored these realms and made them earthy. I think that taking similar steps to his can create a structure by which we can move forward.

[R.4] Non lo so.

Our contemporary view of religion has been largely influenced by urban growth and the interests of capital. Is there a shift away from traditional religion to a more Nature-based view?

[R.1] Broadly no, but I live in a pocket of this kind of thinking. We have many in the hills and valleys around here who find a religious home in nature more than in a building for worship. I'm not sure really this line will result in more ecological solutions either. We need people in pews becoming more reverent, not probably getting people out of pews so they can be reverent. If that makes sense.

[R.2] This question confounds me, since any coherent Nature-based view has to integrate urban growth and capital instead of what appears to me as an implied dissociation here.

[R.3] I see a lot of naive naturalism, like Rousseau's savage and the Arts and Crafts movement. The general sustainability movement seems committed to a secularist position and appears to have commodified itself into impotence.

[R.4] I wish. Sadly, those who live in nature, hunters and farmers, are drawn towards traditional religion and all the bigotry, hatred, and fear that it spawns. But there are those who look at sustainability as a necessary element to survival. Those who actualize the dream of the co-op or the Thoreau/Emerson ideal of the individual who provides for the community. I have known people to live from their vans, start organic fruit farms, and become totally self-sufficient out of no political or religiously motivated ideal outside of self-betterment.

I fear that human beings are flawed, and that as individuals or in groups will always be utilizing religion (of one sort or another) to advance their agendas. Guess that kind of rules out point numbers 1 through 3 in Item 6 above.

* * * * *

Activating Myth, Alchemy & Sustainability - Fall 2010 Planetshifter.com Magazine Survey

<http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1655>

Take the [Online Survey](#)

Or copy and paste your responses in an email
and send them to: willipaul1 @ gmail.com

* * * * *

1. In your day to day life, how do you understand mythology? Do you encounter new mythologies? What mythological sources do you seek out, or sources that inspire you to think in mythological terms?
2. Can you offer some symbols, songs or stories that speak in mythological terms for the Sustainability Age?
3. One of the best ways to encounter mythology is through music and books. What bands or authors stir your imagination these days?
4. We live in a rapidly changing world, the ancients had a practice that sought to investigate the process of change in a way that coordinated with their ideas of universal harmony. They called this study alchemy. Is alchemy a process that intrigues you?
5. Everybody has something that really sparks them, something that gives them a focal point for their creativity. What activities inspire your creativity?
6. Recent news has seen no end to stories of global issues that demand immediate attention, and in an interconnected world we're finding out quickly that even local issues can cause global challenges. Can you give us the top three global issues that need to be repaired?
7. Alchemists used their physical experiments to focus their meditations on the nature of the universe. Musicians and artists very often do the same thing through their creative efforts. Do you experience the process of alchemy through sound and visual art? Any examples to share?
8. The intimate processes of nature played a strong role in the alchemical arts, and mythologies often find the central themes in natural processes. Can permaculture be defined in alchemic or mythological terms or processes?
9. Our contemporary view of religion has been largely influenced by urban growth and the interests of capital. Are you seeing any shifts away from traditional religion to a more Nature-based view?

Thank you!! We will share the results with everyone.

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Environmental Justice, New Mythologies and the Sustainability Age

<http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1650>

"Environmental justice is about social transformation directed towards meeting basic human needs and enhancing our quality of life—economic quality, health care, housing, human rights, environmental protection, and democracy. In

linking environmental and social justice issues the environmental justice approach seeks to challenge the abuse of power which results in poor people having to suffer the effects of environmental damage caused by the greed of others."

Source: [Quarterly newsletter of the South African Environmental Justice Networking Forum](#)

Environmental justice (EJ) issues are a powerful alchemic source for building new myths and transforming our consciousness in the Sustainability Age. EJ issues share many inter-related threads: pollution in the Gulf, immigration reform and energy choices all require us to care for all life and demand long-term solutions.

To write the new myths in the Sustainability Age, we need to consider several key principles from our mythological and alchemical heritage:

I. Myths highlight the collective journey. Coalitions, the community meetings and marches are what Joseph Campbell might have called the journey. Now we are all on the EJ journey together.

II. The power of Mythology is also about shared initiations: educating and growing, seeking and returning to educate.

III. We need more Heroes, but not just adults with advanced degrees from the West, but kids and grandparents from all over!

For a great set of stories and heroes with mythic vision, journey to the [My Hero Project](#).

Please read the following article concerning the fall 2010 campaign to safe guard our current California green energy policy through the mythic components just discussed and consider how myth can empower and help solve the struggle of environmental justice. What stories are you writing? Buying?

Clearly now the collective journeys, environmental initiations and heroes are on a global scale!

[Grassroots Coalition Jumps Into the Fight to Protect AB32](#)

A new coalition launching in the coming weeks is mobilizing groups with deep roots in their communities to take on Proposition 23, a measure on the November ballot that seeks to overturn AB32, California's landmark greenhouse gas regulation bill. Communities United Against the Dirty Energy Proposition represents those who suffer the worst effects of greenhouse gases but often have the most trouble being heard.

