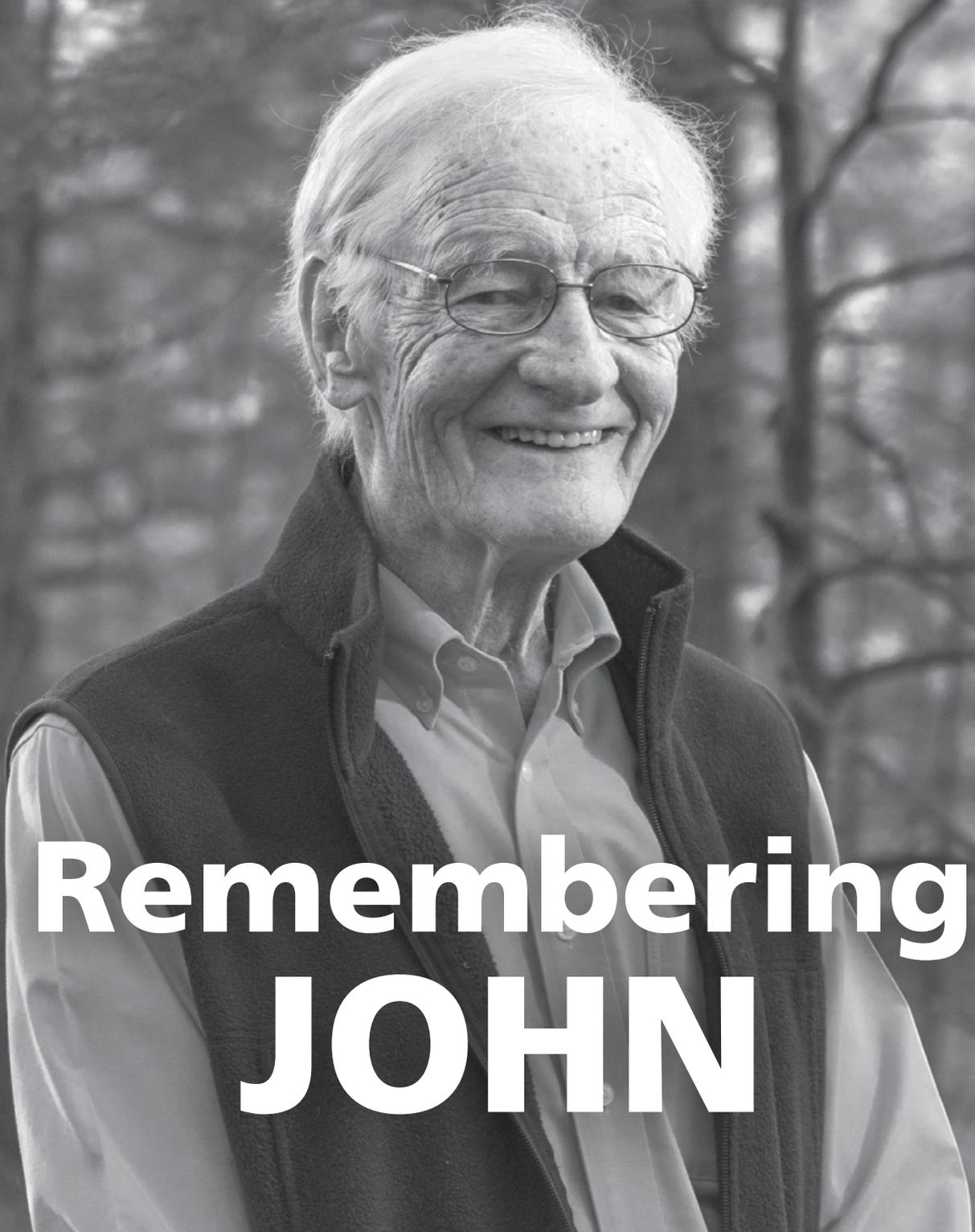




GREEN HORIZON

Magazine

..... AN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL PUBLISHED BY THE GREEN HORIZON FOUNDATION



Remembering JOHN

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Please continue to support John's legacy

It was John Rensenbrink who could envision the vital ecological, democratic, communitarian, and peaceful green horizon. He inspired many of us with that vision, and then he provided us with guidelines toward its realization.

Theorist, activist, educator, organizer, candidate ... father-figure, friend. Over a period of seven decades (!) John's insights and erudition touched the lives and influenced the thinking of one individual after another. He was among the first to recognize that only by rooting our political ideology in ecological wisdom would we be able to address the multiple and interconnected crises our civilization is facing.

John's steadfast belief in the potential of the Green politics movement to transform the world never wavered. He had the idea that there would be interest in a print magazine covering that movement. He was right. For his efforts he received accolades and messages of support on a regular basis. Hundreds of colleagues and patrons have contributed material and provided financial help over the years (2023 will be our twentieth year of publishing).

John was the prime mover and the irrepressible force behind *Green Horizon*. His passing leaves a gap in the worlds of activism, academy, and theory, but especially in regard to the production of the magazine he was so proud of. As his vitality was fading he sent a note requesting that I encourage our supporters to help fill the gap. If the magazine and the Green Horizon Foundation are to continue to thrive, editorial and production assistance will be needed, as well as the funding necessary to meet our modest \$15K-per-year budgetary expenses. Please consider contributing in any way that you can. And know that John Rensenbrink will remain on the *Green Horizon* masthead in perpetuity.

— Steve Welzer

THE TEAM

PUBLISHED BY THE GREEN HORIZON FOUNDATION • FALL 2022 • VOLUME NINETEEN #45

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Green Horizon Magazine is indexed in the Alternative Press Index, which is available from:
 Alternative Press Center, PO Box 33109, Baltimore, MD 21218

Green Party of the United States mourns Founder John Rensenbrink¹

August 3, 2022

[*superscripts refer to links ... which are listed on page 11*]

The Green Party of the United States mourns the passing of one of its esteemed founding members and leaders, John Rensenbrink. He passed away peacefully surrounded by his family in hospice on July 30, 2022. He was 93 and transitioned one month before his 94th birthday.

Greens are remembering John for his role as motivator and leader of an independent political party dedicated to ecology, social and economic justice, democracy, and nonviolence—and for the intellectual weight he gave the Green Party movement as a global imperative, as awareness of the climate crisis emerged.

Rensenbrink was a highly respected political scientist, philosopher, author, journalist, and conservationist by trade. In 1965 he began teaching political philosophy and history at Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine. After semi-retirement in 1989, he continued teaching at Bowdoin for several years, creating an interdisciplinary seminar for majors in Black, Women's, and Environmental Studies.

He was also the founder of the Maine Green Party (now known as the Maine Green Independent Party: mainegreens.org) in 1984 and the Cathance River Education Alliance (CREAmaine.org) in 2000. The latter is an ecological education project for local schools, young children, and high school students in mid-coast Maine. As a political scientist and scholar, John believed that theory and practice were inextricably linked. With his faith in humanity's capacity for self-governance, he encouraged the education of individuals so that all might participate in a healthy democracy. He referred to this praxis frequently in his work and writings.

"Throughout the years when the Green Party needed someone to move it forward, whether as a convener, candidate, or leader, John was the one who seemed to find a way," said Greg Gerritt, former Maine Green and current member of the Green Party of Rhode Island. "With his passing, I am turning to his 1996 US Senate campaign slogan 'Think Rensenbrink' as the embodiment of his approach to politics as both personal and thoughtful policy. John leaves behind a political movement that embraces the maxim: Don't Mourn—Organize."

John Rensenbrink is survived by his wife, Carla, and their three daughters, Kathryn, Margaret, and Elizabeth. He resided in Topsham, Maine.