The contrast could hardly be sharper. In one corner, there are the big Texas oil companies who are Prop 23's most prominent backers. In the other, you have groups like the Green the Rez Campaign, a project of the Bishop Paiute Tribe in the Eastern Sierra that promotes renewable energy and sustainable living on the local reservation.

The oily Texans trying to roll back AB32 already [face opposition](#) from a number of mainstream politicians and environmental groups. Now they're about to get clobbered by a concerted effort that pulls together organizations with strong ties to Asian, Latino, African American, and Native communities. The connections they make between their health needs and the economy call into question the stale jobs versus environmental rhetoric and will give the [No on Proposition 23](#) campaign loads of street cred.

"Prop 23 is a dirty oil industry trick to try to undo a major California environmental law, and if passed, will put all people at risk from more pollution, especially low-income and people of color, who bear a huge and disproportionate burden of fossil fuel and industrial pollution," said Bradley Angel, Executive Director of [Greenaction for Health and Environmental Justice](#), a member of the new coalition. "The health of our state's most vulnerable communities is more important than dirty oil company profits."

Greenaction has been in the thick of the struggle to stop expansion of a waste dump in Kettleman City, where residents have reported a cluster of birth defects they attribute to the current dump already nearby.

Prop 23 “suspends air pollution control laws requiring major polluters to report and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that cause global warming until unemployment drops below specified level for full year,” according to the official ballot description. The campaign’s website calls Prop 23 the “California Jobs Initiative,” declaring that “The fight for our jobs is on!” Its list of endorsers includes politicians, businesses, and various Black and Latino chambers of commerce. Co-optation of conservative groups of color is an old tactic to give right-wing campaigns a veneer of credibility.

Curiously missing from the site of the “Jobs Initiative” are any endorsers from organized labor. That may be because the workers for those jobs are all on the other side. The California Labor Federation and several individual unions such as the Teamsters, Steelworkers, and California Nurses Association have already joined Californians for Clean Energy and Jobs, another earlier pro-AB32 coalition that has some overlap in community membership with the newly launching one. This more mainstream group lists dozens of respected backers like the League of Women Voters, but it also includes names like honorary co-chair George Shultz, a veteran of the Reagan and Bush administrations.

When the mainstream media anoint Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and Mayor Gavin Newsom as green heroes, never questioning their actions in gutting public transportation or Newsom’s connections to investments in oil companies (since divested when they were revealed in print), the struggle at the grassroots can get lost. Perhaps all the conservative and moderate voices against Prop 23 will help to defeat it, but the poor communities represented by the new coalition have little in common with the Shultzes, Newsoms, and Schwarzeneggers of the world.

Their issues are more personal and deeply connected.

Communities United Against the Dirty Energy Proposition declares on its pre-launch website: “California is a ‘majority-minority’ state, and people of color represent 37 percent of independent voters. . . . We need to counter Big Oil’s deceptions. We need to make sure our communities know that their health, their jobs, and their incomes depend on stopping the Dirty Energy Proposition.”

About 60 organizations from throughout the state have signed onto the new coalition, including the Asia Pacific Environmental Network (APEN), Cesar Chavez Institute, Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment, and Oakland Rising. Oakland’s Ella Baker Center, which is known for its work on youth incarceration, green jobs, and street violence, was one of the spark plugs of the new coalition. Veteran local groups TransForm and [Urban Habitat](#), fresh from the fight to move money from the Oakland Airport Connector to local transit agencies for starving bus service, are also on board.

Evidently, voters have been slow to succumb to Prop 23’s charms. A Field Poll released in early July showed the measure trailing 48 percent to 36 percent, with 16 percent undecided. The San Francisco Chronicle story on the poll quoted Stephen Nicholson of UC Merced, who linked the public’s negative views to the backers of the proposition. “If word gets out that big oil is behind this, it might very well go down to defeat,” he said.

The big money is behind Prop 23, but as the defeat of PG&E’s Prop 16 in the June election showed, money can’t always buy its way out of negative perceptions, especially when real people with real roots dig in to fight it.

[APEN](#), which is also already a part of the Asia Pacific American Climate Coalition, sums up the connections for one of the communities gearing up to defend AB32: “We have an extraordinary opportunity to influence how our cities are built, how public funding gets prioritized, and help shape a new greener economy. It is imperative that APA communities engage to ensure that the benefits and impacts of climate programs can be distributed equitably. . . . With a significant California APA population, we are a critical sector in influencing climate programs not just in our state but across the country.”

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[Mapping Catechism and Permaculture as Rites of Passage in the Sustainability Age](http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1646)
<http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1646>

The new Rites of Passage in the Sustainability Age are really operating on multiple channels, on and offline. In the garden and in the heart. We require a map, destination and ample evaluation through personalized design and ownership of the goals of the journey; a spiritual center. There are few global rites of passage that include all world citizens.

Damage control and mass grave digging in Haiti is not a Rite of Passage; war games between North & South Korea and the US is not a Rite of Passage. What about the long-term environmental and economic damage from BP's unconscionable taking of oil in the Gulf? IS there a rite here? Passage to anywhere?

Furthermore, the constant "horror movie and coupon" conditioning of the public by the wealthy few is not about "passing" soulful rites, but just more unsustainable profit and more environmental decay.