THIRD-PARTY FOUNDER

Frustrated with the ineffectiveness and militarism of the Democratic Party, and following a visit to the Canadian Greens, John and his colleague Alan Philbrook convened the first Green Party meeting in the United States, which took place in Maine in January of 1984.

He remained an active and dedicated Green, working on every level, from the local Merrymeeting Greens, the Maine Green Independent Party, the New England Committees of Correspondence, the national Green Party, and the Global Greens. When US Greens launched presidential campaigns, starting in 1996, Rensenbrink encouraged the party to merge national campaigns with local organizing to ensure that presidential efforts would help build local organizations and raise the profile of state Green parties. "John Rensenbrink for decades embodied the best of American progressive politics linking thought to action, and motivating Greens from the local to the national and international levels," said consumer advocate Ralph Nader, who led Green presidential tickets in 1996 and 2000 and counted himself as one of Rensenbrink's closest allies.

As a testament to John's leadership in combining Green philosophy with practical local politics, over 30% of all Greens who have won in US partisan elections have been elected in Maine. "To use an ecological analogy, while the rest of us are pines, oaks, maples and birches, he was our sequoia. To honor his memory, I commend his last book *Ecological Politics: For Survival and Democracy*," said Jon Olsen, peace activist and former co-chair of the Maine Green Independent Party.

GLOBAL GREEN LEADER

After helping to found the Green Party in the US, John Rensenbrink introduced party members to the international Green movement. He worked to ensure that the newly formed Green Politics Network, established in 1992, was connected to Green peers in other nations, especially in Europe, Australia, and New Zealand. When the Association of State Green Parties (which later became the Green Party of the United States) was formed in 1996 with Rensenbrink as a key architect, he convinced the new federation to create an International Committee and served as its first co-chair.

As a US delegate to the initial Global Greens Congress held in Canberra, Australia in 2001, he was also the main force behind the establishment of a Global Green Network, linking all Green parties in the world through an Internet-based meeting space. At the same time, he served as a delegate to the Federation of Green Parties of the Americas, where he helped build US cooperation

with the most powerful Green parties in the Western Hemisphere, including those in Mexico, Canada, and Brazil.

When the European Green parties formed a continental federation to contest European Union elections in 2004, Rensenbrink was one of the US Greens invited to Rome, Italy, to celebrate the creation of the “European Greens” alliance. “For many Greens around the world, John became the most familiar and most trusted face of the US Green movement,” said Tony Affigne of Rhode Island, who traveled with Rensenbrink to Green meetings in Rome, Ottawa, Canberra, Santo Domingo, and Quebec, and succeeded him as International Committee co-chair.

ACROSS THE GREEN HORIZON

In an effort to keep like-minded justice warriors informed, John Rensenbrink co-created *Green Horizon*, a news and opinion magazine, in 2003 (Green-Horizon.org). “It was my privilege to jointly edit and publish *Green Horizon* with John over a span of twenty years,” said Steven Welzer. “He was the one who conceptualized and initiated this distinctive publication—a print magazine covering the international Green politics movement from the perspective of this country’s state-based ecological parties. Readers of and contributors to the magazine appreciated John’s impeccable guidance. They were also aware of his lifelong commitment to the broad movement, within which John wore many hats and played many roles.” A tribute issue in honor of John was published in 2020 and is available upon request from Green Horizon Foundation, PO Box 2029, Princeton, NJ 08543.

MORE TRIBUTES FROM GREENS

“John was a mentor and a guide to so many. I will miss him dearly.” — Jacqui Deveneau, Chair of the Cumberland County Greens (Maine), Senior Advisor on the State Committee and National Delegate from Maine.

“Although John’s name is not widely known among the mainstream political world, his work had, and will have, a lasting critical impact on a global scale and has done far more than most will ever realize for the cause of third parties in the US.” — Holly Hart, Iowa Green and former three-term Secretary of the Green Party of the United States.

“John Rensenbrink believed Americans were entitled to a justice-based government of their own making with representation at the highest levels that respected civil rights, economic justice, and ecological wisdom.” — Pat LaMarche, 2004 Green vice-presidential nominee and two-time gubernatorial candidate; John was Ms. Lamarche’s campaign manager.

MORE INFORMATION

Biography of John Rensenbrink at the website “Americans Who Tell The Truth”
americanswhotellthetruth.org/portraits/john-ensenbrink/

“Seeing the Forest: A Q&A with John Rensenbrink”
By Matt O’Donnell, Bowdoin College, June 15, 2018
www.bowdoin.edu/news/2018/06/seeing-the-forest-a-qa-with-john-ensenbrink.html

Green Party History Weekend—John Rensenbrink segment
Recorded March 28-30, 2008 in Oakland, Berkeley, and San Francisco, CA
www.youtube.com/watch?v=WyBtfjiNSCo

Ecological Politics: For Survival and Democracy
By John Rensenbrink (Lexington Books, 2017)
www.rowman.com/ISBN/9781498537001/Ecological-Politics-For-Survival-and-Democracy

John Rensenbrink: Wikipedia entry
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Rensenbrink

Maine Greens mark founder John Rensenbrink’s passing²

August 4, 2022

It is with great sadness that the Maine Green Independent Party marks the passing of John Rensenbrink, who co-founded both our party and the Green Party of the United States. “John was our Northern Star,” said Green Independent Party Co-Chair Fred McCann. “Not only did he revolutionize third-

party politics in the United States, he also showed us how to recontextualize our views of ourselves outside conventional structures of politics and economics.”

John was born in 1928 in rural Minnesota to his parents, Effie and John. After the death of his father in 1943 he managed his family’s farm with the help of his brother. A few years later, he left home to attend Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan

where he earned a bachelor's degree in history and political science. An insatiable scholar, he subsequently attained a master's degree in political science from the University of Michigan and a doctorate from the University of Chicago.

Rensenbrink moved to Maine in 1961 where he taught philosophy and history at Bowdoin College in Brunswick. In 1983, he spent six months in Poland with his wife, Carla, and daughters Kathryn, Margaret and Elizabeth. There he worked as a research professor at the Maria Curie-Sklodowska University in Lublin.

While in Europe, John heard that a new political party, Die Grünen, had won seats in the German Parliament. After his friend Alan Philbrook attended Canada's first-ever Green Party meeting later in the year, the two held a meeting on January 8th, 1984 to form a Maine Green Party—the first Green state-level political party in the United States.

Rensenbrink served as the campaign manager for the gubernatorial campaigns of Jonathan Carter in 1994 and Pat LaMarche in 1998. After Carter's 1994 campaign, the Maine Green Party became a qualified political party with access to Maine's ballot. At a state convention, John was elected as the party's first co-chair, alongside Nancy Allen of Brooksville. "He was a giant of Green Party commitment," said Allen.

In 1996, Rensenbrink ran for US Senate, garnering four percent of the vote against Susan Collins. His campaign slogans, "Don't Eat the Seed Corn" and "Proceed on Green Only" (depicting a traffic light) conveyed a progressive urgency for sustainability.

Tom Fusco, who replaced John as party co-chair in 1996, after he stepped down to run for Senate, said Rensenbrink believed in empowering people over corporations: "John was one of those rare people who saw the big picture. He saw politics as a means to making things better, not as the cause or the end. He knew that real power does not lie with politicians or corporations, it belongs to the people."

Pat LaMarche, who ran for Maine governor in 1998 and 2006 and US vice president in 2004, in a tribute she posted on Facebook, said she first met Rensenbrink when she was a radio journalist who interviewed him during his 1996 Senate run: "I barely looked up when he walked into our studio—until he spoke. I could not believe my ears. He soft-spokenly explained that America was entitled to a justice-based government of our own making—with representation at the highest levels that respected civil rights, economic justice and ecological wisdom... John cared about people and he believed in their ability to self-govern without corporate influence."