[Alchemy teaches](#) us that a true passage is about the process not the thing.

[A rite of passage](#) is a ritual event that marks a person's progress from one status to another. It is a universal phenomenon which can show anthropologists what social hierarchies, values and beliefs are important in specific cultures. Rites of passage are often ceremonies surrounding events such as other milestones within puberty, coming of age, marriage and death. Initiation ceremonies such as baptism, confirmation and bar or bat Mitzvah are considered important rites of passage for persons of their respective religions.

Rites of passage have three phases: separation, transition, and re-incorporation.

* * * * *

I. Permaculture as a mythic and alchemical rite of passage in the Sustainability Age

Permaculture Rite of Passage map:

- Understanding the principles in ecology (looking at broader theory and specific examples)
- Working the land in harmony with the principles (hands-on experience)
- Teaching the values to next generation (sustaining the good)
- Creating new songs, symbols and stories for a new mythic base

II. Catechism as Ritual for Youth

Catechism Rite of Passage map:

- Memorization
- Standardized testing
- Ceremonial (join the club)
- Separation from the larger group

We need to develop new systems and rites of passage that are Nature-based, alchemic and individualized, and phase out those dogmatic, top-down spiritless rituals that prevent our evolution.

We desperately require new stories, better values and new rites of passage. As a human race, we are collectively stuck treading in deep water as the planet shrinks beneath us. Drowning in the lies from our militaries and corporations that twist their brands and shovel their dirty little stories.

So we choose: ancient, heartless, dead-end initiations, self-centered "graduations" or spiritual evolution with all people.

Permaculture rites of passage are critical if the [myth + alchemy = sacred] theory can grow.

Candles and the Lord's Prayer? A Rite to where?

* * * * *

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

<http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1636>

PlanetShifter.com Magazine's ongoing pursuit of the elements and relationships in the **alchemy + mythology = sacred** path vision continues with an 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](#) , 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.'

* * * * *

An Offering to the Sustainability Age: Souvenir as Mythic Alchemy (in Willi's Green Box)

<http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1572>

Play Soundtrack Now - R.E.M. - [Cuyahoga](#)

Let's put our heads together and start a new country up
Our father's father's father tried erasing the parts he didn't like
Let's try to fill it in bank the quarry river swim
We knee skinned it you and me we knee skinned that river red

This is where we walked this is where we swam
Take a picture here take a souvenir
Let's put our heads together, start a new country up,
Underneath the river bed we burned the river down.
This is where they walked, swam, hunted, danced and sang,
Take a picture here, take a souvenir

Cuyahoga
Cuyahoga, gone

* * * * *

I. Define [Souvenir](#)

Souvenirs are connected and collected, then kept somewhere special for future enjoyment, sharing and reflection.

Souvenirs are akin to mementos or keepsakes that a traveler brings home for the memories associated with it.

They may be marked to indicate their origin such as "Yellowstone - 1969".

Souvenirs are also gifts for friends or relatives who did not make the journey. For connection to a place and a memory to share. They are paradoxical: souvenirs are artifacts of active <> memory; a mental map from the current to the past and back to the future.

Consider why we capture and save the past for the future:

- Emotional place holding or re-imaging and artistic framing
- Family scrap book making
- Building an idea reservoir

If souvenirs represent our best experiences, then it follows that souvenirs help build the best stories in our culture and can support new themes and myths in the Sustainability Age.

II. Examples of Common Souvenirs

- Old records
- Songs
- Photographs
- Ticket stubs from concerts
- Clothing from special events
- Family Jewry
- Maps
- Keys

III. Proposed Role of Souvenirs in New Story and Myth Making

From "[I think there is Something Growing in my Heart](#)", the following expanded recipe is proposed to explain how new myths can be generated:

Step One: survival behavior

life critical feedback from the environment that forces change in beliefs and actions

Step Two: new pleasant or valued routines that work with the new constraints

the shift from oil based agriculture to permaculture?

Step Three: a new practice is created

or a new valued routine

Step Four: new practices are linked to spiritual well-being

souvenirs are a part of an alchemic change for new ideals, values and new symbols and emotions

Step Five: global mythic stories are envisioned , disperse through the media and morph into great lessons

Souvenirs are held in our hearts and hands and play an emotional connecting role in the creation of transitional stories and myth.

How did you get that scar on your knee?

* * * * *

The New Church of Sustainability is "Awakening the Dreamer"

<http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1519>

"Biblical stories which give man dominion over the planet, manifest destiny, Ayn Rand, Karl Marx, the list is long. I don't deny the power of myths -- and I revere many myself -- but while I'm in favor of retaining those which stress our common humanity, I also think we need stories that will act as instruction manuals as we learn to live wiser, more sustainable lives. Whatever you may think about films like "Avatar," they undeniably address an urgent, unsatisfied hunger in audiences."

[Burt Kempner](#)

Subject: New comment (3) on "Can the old stories save us?"

LinkedIn Group: [PlanetShifter.com - Innovating Evolution in Homo Sapiens](#)

Last Saturday I had the privilege to attend a seminar by [Awakening the Dreamer](#), by [The Pachamama Alliance](#), who mission is to bring forth an environmentally sustainable, spiritually fulfilling and socially just human presence on Planet Earth.

Please view two terrific videos.

One called, [The New Dream](#); and a YouTube [call to action](#).

They insist that the "The Old Dream is dying. Its demise becomes inevitable as we discover the devastation we've caused to our own planet home, as we count the rising cost of our inhumanity to each other and as we see how our current way of living fails to deliver lasting happiness. All of these are the inevitable conclusions of an old dream rooted in acquisition, consumption and putting personal gain above communal good." And that "The New Dream is emerging! It's community, collaboration; it's life-enhancing and earth-honoring; it's together and for our grand-children, rather than Supersize me Now!

We are the Change Agents
Defend what we love
We are passion gifts
Imaginal cells
Blessed unrest
We are instruments of something that works thru us: conduits
The Sustainability Church
Sit quietly with deep gratitude
This needs to be focused on kids and teens
The petroleum complex
Stars of the collapse
We are mistaken not flawed, mislead, corrupted but pure in heart

Willi Paul, Re-Streaming Consciousness

Throughout the day's presentation – scripted, read with video/power points, an interesting analogy emerged and took shape stemming from one of my many research questions is [if sustainability is like a new religion?](#)

Awakening the Dreamer is quite possibility the new Church of Sustainability. Consider the components:

- Facilitators (readers, guides) are like Priests
- A strong set of Messages, Values and Principles
- The Alter is the media screen
- Participants as Congregation
- Call to join, be present and contribute
- Friendship bracelet for all participants
- Could be a once per week gathering
- Who are the Prophets? These include Swimme, Berry, Robbins, JB Hill, Hawken, Tutu, and many others
- Like ate church, the facilitators repeatedly called for feelings-based, silent reflection or "prayer"
- The Earth is God, we are stewards of the good
- [Green Sanga](#) principles enjoin the vision (Compassionate Action and One Body)
- Life changing mythological / biblical-like stories are stressed:

- [The Eagle and the Condor](#): Tech/Science vs. Spiritual Life
- ["The Universe Story,"](#) by Brian Swimme and Thomas Berry

The Awakening the Dreamer symposium or "movement" as a Church can be debated. Many of the churches around me are "holding fear" and doing little to actionize folks beyond it. [Nature-based spiritual movements](#) are now coming (back) around to the forefront and can offer some structure and continuity to followers.

One might argue that the Awakening the Dreamer symposium is too passive, as I experienced in the event. There is also the risk of not getting out into the world -- "Being and Deeping." I want more aggressive action toward bad corporations and dumb religious institutions. We don't have time anymore for too much reflection.

We need to be careful not to preach to the choir! Awakening the Dreamer needs to capture kids and youth now! "Passing the Light to the Next Generation" is on YouTube.

There is no political solution
To our troubled evolution
Have no faith in constitution
There is no bloody revolution

Our so-called leaders speak
With words they try to jail you
The subjugate the meek
But it's the rhetoric of failure

Where does the answer lie?
Living from day to day
If it's something we can't buy
There must be another way

We are spirits in the material world

["Spirits in the Material World"? The Police](#)

Connections –

[Trainer](#)
[Awakening the Dreamer](#)

[The Pachamama Alliance](#)
San Francisco
+1 (415) 561-4522

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Sacred in Participation: Seek, Reflect, Share, Act, Evaluate (SRSAE)

<http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1492>

As a both a primal and future seeking process, Sacred is interconnectedness and communication with others on Earth, not habitual worshiping of an unseen force "above." Sacred is a proactive universal search for knowledge and spiritual experience on Earth. Humans are the glue, scribes and story tellers of all that is Sacred. For humans, Sacred is pre-wired and healthy but rapidly fraying in our hearts and minds.

If Sacred is our energy, how can we tap into, and revive it? Is Sacred part of the promise and power to find solutions in creative and troubled times?

Seek, Reflect, Share, Act, Evaluate

We need to ground the idea of Sacred in every day terms and make it accessible and practical. We need to transform a planet bent to build new nuclear power plants and plastic toys. We can never accept light beer and corrupt politics be seen as Sacred.

Sacred is first a seeking. Identifying a question or need then reflecting on illuminating resources – often with the support of others. Sharing concerns and solutions is next. Making a plan and a setting out on a journey. Finally we evaluate the experience of the Sacred and chronicle it.

Four Experiences of Sacred

☞ [U2 – Bullet the Blue Sky Live:](#)

Why do we go to see a show? Certainly we seek a shared experience, fun and messages from the band. Music alchemy, political instruction? A release? Of what?

“In the locust wind comes a rattle and hum, Jacob wrestled the angel
And the angel was overcome, You plant a demon seed
You raise a flower of fire, See them burning crosses
See the flames higher and higher ...”

☞ [Redwood Pilgrimage, by Bill Pratt:](#)

Nature is an often cited source of Sacred. Do you feel connected to a broader landscape here? I see that there are common elements in each of our interpretations of Nature.

☞ [Moon Phases:](#)

The Moon has helped to spawn many emotions and mythologies across cultures ever since humans had the luxury of looking up. As a reflection of our own changes and yearnings, is the Moon Sacred to you?