In 1996, the Maine Green Party lost qualified party status after Ralph Nader failed to acquire at least 5 percent of the vote for president. After LaMarche's 1998 gubernatorial candidacy, the party regained that status, but this time as the Maine Green Independent Party, due to changes in state law in how parties are named when formed by a candidate that acquires the requisite votes. The Green Independent Party

will celebrate its 25th consecutive year as a qualified party in Maine next year.

Sam Pfeifle, an elected Green who is chair of the Gray-New Gloucester School Board, said he was motivated to join the Green Party after Rensenbrink's senatorial run and Nader's presidential campaign that same year. While he was an internationally recognized political activist, John often espoused the importance of involvement with local politics. His commitment to engaging in activism at all levels, is a factor that later inspired Pfeifle to run for office himself: "Just look at what he'd been able to do in conserving land and reforming government in his little town. If this guy could have this much enthusiasm and joy after nearly 90 years on this earth and a lifetime of butting his head against corporate behemoths, surely I could muster up some hope and at least see what I could do on the local school board."

Betsy Garrold, of Knox, who is running to be the state representative in House District 38 this year, first met John in 2002, during her first run for the legislature: "He came to my house and sat at my kitchen table eating blueberry muffins with me and Jonathan Carter and some others. He became one of my most cherished political mentors, gave me an autographed copy of his book, *Against All Odds*, made me laugh, made me cry, praised my ethics and pointed out my mistakes."

In a recent blog post, Maine Green activist Sam Smith said Rensenbrink is the reason why Maine's party is arguably the most successful state Green Party in the nation: "A few days before his passing, I happened to be examining in which states the Green Party had been most successful and found to my amazement that Maine had 32% of all the elected Green officials in the country, including a constable in one town and a sewer board member in mine!"

The Maine Green Independent Party posted this: "Those who know John know how beautiful his soul is. His will and determination guided our party from creation to present, and we are forever honored to have been so closely connected with the history John made." He was inducted into the Maine Green Independent Party Hall of Fame in 2019 and served as the party's senior advisor at the time of his passing, a role he had for nearly two decades.

"The Green Independent Party, on behalf of its members, extends eternal gratitude to John Rensenbrink for a lifetime of service in connecting people with nature, and connecting politics with both people and nature," said Lyn Maravell, co-chair of the party. "Our heartfelt sympathies and admiration go out to the family of this incredible man."

John Rensenbrink authored three books on Green politics and was a frequent contributor to numerous periodicals, including *Green Horizon Magazine*, which he co-founded and co-edited. In a 2015 issue of the magazine, he wrote, "Life is open, thought is open. In that awareness and with willing and purposeful intent, we can and do change the world."

Ideas and Actions

Some bring to us important insights; others are notable for getting things done. When an individual is outstanding in both spheres they inspire movements. Such was John Rensenbrink.

Tributes to his distinctive efforts, influence, and vision filled our Spring 2020 special issue. You can reference those online:

greenhorizon.sites.community/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/GHM40_web.pdf

Below are a sample, just a small number among the dozens of additional laurels that have been sent in for publication since John passed on July 30.

* * * * *

Remembrance from CREA (the Cathance River Education Alliance)³

The CREA community mourns the loss of our co-founder John Rensenbrink.

John was a visionary and played an essential role in CREA's creation and evolution. In his own words, written in 2005, "Five years ago, we had an idea. We didn't quite know exactly how to translate the idea into reality, but we did know that we wanted to make maximum use of the 230 acres along the wildest portion of the Cathance River in Topsham for environmental education purposes. Also, to help nurture an appreciation for and knowledge of this pristine area now known as the Cathance River Nature Preserve." John served as CREA's first president and continued on its Board for many years, most recently serving on its Advisory Council. His interest and enthusiasm never waned—he remained a regular attendee at CREA programs. All that CREA does today is part of his legacy. His vision of

using the Preserve to nurture appreciation for the natural world is realized in the shrieks of delight of our summer campers immersed in outdoor discovery, the "Wows!" and "Look at this!" of school children learning at the Preserve, the local elementary students experiencing robust science curricula, the engagement of people introduced to startling natural wonders on guided walks, and so much more.

John's energy and accomplishments stretched far and wide. We are deeply saddened by this loss, but so grateful for the time, energy, wisdom, and vision that John devoted to making CREA a reality, to the benefit of the many thousands who have passed through our special corner of the world—learning, renewing, and appreciating. We invite visitors to celebrate John's vision and leadership as they walk to the Preserve and Ecology Center via Rensenbrink Way, named in 2019 as John turned 90.

* * * * *

Bangor [Maine] Daily News . . . August 2, 2022 (excerpts)⁴

TOPSHAM, ME - In a life that arced across 93 years, John never retired—from anything. It never occurred to him. John could not but engage the world: as a professor, philosopher, theorist, political and environmental activist, author, community builder, husband, father, and friend. These were in no way distinct roles or identities; they were the bundle of his singular and irrepressible energy.

John's 93 years were full of engagement with people and ideas and political action. Many of John's endeavors were aided, inspired, and co-authored by Carla, his wife of 63 years. His wide and deep grasp of philosophy, literature, and politics was honed through decades of conversation with her. His three daughters also challenged and enriched John's views, even as

they learned from him. As his son-in-law remembers, normal dinner chats in the Rensenbrink household were the stuff of doctoral dissertations.

If you were lucky enough to be in one of John's classes at Bowdoin, or to be one of his daughters, you listened carefully to his stirring lectures, but you also might find him at your side a minute later, listening carefully to you. With those outsized farmer's hands, he'd often bang the table, in class or in the kitchen. It wasn't rage; it was his way of emphasizing a point. John taught you, showed you, that ideas have energy. Like he did.

John was born in Pease, Minnesota to John and Effie Rensenbrink. He was the fourth of seven children. At 14, when his father died, he and his brother Henry took over running the family dairy farm. John completed his high school education through a correspondence course, doing schoolwork at night sustained by his mother's coffee. Effie sold the farm and moved the family to Grand Rapids, Michigan so that her children would have access to a college education. John graduated from Calvin College, then went on to earn a PhD from the University of Chicago. He taught at Williams College, where he met Carla. They married in 1959. In 1962, John took a one-year position at Bowdoin College, then the couple spent three years in East Africa where John worked for the Agency for International Development. In 1965, the family returned to Maine, and John to Bowdoin. They bought the house John would live in until his final illness.

John was deeply involved in progressive politics. In the sixties and seventies, he ran for office and worked with the Reform Democrats of Maine, which he co-founded. In 1983, he spent six months in Poland researching the grassroots

Solidarity movement and returned home to throw himself into environmental activism, co-founding the Maine Green Party, the first state party in the country, and later the US Green Party. He was also active with international Green parties and the Global Green Network. In 2003 he founded *Green Horizon Magazine*, a journal dedicated to environmental politics. He served as its editor for many years. Closer to home, John co-founded the Cathance River Educational Alliance (CREA), which preserved 230 acres along the Cathance River in his hometown of Topsham. CREA now has an Ecology Center and, using the Cathance Preserve as its base, it provides a summer nature camp, hands-on science programs in local schools, and nature walks and programs for the public. John's years of activism led to his inclusion in Robert Shetterly's "Americans Who Tell the Truth" series.

John also wrote avidly, publishing three books and innumerable, impassioned letters to the editor [and opinion columns...see below]. At his death, his computer screen showed work on his newest project, a collection of his writings he called "60 Years of Letters to the Editor." His email correspondence was massive, the sound of his fingers abusing his keyboard a constant until the last months of his life.