☞ [Sacred in Practice – Jackson Pollock:](#)

Pollock was a transmitter. A connector and paint stick scribe that pulled us along with him on his Sacred path. A collaborative journey when the paint dried. Watch the video and see if the journey comes alive?

“Because the painting has a life of its own, I kind of let it live.” JP

Again and again! What is Sacred? We often know what is not sacred faster than what is! And the issue of how sacred is created and transmitted thru the Internet is another path to debate. How is the Earth sacred? The green teacher, the living experiment? The Continuity? A portal to awareness that we are all One?

Can we celebrate Sacred online?

Can we build new Sacred experiences together (to save our soul!)?

Seek, Reflect, Share, Act, Evaluate.

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It's the End of the World – or the Beginning of a New One! Question: What are Your Sustainability-driven Songs, Symbols and Stories for the New GreenWorld Mythology?

<http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1461>

Resources

I. “The old story that gets in our way is that of disempowerment and disconnection. Because people feel small and disconnected and that their acts don’t matter, they lose connection to the immense power and wisdom of nature which can guide and heal so effectively and richly. By living from and relating to a whole person, whole planet paradigm, our potential is limitless.

Life has shifted as we have redeveloped local skills, use locally and regionally appropriate materials to meet our needs and have turned a monstrous waste stream into an elegant and creative culture of creative reuse. People more often choose to turn their lights and life down as we gracefully and ethically descend peak everything. And there you sit under the soft-glowing beeswax drip of another hive gift, bathed in the light of a well-lived, well-loved and well-designed life.”

[Trathen Heckman Interview](#) on PlanetShifter.com

II. “When I think of particular colors, icons and symbols for sustainability, I imagine colors like the greens of fresh grass, the deep sea and fir trees, warm natural hemp and tobacco colors, a little dash of earthy brown and some pale robin’s egg blue. The typical icons include trees, plants and leaves, hands holding hands or 3 arrows bent into a circular form – like the recycling symbol, but I also see something like an interconnected network – like a mind map where each element is connected to many other ones, making up a web of complexity. “

[Amy Stafford Interview](#) on PlanetShifter.com

III. [Willi's Green Box](#) - New green stories and myth generator:

- Survival behavior
- A new practice (refined behavior)
- Pleasant or valued routine
- Spiritual linking to new story making and new symbols
- Global mythic story

IV. [The PlanetShifter.com Survival Guide to 2010: Curriculum Plans, Thought Leader Interviews and Big Green Ideas,](#) based on the Event Circle Interviews

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Guitars and Crow Bars: Building the Green Stairway to Heaven

<http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1457>

The self-fulfillment first , self-interest makes right, trickle down Apple gizmos for the masses have given a few bankers and dirty arms dealers war profits and overflowing landfills over the years. Capitalism got us into this greenhole but we cannot continue to live in this hideousness crack as we know it.

The next Earth, if we fight to create it, will be a magical place of healing arts and soul, clean oceans and urban gardens -- not Wal-Mart aisles contaminated with rubber stamped sustainable plastic crap made in China.

China is hell. Why live here?

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Humans have perpetrated some heavy duty changes on the planet along the way to a messy and expensive global meltdown. Look how far the wheel has taken us! The printing press -- have you ever seen one? Organ transplant surgery, micro wave pop corn. The Alaskan pipeline; the mini skirt. Pot stores! As an out, many bloggers, high school teachers, Sunday alchemists and our kids are echoing for a very different kind of evolution: in our consciousness.

Not about hybrids in the garage, not about fresh coffee and recycling coffee cups at Peet's Coffee. Close? More about putting some food in the food pantry box; walking to work. Do you have a consciousness? The rant is "collective consciousness!" But where? How?

In the alchemy of making music and environmental collaboration.

Back to the tribe.

* * * * *

I'm at peace, I'm the man
Buying stocks on the day of the crash
On the loose, I'm a truck
All the rolling hills, I'll flatten 'em out, yeah
It's herd behavior, uh huh
It's evolution, baby

I am ahead, I am advanced
I am the first mammal to make plans, yeah
I crawled the earth, but now I'm higher
2010, watch it go to fire
It's evolution, baby
Do the evolution
Come on, come on, come on

[Do the Evolution](#)

Pearl Jam

Whether you ping-pong to hip-hop or melt to the fires of the Grateful Dead, bands are calling for a Higher Being. A cosmic place shared by all and anger for the profit punch we have suffered for too long.

Herd behavior . You know this can be good,... your brother taught you to dance with the sisters. The Gods are calling you now?

* * * * *

"i am in an anaesthetized place where there is no gravity
my fingers become free and do what they will
music becomes effortless
we are swept up by some powerful wave
the feeling is completely addictive
and total release is rarely achieved
still...."

[Steve Kilbey Interview in PlanetShifter.com](#)

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Rock music excites and educates us. Myths expand our awareness and consciousness. What groups can we join in 2010 to make the planet better?

A tribe is essentially a group . A group is a set of users who share common interests. We gave it the name tribe as we believe it reflects more the ethos of our brand. Tribes can be started by anyone and anyone can join any tribes (unless specified otherwise). It is up to the tribe moderator and the members to “feed” that tribe.

[Seven Bean Soup and Detroit Prayer Songs: The CoolTribe.com Interview](#)

A myth is a vehicle for communicating an idea without any regard to its historicity, plausibility, predictability, or factual truth; David & Goliath, King Arthur, the Big Bang, and the Industrial Revolution are all mythological because they are all stories that address the purpose and meaning of human life.

[Green Symbols and Myth Making in the Sustainability Age" - GreenSource Knowledge Paper #7 - based on the Event Circle Interviews by Willi Paul](#)

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Two Events to Join with Love in 2010:

[I. Green Generation Campaign – Earthday.net](#)

Earth Day Network’s “Green Generation ” campaign is a two-year initiative that will launch in 2009 and culminate on the 40th Anniversary of Earth Day in 2010. Similar to “The Greatest Generation” that confronted the challenge of World War II, who inspired the major societal changes that followed, the Green Generation includes ordinary people who are engaged in individual and collective activities to improve their health, to improve their schools, to participate in building a solution to urgent national and global issues, such as climate change or the world’s water crises.

[II. Imagine, Connect, Act - Idealist.org](#)

For the first time in history we can build a global network that will serve and support all those people who want to make the world a better place. A network, a movement, an ecosystem that will allow people and organizations everywhere to imagine, connect, and act:

- Imagine a better world, a better community, and a better life
- Connect with others, and share skills, ideas, and resources
- Act on our good intentions, and help others to act on theirs

I've got no self control
Been living like a mole now
Going down, excavation
High and High in the sky
You make me feel like I can fly
So high
Elevation

A star
Lit up like a cigar
Strung out like a guitar
Maybe you can educate my mind

Explain all these controls
Can't sing but I've got soul
The goal is elevation

Experience not purchase
Love not greed
Family is the gang
Stop the bleed

Elevation

U2

* * * * *

"We hear and see symbols through rock music and art. Band names and titles of records and songs contain important cues, many political or humorous, but some for "mythic punch." Album art work is the first to be interpreted and often carries the same meaning all over the world. When musicians combine song lyrics with complimentary symbols, mythic meanings are reinforced and deepened. Symbols and metaphors are the seeds, our invitation to the feast. And many symbols, like numbers and colors, have ancient meanings and universal power. Campbell might have asked at this point: Do we know the power of these symbols? Have we lost our connections to the mythic reservoir?

It is clear that if mythology and rock music can guide us through a confusion of bent traditions, shooting matches at City Hall, and TV-centered materialism, must learn to distinguish between our heroes and the clowns. We are always standing at the crossroads.

We learn how man has treated this planet through the myths and folklore of our ancestors. And now we rework them for our children. Jung and Campbell might be saying that we should combine the forces of good and evil into a unity (or understanding); nurture and share all sources of world spirituality; and begin to work for a healthier planet."

From: [the reservoir: rock music and mythology](#) by Willi Paul

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WP COMMENTARY

10 crappy things about the green movement

<http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1295>

Run it....

1. Green web sites that don't connect to actual neighborhoods – that just post, babble and ghost.
2. Big ass ego sustainability consultants who think the world will change as they get rich.
3. Green job training seminars that cost 499.00.
4. Little or no praise or support for the effort from the Latino community, period.
5. Scant connection between all of the key hot button issues -- too much weight on a climate crisis and foodies.
6. "Green Celebrities." Crap.

7. Little scrutiny and basic integrity on now Obama's cowering to the military industrial devils in Afghanistan.

8. The idolization of the new green cars with little planning for the day we all have NO CARS.

9. Green products, green product web sites, green product web sites that rate their own profit-driven and pre-sponsored green products.

10. Burning Man.

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Who has the keys to the mythological reservoir?

<http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1629>

As wars and natural disasters fragment people away from Nature, sustainability is awash in corporate slogans and lies with little hope for green solutions. Rather than be a part of the mythic machine, self-serving resource gulping companies are dumbing-down and short-circuiting our consciousness and spiritual; collaboration across the globe is reduced to a hidden balance sheet .

Our morals and every day values are dirty with self-interest, with military agendas, oil caked beaches. We are a people of reaction, tireless excuses and mental litter. As the speed and redundancy of Twitter and CNN minds bomb us into commercials daily, our attention span is falling into "zero awareness." Myth in this social pollution cannot breathe, excite and deliver the challenge to comfort or change.

Powerful myths are connectors, shared fights and realities, common solutions to the Big Challenges. Myths are also road maps or clues (examples) for the seekers and visionaries. Pieces of the next puzzle that cannot be solved in one hour segments.

Strategic elements, issues, themes, stories... we need to find the seeds of the new myths before planting them. This journey is precisely what Campbell advocated and is the grunt work that we cannot afford to shun. It is dangerous to decry a Hero before the sweat is spilled and the information tested.

There is no mythology without alchemy. As our consciousness is raised and the elements connected, transformation is possible. Alchemy can be mediated, voice activated, and Nature-fueled. It is love in action, the glue that makes myth universal.

Do we know the power of myth; in the new myths that we can create together?

What are some examples of work that supports the mythic process?

Avatar. Jackson Browne. Keith Haring. John Muir.

What are some things that are killing myth?

The PR industry. Pro Wrestling. New Age Music. Religious dogma.