John's contributions to the common good are profound and innumerable. He was fully engaged. And he never tired of it—or retired from it. A few days ago, nearing the end of this adventure, he was still engaged. This time as a poet. One of his daughters wrote down, in a scrawl much like his own, his final reflections on life: "Wonderful, wonderful! So marvelous!"

Yes, it is. Yes, he was.

* * * * *

The Times Record of Brunswick, Maine . . . November 25, 2020⁵

Guest column: Ignoring the role of ranked-choice voting cost Gideon a Senate seat

By John Rensenbrink

Why did Susan Collins win? Just as relevant, why did Sarah Gideon lose? I offer these observations.

Joshua Rogers made a good argument in The Times Record Opinion page ("The incumbency factor in Maine") on Nov. 11 [2020; in the wake of the US Senate election where Green Party candidate Lisa Savage ran against Republican Susan Collins, Democrat Sara Gideon, and independent Max Linn]. Rogers said it was Collins' incumbency that made the difference. I further note that Collins was used to winning by a big majority. She and her people from the get-go were "thinking majority." Why is this important?

They faced an obstacle: ranked-choice voting (RCV). It brought into play new rules. The winning candidate must get a majority of the total vote. Winning just a plurality would not suffice. Republican Bruce Poliquin's 2018 defeat by Democrat Jared Golden in Maine's 2nd Congressional District was a stunning message. In addition to the provision of "must-have majority," RCV also provides that each voter has the opportunity to vote their preferences among all the candidates, not just the top two. The preferences on the ballots of third-place finisher Tiffany Bond went to Golden, boosting him to majority of the total vote, defeating the incumbent Poliquin.

This message was all the more reason for Collins and her people to push extra hard to win that majority in the general election, thus bypassing resort to second place preferences. They pushed hard and won. Almost miraculously for them, the press treated the race as just a shoot-out between Collins and Gideon, ignoring RCV. It seems the

media were still for the most part in the grip of “thinking plurality,” not “thinking majority.”

Gideon got caught up in thinking the same way. This became especially clear when she joined Collins in the “secret” exclusive debate put on by Portland’s WMTW-Channel 8 on the Friday before the upcoming election Nov. 3. She could have and should have insisted that the two Independents be included, Lisa Savage and Max Linn.

This was in her interest because the second place preferences on their ballots were a factor in a tight race. Seating Savage was not only the right thing to do, but the preferences on those ballots, especially those of Savage, could be decisive. By denying their presence in the debate, the TV station was going against the intent and provisions of the RCV law. By agreeing to exclude the independents together with their ballot preferences, both Collins and Gideon

bowed to this palpable irregularity. They all ignored or bypassed two closely related provisions of the relevant RCV law: that the winning candidate must reach a majority and that the second place preferences of the ballots of Savage and Linn are potential votes. It was premature to assume four days before the election that the second place preferences on their ballots were irrelevant.

If Lisa Savage had been given her rightful standing in the debate, she could have and probably would have focused hard on the ballot preferences and on the majority principles of RCV. She would have four days of strong campaigning to turn heads and increase both her ballot totals and the second place preferences for Gideon on those ballots. This may have given Gideon the boost to majority and victory. Putting such speculation aside, it is clear that Gideon missed her chance. She and her people were immersed in first-past-the post, plurality thinking. Collins got the benefit.

* * * * *

FROM: Clayton Rose, President of Bowdoin College⁶ TO: the Bowdoin community

I am saddened to report that John C. Rensenbrink, professor of government emeritus, political activist, founder of both the Maine Green Party and the Green Party of the United States, and a figure highly respected and admired by generations of Bowdoin students, died on Saturday, July 30, 2022, just a month short of his ninety-fourth birthday.

John was born in Pease, Minnesota, on August 30, 1928, one of seven children of Dutch American farmers John and Effie Rensenbrink, and he grew up working on the farm. As John recalled in a 2018 interview in *Bowdoin Magazine*, “My mother did not want me to go to the public high school in town because it was not Christian. My father thought I should work on our hardscrabble farm. But then he passed away. So, my older brother and I managed the farm, and my mother allowed me to take correspondence courses from the American School in Chicago. And later my amazing mother, with her limited formal education, wrote a personal appeal to Calvin College (in Grand Rapids, Michigan) to accept me as a student.” John studied history, English, and philosophy at Calvin and was editor of the college newspaper.

After graduating from Calvin in 1950, John went on to earn a master’s degree in political science at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, in 1951. He was awarded a Fulbright scholarship to study at the University of Amsterdam from 1951 to 1952, followed by doctoral studies in political philosophy, American politics, and constitutional law at the University of Chicago, where he earned his PhD in 1956. It was at Chicago,

studying under philosopher Leo Strauss, that John learned the importance of learning alongside his students. “For me,” he said, “the purpose of the classroom is to advance the knowledge of all who participate, including the professor.”

He began his teaching career in 1956 at Coe College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, moving on after a year to teach political philosophy and American government at Williams College. While preparing for his first class at Williams, John met Carla Washburne, whose father owned the College Bookstore in Williamstown. They married in June 1959, shortly after Carla’s graduation from Radcliffe.

John and Carla moved to Brunswick, Maine in 1961 after he received an appointment to teach political philosophy and history at Bowdoin. He taught for one year before leaving in 1962 to serve as education advisor to the governments of Kenya and Tanzania, sponsored by the US Agency for International Development.

He and Carla then returned to Bowdoin in September 1965 with their two young daughters, Kathryn and Margaret. John was promoted to associate professor with tenure in 1968 and to full professor in 1974. Their third child, Elizabeth, was born in January 1968.

John chaired Bowdoin’s government department from 1977 to 1980, and again from 1987 to 1989. He also served as president of the Bowdoin chapter of the American Association of University Professors in 1976–1977.

In addition to his teaching and scholarship, John was a longtime political and community activist, beginning as a prolific letter-to-the-editor writer at age fourteen. Originally a supporter of former Minnesota governor and presidential candidate Harold Stassen, John left the Republican Party during the McCarthy era to become a Democrat.

In 1968, following the assassinations of Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy and the violence against student protestors at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago, he and others formed the Reform Democrats of Maine to push for an end to the Vietnam War and for political reforms.

John ran twice for the Maine Legislature and fought to close Wiscasset's Maine Yankee nuclear power plant in the early 1980s, but he was best known as a founder of the Green Party in Maine and nationally. While studying in Poland in 1983, he learned about the success of the Green Party in electing more than two dozen members of parliament in what was then West Germany and visited friends and party members there on his way back to Maine.

In 1984, he led the effort to establish a Green Party in Maine, the first in the United States, and went on to help the new party organize throughout the country, where it has continued to field candidates for local, statewide, and national office, including president of the United States. Today it is the fourth largest political party by registration in the US.

John was the Maine Green Party's candidate for the US Senate in 1996, losing to Republican Susan Collins, who still holds the

seat, in a four-way race that also included former Maine governor Joseph Brennan and independent candidate Bill Clarke.

Throughout his retirement, John remained active in the Maine Green Party and engaged in local environmental causes and social justice issues. Working with local real estate developer John Wasileski, he was instrumental in creating a 235-acre nature preserve in his hometown of Topsham and was a driving force behind the establishment of the Cathance River Education Alliance (CREA), a nonprofit organization that promotes a sustainable future through nature-based learning among students, teachers, and the public. In 2019, John told the Portland Press Herald that creating CREA was his proudest accomplishment, and in August of that year, he recalled being "thunderstruck, wonderfully delighted, and surprised" when the road leading to the alliance's office was named Rensenbrink Way in his honor.

John was the author of several books, including *Poland Challenges in a Divided World* (1988) and *Against All Odds: The Green Transformation of American Politics* (1999), the latter with a foreword by consumer advocate and presidential candidate Ralph Nader.

John was beloved at Bowdoin and in his adopted state of Maine. In the classroom he taught generations of students how to think, and in his work off campus he was wise, bold, and truly lived his values. I know you join me in conveying deep condolences to his family and our gratitude as a community for his many important and lasting contributions to the College and to society.

* * * * *

Remembering John Rensenbrink

By Tony Affigne

One day many years ago, John and I walked across the Forum in Rome, treading stones and soil from the Roman Republic and Empire. We talked about parallels between that ancient regime and our own world. John appreciated history not as stories of dead times and old ideas, but as a guide to understanding the breadth and limits of human nature. In particular, he looked to the past for insights on the variety of political systems and traditions human cultures had adopted, and how those systems succeeded—or failed—in response to changing technologies, environmental crises, and social disruptions. It seemed to me then, and now, that John's particular wisdom was to draw inspiration from the sweep of human experience, blend that with a deeply progressive, humane vision of human potential, and weave both historical inspiration and visions of the future into new understandings of who we are as a species, where we are headed as a culture, and what we

must do to survive as a civilization. But for John, a pattern of understanding, no matter how rich and well-grounded in history and theory, could never stand on its own as simply a theoretical framework, an analytical description, or a thought experiment; theory must serve as a guide to practical, effective community action. For John, the ideas of an individual could only find space and power in the world through thoughtful, principled, and persistent social action, through community engagement and participation, and ultimately, through the creation of organizations—local, national, and international; political, literary, and ecological—to be more powerful, and more enduring, than any one person's life.

Yet all of this is not enough to explain John Rensenbrink's impact, and the reason his example will live on, in the hearts and minds and political force of those who knew him. More than living by a theory of how and why things are as they are, more than acting in concert with others, guided by that theory of liberation, ecological restoration, and social justice, more than these, was the power and

solidity of John Rensenbrink's vision. I have called him a visionary, which I believe to be an honest name for his essence, more precise a name than theorist, or activist, although both of these are also true. An understanding of theory, and a commitment to action, is not enough. Animating and directing both of these, was John's clear vision of a destination, of a world at peace, with a civilization grown beyond selfishness, violence, and tribalism, on a planet whose intelligent denizens have learned to live in harmony with the Earth, and with one another. In the dark days of the past, and especially in the dark, challenging days to come, it hasn't been, and won't be, John Rensenbrink's praxis alone, his example of broad thought and concerted action, that endures, that motivates, that enables his successors, students, allies, and friends, to carry on his work and continue his legacy. It will be, I believe, our memory of his vision

He was a highly respected political scientist, philosopher, author, journalist, and conservationist by trade.

itself, of a beautiful island to which our fragile craft must travel if we are to survive, and leave to our own descendants, a livable world.

In walking through ruins of ancient Rome, John and I were reminded not just of the fleeting moment of individual lives, but also of the fragility, the impermanence, of humankind's most treasured legacies—our democracy, our environment, our civilization itself. We will honor John's life by remaining true to a vision, an aspiration, a dream, of a world much better than the one we know. Thank you, John, for showing the way, for teaching the importance of theory, of practice—and of inspirational vision. We will do our best.

Tony Affigne is a senior professor in the political science department and Black studies program at Providence College and visiting professor of international and public affairs at Brown University.



A key asset for international connection and cooperation

By Ralph Monö

I met John Rensenbrink for the first time in 1997 at the Portland, Oregon meeting of the Association of State Green Parties in the US. My own role at the time was as Secretary General of the European Federation of Green Parties. The Federation as well as the Green Group in the European Parliament were keen to learn more about the efforts to create a national Green Party in the US. We also wanted to increase Green contacts between our continents, both politically and in terms of how to organize.

John, of course, had an important role from the US side in this because of his comprehensive understanding of the development of the Greens at the state level and of the issues and conflicts confronting the Green movement in America. I happily connected

with him because of his insights and wisdom and his ideas on how to move forward to build a national US Green party.

As a European, I also appreciated John because of his ability to view the US Greens—as well as his own country—from an outside, international perspective, a key asset for international connection and cooperation. He always showed great curiosity about Green parties elsewhere, their different political contexts and various stages of development as well as what experiences could be useful for the US Greens. John, together with other internationalists like Annie Goeke, Mike Feinstein, and Tony Affigne, therefore played an important role in linking US Greens with Greens worldwide. He will be missed.

Ralph Monö is a former International Secretary for the Swedish Greens.

Elie Yarden was a close friend of John's

An activist, community organizer, and Green Party stalwart, Samuel Elie Yarden died surrounded by family at home in Cambridge, Massachusetts, on September 5 at the age of 99. Born in Philadelphia, Elie recalled a boyhood filled with books, movies, and summers in the utopian community of Vineland, New Jersey. During high school he moved with his family to Venice, California and began college at UCLA studying engineering. But he moved to New York City in 1950 in order to pursue a music career. His completed compositions include string quartets, pieces for piano, small ensembles, opera, and an orchestral work.

During the 1960s Elie resided in Greenwich Village, where he worked with the Living Theater. He eventually got married and had a family, then began working with experimental sound synthesis at Bell Labs with Milton Babbitt. In 1967 the family moved to Bard College, where Elie taught music

and humanities for over thirty years. He and his wife, Nona, built a home that was open to an extraordinary community of artists, students and teachers. After retirement from Bard, Elie joined Nona in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where she had moved to restart her own career. He was an active member of the Green-Rainbow Party where he participated in writing the party's platform. Elie attended council meetings regularly and ran for Cambridge City Council at the age of 90!

For the special 2020 J.R. tribute issue of our magazine, Elie wrote a laudatory review of John's book *Ecological Politics: For Survival and Democracy*. He was a major financial contributor to the Green Horizon Foundation. Like John, his generosity, insight and activism touched the lives of Greens all over the United States.

[adapted from a remembrance written by Elie's children, Tal, Seth, and Guy Yarden]

LINKS:

1. https://www.gp.org/gpus_mourns_founder_john_rensenbrink
2. <https://mainegreens.org/news/press-releases/221-greens-mark-founder-john-rensenbrink-s-passing>
3. <https://www.creamaine.org/remembering-john-rensenbrink/>
4. <https://obituaries.bangordailynews.com/obituary/john-rensenbrink-1085844906>
5. <https://www.pressherald.com/2020/11/25/guest-column-ignoring-the-role-of-ranked-choice-voting-cost-gideon-senate-seat/>
6. <https://www.bowdoin.edu/president/writings-and-addresses/in-memoriam/2022/john-rensenbrink.html>

During July, just two weeks before John passed, filmmaker Pawel Kuczynski of "The Thinking Camera" Youtube channel released Part Three of his documentary series titled *The Ontological Imperative*:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=08sQEugMYyo&t=137s>

The series features John discussing his vision for a better society while meeting with colleagues and presenting a workshop in St. Louis during the 2015 Green Party Annual National Meeting.

After Pawel heard that John had died, he put together Part Four as a culminating memorial tribute and made it available for viewing:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cT6yUnTK9Ug>

Fighting for economic development that benefits communities and the planet

BY GREG GERRITT

Greens need to help governmental agencies at all levels find alternative developmental pathways that are sustainable and socially beneficial.

At a meeting in Augusta, Maine, in January 1984, John Rensenbrink helped found the first state Green Party in the US. Living in Maine at the time, I joined up the following month. Two years later, working closely with John, I became the first Green in the country to run for office in a partisan race (for state representative).

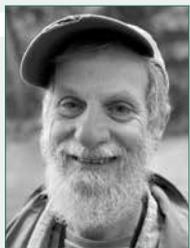
As I campaigned it became more and more obvious to me that for Greens to get elected they need to have a very strong and very clear economic development program, noting precisely how to create prosperous—yet ecologically sound and just—communities. So I began to read extensively, to participate in every public discussion on creating prosperous-and-sustainable futures, and to refine my thinking by writing about a distinctively Green vision of prosperity.