Myths are our hearts turned inside out. Our shared blood is the path to a better global way.

Written for [Magic, Myth, Sustainability - Radio Interview with Willi Paul by Progressive Radio Network Host Carol Brouillet, communitycurrency.org 7-8-10](#)

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I am willipaul.com - a retrospective

<http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1603>

Any succulent history of Willi's creative journey must include his [electronic paintings](#) that bounce and glow off your monitor "pop eco weird."

Mr. Paul was an early **online community designer and program designer**. In 1996-97, he invented and evaluated what he called "[the electronic charrette](#)." This is the online version of the then state-of-the-art community analysis and goal setting process of the [Minnesota and Design Team](#). Willi's pioneering **digital-face-to-face decision making system** was presented and published widely in US and European books and web sites.

Never satisfied with the merit badges and sermons from the old school, a quest to understand and apply the work of **Joseph Campbell** lead Mr. Paul to interview rock musicians and publish on the role and alchemic dynamics of mythology in popular music. Delve in to the data base: [the reservoir: rock music and mythology](#) and **see what you feel**.

Later, while living in Berkeley, CA, Mr. Paul worked the new field of green business consulting, networking and creating many partnerships. See his [sustainable business strategies](#) web site, now archived for public study. Also check his site to shut-down a local East Bay polluter at [clean air coalition](#) and [JOLTS! Public Participation on Steroids](#) for alternative insight into the role of citizen in the **community participation process**.

Willi Paul has released words and [poetry](#) since he left for the dorm. He is hawking two long stories on PlanetShifter.com: [Geo's Vision Machine](#) and [LAO from GreenLoc, CA](#) a post-oil world of net pirates and permaculture rings.

Launched as a community site for green creatives on Earth Day 2009, Mr. Paul's [PlanetShifter.com](#) Magazine & Networks thrives today with the addition of the [CoolTribe.com](#) partnership and includes over **230 thought leader interviews and 1600 posts**. The first traditional PlanetShifter.com Magazine, called the [GreenCatcherUnion.com eMagazine](#), designed by Eric Needle, is gorgeous and well worth a download.

A must read, "[The PlanetShifter.com Survival Guide to 2010](#): Curriculum Plans, Thought Leader Interviews and Big Green Ideas," based on the Event Circle Interviews, by Willi Paul.

Looking west,

Robert Newridge III
San Francisco
06.13.10

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I will re-invent television with you

<http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1593>

"Hello! How are you?!" It's my Orange County Green Interior Designer friend [Lorraine Francis](#) on the cell. She is exploring a new media network with colleagues in LA. "Something about green?" Yes, but where to find inspiring content?

That's when my **alchemic hinge** sprang out!

We create the programming ourselves and pass it round. We are Network 1. The Johnson's next door are Network 2. **We are the content now**. New nature media. We frame, narrate, splice and pass around the iPhone so the garden is in seasonal installments and we become the guy on the roof tinkering with the solar view.

New TV is about this:

- instructional but not clique and not preachy
- Learning for the long-term, ... perennials please
- Life changing and affirming
- Local, very local right down to the dirt patch by the garage
- Value challenging not fighting
- Access to what we know and what we need
- Something real. From our hands; about family, friends -- and for the neighborhood

Um. There are no commercials. No violence. And maybe we take better care of our souls?

We can capture our kids and their hopes in the garden. It's about the stories and myths in our everyday lives. DailyActs.org in Petaluma is a reservoir for the permaculture course ahead: **the new tech-nature-interface**. I also recommend greensangha.org as a "TV Guide":

"Integrity - As spiritual activists, we stand together in our commitment to be that which we are trying to bring about in the world: peace and love."

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Ralph Lauren's Fading Jeans in our Sustainable Age

<http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1585>

"What began forty years ago with a collection of ties has grown into an entire world, redefining American style. Ralph Lauren has always stood for providing quality products, creating worlds and inviting people to take part in our dream. We were the innovators of lifestyle advertisements that tell a story and the first to create stores that encourage customers to [participate in that lifestyle](#)."

I don't value Ralph Lauren's clothes for his lifestyle frame but because they are well designed and last a long time. And I admit that I own four pieces from his collection. Style and values for too few but that does last a long time. **A sustainability paradox.**

I spoke with Mr. Lauren's Corporate PR and Communications staff twice but their Director Ryan Lalley elected to ignore my messages. You can try if you wish: 212.318.7116. Ralph Lauren's web site thus became my only official source of data on the designer's sustainability mantra. I was interested in where the firm obtains its raw materials ("sourcing") and what whether the current labor practices benefit both Mr. Lauren, his investor's and the machinists themselves?

But again, there is no mention of any green or sustainability principles here – except an aged Earth Day site with no buzz at Rugby.

My thesis: the American Lifestyle that Mr. Lauren creates for a few consumers is now largely clique and stained from an old American Way. His brand strikes me as a fantasy play where a few rich clients invest in - and strut around in - **an image parade for each other.**

What are the messages? What are the metaphors, symbols from the upper rich side? A closet full of dusty shoe horn investments; too many one nighter sweaters; drop dead Playboy shapes and five hour hair dos from heaven. No global warming in here, Ralph.