I believe activists need to directly confront economic development and real estate interests in their communities, analyzing their documents and actions from a justice, equity, ecology, and peace perspective. This has to be done using the history, culture and ecosystemic analysis of the place you inhabit to explain what is going on and how it must change. Activists should provide both the local context and a larger perspective based on global trends, reports, and data. *Do not forget the data!* The global reports especially valuable for creating a perspective on local efforts include World Bank reports, International Monetary Fund reports, FAO (the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) reports on agriculture and forests, and all the work around Social Development Goals. This should be supplemented with local versions of the reports on economic performance and social/ecological trends.

If done poorly—with an ideological perspective that will not be heard or without sufficient supporting data or with difficult-to-understand explanations—your work will quickly be dismissed by the media and the ruling elites. But if done well, even if not readily accepted, you will be listened to in public forums, policy leaders will pay attention and understand that you bring useful information (even if they do not support it), and your colleagues and fellow activists will be thankful for the elucidation.

As an educated white man I can be heard on the issues in ways that women, people of color, and other marginalized folks often are not. That women and people of color have a harder time than I do getting a hearing is always on my mind. I cannot represent them, but I can voice similar concerns and advocate that they be heard while bringing my perspective and information to the public square.

If you want to infuse debates and policy around economic development with a better perspective than that which currently dominates, you have to be prepared with data and the ability to communicate clearly. This means speaking the language of the audience, whether it be the halls of government or a street corner. Activists are used to doing this, but my sense is that they don't often enough focus on what is an appropriate economic development plan. I have worked with leftists but find that they tend to avoid forums where the nitty-gritty is being discussed. The fact that "mainstream" activists from NGOs avoid directly confronting the rich and powerful locally may be because it becomes extraordinarily difficult to raise money if you do so; it requires challenging the influence and assumptions of the most powerful people in the community. Real estate developers and investors provide much of the money spent in local political campaigns and large businesses fund many nonprofits.



GREG GERRITT

is the Administrator of the Environment Council of Rhode Island, leading the RI Compost Initiative for which he received a 2012 EPA Region 1 Merit Award. Greg's blog is ProsperityForRI.com. He is

the steward for his local watershed organization Friends of the Moshassuck. Greg helped found the Green Party of the United States and the Environmental Justice League of Rhode Island. He was the Green Party candidate for Mayor of Providence in 2002.

Re: THE GOALS OF INDUSTRIAL POLICY

Motivated by a reading of the document “Rhode Island Innovates 2.0” (the latest economic development plan of the Rhode Island Department of Commerce, aka CommerceRI),¹ I recently produced several lengthy essays: “CommerceRI innovates towards inequality, unaffordable healthcare and ecological collapse”² and “What are you willing to bet on the Blue Economy?”³ Those and several more on the blog ProsperityforRI.com provide much of the foundational principles and facts upon which I base my activism around economic development projects, issues, and policy.

I agree that every government should have an industrial policy and should be quite open and clear about what it is. My critique focuses on the *goals*. I assert that the goals of “RI Innovates 2.0” are to create enough jobs to keep the peons from revolting while helping the wealthy and well-connected get rich even faster, paying only lip service to economic development that can actually improve conditions in the lowest income neighborhoods or can heal ecosystems.

The industrial policy of Rhode Island—and every other place on the planet!—should put mitigating the climate and climate justice catastrophes at the heart of everything being done to improve the economy. “RI Innovates 2.0” shows that CommerceRI is still stuck in old paradigms.

Around the turn of the century CommerceRI tried to convert the former naval base at Quonset into a container port. Unsuccessfully. While the politicians and economic development crowd loved it, the people hated the idea. What stopped it was both powerful opposition and the eventual unveiling of the prospective port developers as conmen. What I brought to this discussion was an understanding of how the vast increases in trade on ships coming from Singapore would lead to ecological collapse and a human rights nightmare in southern and eastern Asia; that what comes through a port like Quonset can have adverse effects on the receiving end; and that genocide was one of the tools being used to industrialize southern and eastern Asia.

I usually try to be non-ideological, but the one place I make an exception is in regard to neoliberalism. If you study the history of that trend the consequences become readily discernible. Neoliberal economists resort to elegant mathematical models to prove that making the rich richer is advisable, but the truth is that they are completely unmoored from reality, as study after study has shown. In the real world, neoliberal models and prescriptions for economies are not only useless, but actually result in real harm to communities, and *do not increase the growth rate*. Recently some segments of the economics profession have started pushing back against neoliberal models by focusing on real world results. The data now is clear that weak environmental regulations do nothing to help an economy and that, on the other hand, responsible regulations spur socially beneficial innovation that accomplishes environmental goals and often fosters better economic performance as well.

CALL OUT THE BUSINESS CLIMATE OBSESSION

All the statistically valid studies of the effect of a state’s “better business climate” find no evidence that the touted phenomenon correlates with higher growth rates. A study funded by the state of Kansas found that all the efforts to improve business climates at most influence growth rates in about 5% of a state’s economy, an almost insignificant effect. Factors like history and natural resources are much more important. Unfortunately, after Kansas Inc. produced that study, the state of Kansas fully bought into the neoliberal narrative, anyway. Eventually the state went broke. Kansas Inc. and its paper on business climates seem to have disappeared from the web.

A notable analysis appears in the article, “Business Climate and the Second War Between the States” by The Business Curmudgeon (Ron Coan), published online in *The Journal of Applied Research in Economic Development* in February 2013.⁴ Coan reviews much of the relevant information and studies that have analyzed what “good business climates” actually deliver. He states that all work on business climate is inclined to favor the 1% and ideological conservatives—and that the economic results of following the dictates in these reports are not any better than other approaches. One can conclude that industrial policy is about power and politics, not the economy.

Indicative of the fallacies associated with the “business climate” trope, Rhode Island Innovates 2.0 notes that “the state ranked 40th for small businesses in the Fit Small Business Index, but Rhode Island’s small business survival rate is *the strongest in the country*.” [emphasis added]

INNOVATION? OR JUST MORE GIVE-AWAYS TO THE RICH?

Another trope of our times focuses on innovation within “economic clusters.” Here is the list of clusters that CommerceRI thinks are going to be a Next Big Thing for Rhode Island: biomedical innovation; IT/software, cyber-physical systems, data analytics; defense shipbuilding and maritime; advanced business services; design, food, and custom manufacturing.

The idea is that these industry clusters are ones that can create high paying knowledge jobs and are therefore where the development agency should focus. The fact that the clusters make up less than 10% of the RI workforce and in recent years created less than 7% of the new jobs calls into question the agency’s priorities.

It is important to remember that the obsession with the growth of IT, cyber data, finances, financial technology, advanced services and real estate is just what crashed the economy in 2008 and could very well lead us into crisis again (maybe, now, with crypto currencies thrown in for good measure). These industries are a huge source of the inequality and injustice in the American system, exacerbated by the algorithms that in hidden systematic ways discriminate against people of color, the new form of redlining.

The investment cluster

RI Innovates 2.0 says, “Rhode Island should create an InvestRI Initiative to match the investments of large institutional and individual holders and generators of wealth—pension funds, university endowments, estates, and family offices—with projects that are investor ready and meet return expectations.”

The truth is that the corporate world often does not invest in expanded production because the returns are deemed to be inadequate. Businesses are therefore prone toward investing in financial schemes and real estate. What would benefit the populace would be higher corporate taxation and expenditure of the revenues on provision of public goods like clean water, better transit, climate adaptation and housing for people shut out of private markets.

The healthcare cluster

The American healthcare system delivers relatively expensive yet inferior care while funneling resources out of communities and into the biomedical industry. My latest article about this travesty is titled “Health innovation policy for the people.”⁵ It describes how Rhode Island is trying to emulate Boston and cultivate a huge medical industrial complex. I note that asthma is a perfect example of how supporting the biomedical industry can go very wrong for our communities. It is unlikely that there is ever going to be a simple one-pill cure for the condition. Massively reducing asthma is going to take community health initiatives such as cleaner air, healthier housing and mitigating the climate catastrophe. Yet almost all the money being allocated to asthma relief is going into treatment. Treatment fosters the creation of patentable medicines that can yield high profits for Big Pharma; but it is *prevention* that can save the public and the community billions.

The “Blue Economy” cluster

The Blue Economy (ocean-oriented) cluster is one with rather disparate parts—some of which provide real benefits, some of which do not. The study of marine systems enables us to keep the ecosystems that feed us healthy. That’s good. Supporting and aiding the development of the wind turbine industry is vital to our future. Shipbuilding related to serving that industry is ecologically beneficial; but manufacturing mega-yachts for the super-rich is economically and socially pernicious. And military-related maritime expenditures are an odious way to try to create jobs.

LINKS

1. <https://commerceri.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Rhode-Island-Innovates-2020.pdf>
2. <https://prosperityforri.com/commerceri-innovates-towards-inequality-unaffordable-healthcare-and-ecological-collapse>
3. <http://newsletter.convergenceri.com/stories/what-are-you-willing-to-bet-on-the-blue-economy,7275>
4. <http://journal.c2er.org/2013/02/business-climate-revisited/>
5. <http://newsletter.convergenceri.com/stories/health-innovation-policy-for-the-people,6962>

Real estate

For most politicians economic development is 99% a real estate game. Getting shovels in the ground makes them look good. But the reality is that as long as real estate schemes are at the core of economic development policy we’ll continue to see displacement and increasing homelessness. After all, economies really are built from the bottom up. The top-down corporate ownership of real estate in the current system increases the inequality in our neighborhoods.

THE MISSING CLUSTER

It’s unsurprising to observe that in RI Innovates 2.0 there is no Climate and Decarbonization Cluster. Yet how Rhode Island deals with the changing climate—what we do to increase resilience and eliminate fossil fuel use—will be more important to our economic future than tax policies, job training, or real estate boondoggles. Opportunities for innovation abound in the climate sphere, and this is where we should allocate our resources. Funding for innovations in low cost super-efficient housing, expanded electrification, and coastal relocations would be good places to start.

Recently I participated in an initiative examining how well the RI state process regarding transportation infrastructure expenditures is operating. Every member of the public who testified said the process is skewed towards automobile infrastructure—in an age of climate catastrophe—instead of climate-smart infrastructure. The whole process needs a lot more public transparency and an elimination of the bias toward anything that the rich favor. Nonetheless, the commission voted more money for highways—despite principled opposition and a record number of commission members who voted no.

CONCLUSIONS

Much of what passes for industrial and economic policy is based on wishful thinking, fabrication, and appeasement of special interests. Studies done for the power elites rarely are able to back up the assertion that low taxes and less regulation actually improve economic performance. So, typically, in their document “Rhode Island Innovates 2.0” CommerceRI offers us jargon and touts clusters of industries that often do more harm than good. Their most egregious error is to all but ignore the unfolding climate catastrophe. Greens need to help governmental agencies at all levels find alternative developmental pathways that are sustainable and socially beneficial.

Remembering Paul Farmer, Doctor to the Global Poor

“Health care is a human right.”

~ Paul Farmer, *AIDS and Accusation: Haiti and the Geography of Blame*

Dr. Paul Farmer was an infectious disease specialist who worked for decades in the poverty-stricken and barren highlands of Haiti. His work eventually expanded to treating the poor in Mexico, in Peru, in Rwanda, and in West Africa where he was instrumental in bringing health care to a region devastated by Ebola. In Russia he treated prisoners sick with tuberculosis.

Dr. Farmer graduated from Harvard Medical School and later taught there, using his position as professor and then Chair of the Department of Global Health and Social Medicine to advocate for the health needs of the global poor. An outspoken critic of the neoliberal agenda of privatizing health care, he fought against forcing poor people to pay for health care as part of “restructuring.” As Partners in Health, the organization Farmer founded, expanded its work to other countries, he worked with international stakeholders such as Bill Gates and Ban Ki-Moon to bring health care to the “bottom billion,” the poorest of the world’s poor.

Farmer died unexpectedly in his sleep of heart failure on February 21, 2022. The man who saved so many others from death eluded medical care and slipped quietly from this life. His untimely death left his organization devastated but determined to continue.

A PROLIFIC WRITER

Farmer was a prolific writer, with twelve extensively researched books to his credit. A brief review of some suggests the depth of both his knowledge of, and his concern for, the pandemics of infectious disease and their root cause in the structural violence imposed upon Third World nations.

During the Ebola epidemic of 2013-16, Farmer went to the disease-racked countries of Liberia, Guinea, and Sierra Leone in West Africa. In *Fevers, Feuds, and Diamonds: Ebola and the Ravages of History* he discussed the disparity of treatment between responses to Ebola in the West and in West Africa, and accused global health organizations of a colonialist attitude towards health care.

In *Haiti After the Earthquake* he discussed the disasters that country has endured including poverty and disease, the American occupation in 1915, and the response (or lack of it) by the international community to the 1994 earthquake. Farmer discussed how gender inequality translated into increased risk for AIDS in *Women, Poverty and AIDS*, while in *Pathologies of Power: Health, Human Rights, and the New War on the Poor* he documented his outrage at those who failed Haitians by imposing neoliberal “structural reforms.”

In several of his books, Farmer repeated his condemnation of the effects of modernization on the global poor, describing how the construction of a dam in the mountains of Haiti to produce hydroelectric energy only benefited the well-off city dwellers in the capital of Port-au-Prince while causing displacement of rural peasants from their productive, fertile valley lands and forcing them to relocate to barren mountaintops where they lived in great poverty.

Farmer’s work with these peasants, sick with AIDS, tuberculosis, and other communicable diseases, led him to understand the all-important role that empire

BY ROMI ELNAGAR

He censured the neoliberal philosophy that informed the West’s response to the needs of the global poor and was so destructive to efforts to deal with the health crises in the Third World.

“There can be little doubt that slavery and its disruptive machinery triggered raids and war while unleashing epidemics across the region and in the distant lands to which its sons and daughters were dispatched.”

and racism play—and have played—in Haiti’s tragic history. As Farmer’s understanding of why health care does not reach the global poor deepened, his writing evolved over time from the simple discussion of Haitian life in *AIDS & Accusation* to the deep analysis of structural inequalities in works like *Fevers, Feuds and Diamonds*. His thinking ranged from the detailed descriptions of the sick of Do Kay, the Haitian village in which he worked for so many years, to a damning critique of the socioeconomic factors at play in Haiti and throughout the Third World. Perhaps most importantly, he censured the neoliberal philosophy that informed the West’s response to the needs of the global poor and was so destructive in regard to efforts to deal with health crises in the Third World.

I “INTERVIEW” PAUL FARMER

In conclusion, I would like to imagine that I was sitting across the table in Dr. Farmer’s office, asking him about his philosophy and his work, and letting him tell us about himself in his own words. I imagine that it had been my unique privilege to be allowed to interview him, and so I traveled to Cange, in the highlands of Haiti, to meet him. In my mind, I lean forward and begin:

“What is ‘structural violence,’ and how does it affect the health of the poorest billion human souls on the planet?” I ask.

[All Farmer quotes are from the works cited at the end of this article.]