Sustainable or green values, in addition to the manufacturing-related ones above, obviously counter the Lauren lifestyle. "The sustainable wardrobe lifestyle" is a more about shared values than the clothes themselves. The Green Consumer has changed clothe buying from "must have that gown to gotta donate to Goodwill." From dressy to casual to grunge with a bag of recyclables. Eco-peeps are more global and community integrated than the RL horse show lifestyle. Sacrifice for the planet and for our children's future drives the symbols and metaphors in the Sustainable Age.

There is no second hand clothes ethic at RL. We just can't give them away!

"The American Dream is that dream of a land in which life should be better and richer and fuller for everyone, with opportunity for each according to ability or achievement... It is not a dream of motor cars and high wages merely, but a dream of social order in which each man and each woman shall be able to attain to the fullest stature of which they are innately capable, and be recognized by others for what they are, regardless of the fortuitous circumstances of birth or position."

-- Historian and writer James Truslow Adams coined the phrase "American Dream" in his 1931 book The Epic of America

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Transforming the US Postal Service Green: Tech Incubator, Permaculture Educator and Community Trainer

<http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1502>

Build Our Future Back!

The US Postal Service (USPS) is a failed idea when an institutionalized budget deficit and top management. Just as the current blue box replaced the pony express and the smoke signal before that, it's time to innovate our resources crumbling from within. These include the buildings, land, employees and vehicles of the USPS. While we need some of this infrastructure and people power, some of it needs to be transformed or decommissioned.

The Big Picture: Our Green Community Collaboratory

The following components make up the new "neighborhood web site":

- **Technology Transfer** – The new space includes a lab for citizen inventors; grey water get's installed.
- **Access to Communication Tools** - Computers and Video Conferencing
- **Green Job Training** – the buildings can be sites for new green tech
- **Permaculture** - Parking lots and yards become gardens and demonstration projects
- **Renewable Energy** - Solar on the roof!
- **Community Art Gallery** – sharing creative ideas with local artists of all ages

Localization Now: A living, working, training place for all community members

Obviously not all current USPS offices and other system facilities are large enough to take on the full vision program outlined above. But all offices that are not closed can be connected by Internet so training and lessons can be shared.

Negotiate deals with FedEx and/or UPS for package services. Bring in solar panel distributors. Not is the time to build the zero waste economy and give all people access to email and other digital tools. Charge for some while giving away others.

Send me your feedback: willipaul1 @ gmail dot com

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Half Doom, Half Green - Self-Criticism

<http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1475>

[Supporting SoundTrack](#)

My energy spirits are sliding sideways. PlanetShifter.com is pure vision on some levels and a stubbed toe on others. I want to ask you: where you are finding hope in our greyblack climate dream. Can you park your car and get out?

Community?

I eat, drink and bike collaboration but little innovation is budding around me. Craigslist.org is for sale and LinkedIn.com is filled with Carnegie hucksters and pro-nuke princes. The Green communities that I re-post on are just flat tired with bicep'd tales and no actions. My peeps fall about, flaying, like little online theatres with curtains down.

(I'm thinking that they are thinking that) I'm too old now for any employer with 465 resumes and one job to fill.

I see too much retreat; too much home entertainment and far too little fire dancy angry mobs in the streets. I am the half empty shouting to Be.

Is there a green protest song in your heart this weekend?

Find me.

* * * * *

WP POEMS

I am a time bomb

<http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1251>

I am a time bomb

Lighting my own fuse
In a coal eyed world
Green mad

Got too many fingers

In daddy's pie
Too little faith
Too many dull knives

How much longer

With this black hole dream
Angel wings and
Data beam

Lighting the Aquarius sky

Drenched in Mommy's breath
at the last silly fork in the world

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[I think there is Something Growing in my Heart](http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1345)

<http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1345>

[I think there is Something Growing in my Heart](http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1345)

Fall into my hypothesis for a while?

As far flung as I am already...

I'm trying to "come back" -- as Campbell wants -- and fill you all in...

"Hear I come," as the big bear shouts to Goldie Locks!!

How do we create and teach and enjoy the new green planet?

Thru new gas-less cars? Organic pears? Good Will pants?

Maybe.

Take out the trash.

God, we do this uncherished act way too much.

It seems to interrupt the day, right?

But composting is way different. Ask your kid.

Recycling, it's so-green precursor, is now a cool game, a prized act of reverence for the Earth,... a prayer for Peace.

Ah, composting?! This is an act of helping reduce waste and grow new foods and flowers!

Back to the hypothesis!

Review the five stages to "mythic story"... I'm the dart board.

What's in your box?

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Occupation in your Eyes

<http://www.planetshifter.com/node/1469>

Occupation in your Eyes. Poem by Willi Paul 2010.

I am in your micro wave
Melting the North Pole
Calling for the Old Silicon Valley
Charging the new black hole

I am your compost pile
The dark black box in the garage
Spent cartridge in your gun
The billy beer can under the couch

I am your empty pool
The top of the dirt pile in the side yard

Occupation in your eyes
Slime of lost causes and silly intentions

I am dust and wax and spit and tv's last glare
Lost Boston tapes
Bald head and broken nails
Green coal in your fire place