He explained that the term originated with Latin American theologians in the late sixties, who described social structures steeped in wrenching social inequality, racism, and gender inequality. “Structural violence is violence exerted systematically—that is, indirectly—by everyone who belongs to a certain social order.” He said that extreme poverty and social marginalization exist not only in the growing slums and depopulated villages of the Third World, but also in the ghettos of the United States, and he explained that there are various forms of resistance to such social structures, which he called “the weapons of the weak.”

Thinking about your time in Africa working to halt the Ebola epidemic, what was wrong with health care under colonial and post-colonial rule, and what do you have to say about the measures that public health authorities used in that pandemic?

“There can be little doubt that slavery and its disruptive machinery triggered raids and war while unleashing epidemics across the region and in the distant lands to which its sons and daughters were dispatched.” [See: *Fevers, Feuds and Diamonds*] He accused the colonial powers, France and Britain, of determining many of the policies and practices that still influence health care today. “The rural poor, the great majority in all three Ebola-afflicted nations until war drove them into towns and cities, were rarely viewed as deserving of medical care under colonial rule.”

Farmer condemned the practice of public authorities in prioritizing control of an epidemic over care for the victims, angry that this kind of dismissal of the health care needs of the poor in Africa would not be tolerated in the affluent West. He argued that this is the reason people in West Africa and low-income countries frequently did not cooperate with measures to control epidemics, perceiving that their own needs were being ignored. “Within an affluent and inegalitarian nation, like my own, the idea of walling off afflicted towns and cities without attempting to treat the sick with therapies existing anywhere in the global economy would be dismissed as a nonstarter.”

How can we prevent future disastrous epidemics?

Farmer advised that the most important measure in prevention of epidemics in the future will be to deliver vaccines and therapies to those at the bottom of the social structure. Many of those people live in “a clinical desert” that has resulted from the enslavement and subjugation of their ancestors. [See: *Fevers, Feuds and Diamonds*]

How are AIDS and poverty related to gender inequality?

Farmer was deeply concerned about the high levels of infection among women, and blamed women’s low social status, and greater poverty, which make women’s “biological predispositions” more acute. In addition to the lack of power women have in most sexual liaisons, women don’t have equal access to economic resources, housing, health care, legal protection, land, schooling, inheritance, and employment in many societies. And women, especially domestic workers, are vulnerable to pressure to be sexually accommodative to supervisors in order to keep their jobs, or to moonlight with sex work. “Male violence, whether threatened or actualized, is also all too commonly used to control women. It increases their vulnerability to infection. In many cases, such violence is legally as well as socially sanctioned.” [See: *Women, Poverty and AIDS*]

How have the international community and organizations like the World Bank responded to your emphasis on the health needs of the poor?

Farmer had not forgotten how the international community promised to rebuild Haiti after the earthquake of 1994. Most of the aid never reached Haiti. “But we seemed to have no trouble running hundreds of millions through the Duvalier dictatorship.” And so he lambasted the international bankers of the IMF and World Bank, calling them “the architects and implementers of programs cooked up in Geneva and Washington and other centers of soft (and not-so-soft) power,” accusing them of making health care a “commodity,” even when people are too poor to be able to afford it. By instituting so-called

“structural reform” neoliberals have become “the gatekeepers” whose programs of privatization make health care out of reach of those who often are most in need of it. These neoliberal programs limit the choices not only of “the world’s destitute sick” but also of those who might serve them, tying the hands of doctors and health care workers.

Farmer asserted that international organizations, including many aid organizations, are less interested in the health of the poor than in their own bureaucratic agendas—and in the case of the IMF and the World Bank, in imposing a neoliberal regime on the Third World. [See: Farmer’s Foreword to Salmaan Keshavjee, *Blind Spot: How Neoliberalism Infiltrated Global Health*]

What is the history of the United States’ interventions in Haiti?

Farmer explained that the United States set up “virtual protectorates” over the Dominican Republic, Haiti and Nicaragua, as well as actual possession of Puerto Rico and the Canal Zone, and subsequently transformed the Caribbean into “a [North] American lake ...” [See: *AIDS & Accusation*]

He also accused the United States of being directly responsible for the introduction of HIV into Haiti through sexual tourism “which inevitably takes place across steep grades of economic inequality.” Farmer insisted that the AIDS epidemic was documented in the US before it was in Haiti, contrary to what the American media and officials have claimed, and he cited genetic evidence to prove his point.

How would you sum up your life’s work?

“... since none of my patients can pay for my services, it is my job, my great privilege, to draw attention to the suffering of the poor and to bring resources to bear on the problems that are remediable. Most are.” [See: *Pathologies of Power*]

* * * *

Another doctor, fighting for freedom and social justice in the mountains of another Caribbean island, once wrote: “The people of the Sierra Maestra are like wildflowers; they live for a little time and then they die; and no one cares for them.”

Paul Farmer admired the Cuban Revolution, and the work it did to bring health care not only to Cuba, but all over Latin America; and, like Che Guevara, he gave his life in service to the poorest people on the planet.

We should hope that he rests in well-deserved peace.

*With the poor people of this Earth,
I wish to share my life.
The little streams of the mountains
Please me more than the vast ocean.
(Guantanamo)*

.....
Note: As this article was going to press I learned of the death of John Rensenbrink, one of the founders of the Green Party of the United States, and creator of this magazine. Like Dr. Paul Farmer, John dedicated his life to serve the cause of social justice, and Greens in America mourn his passing. Both men worked to the full extent of their power to bring about real change, and this sad world is the better for their time here on Earth. They will both be sorely missed.

— RE

SOURCES

In writing this memorial, I relied on the excellent biography by Tracy Kidder, *Mountains Beyond Mountains: The Quest of Dr. Paul Farmer, A Man Who Would Cure the World* [2003], as well as the following books by Dr. Farmer, from which quotes during my “interview” with him are taken:

AIDS and Accusation: Haiti and the Geography of Blame [1992, 2006].

Infections and Inequalities: The Modern Plagues [2001].

Pathologies of Power: Health, Human Rights, and the New War on the Poor [2005].

Fevers, Feuds, and Diamonds: Ebola and the Ravages of History [2020].

OTHER SOURCES:

Haun Saussy, editor, *Partner to the Poor: A Paul Farmer Reader* [2010].

Dr. Salmaan Keshavjee, *Blind Spot: How Neoliberalism Infiltrated Global Health* (Vol. 30, California Series in Public Anthropology), Foreword by Paul Farmer [2014].

The Wikipedia entry about Paul Farmer includes a complete listing of his books.



ROMI ELNAGAR

is a retired teacher-librarian and a practicing Muslim. She has written for *Green Horizon* on social issues including Islam, nuclear power, and Native America. Her degree in history from U.C. Davis emphasized modern colonial and post-colonial history in the Third World.

The Greens in This Historical Moment

BY CHARLENE SPRETNAK

The extent to which a community, town, or city is resilient before, during, and after a climate disaster depends on many factors, not least of which is the strength of its social fabric.

The Greens are the only party to have been focused for 40 years on community-based economics, which is part of community cohesion and self-reliance.

Even as the “heat apocalypse” hit Europe and Asia in July 2022, killing thousands of people, destroying crops, and providing desiccated matter for wildfires—climate disasters that also strike North America and other continents now—a *New York Times*/Siena College poll found that only one percent of American voters named climate change as the most important issue facing the country, far behind worries about inflation and the economy. Among voters under age 30, a demographic generally more focused on the climate crisis, that figure was only 3 percent. Astounding.

The Green Party and individual Greens are rightfully working on numerous crucial issues simultaneously. While we do that, though, we had best keep an eye on what is coming at us. We know that the greenhouse gases now in the atmosphere will remain there for 30 to 100 years, while high levels of carbon emissions and methane are still being added every year. Thus we know that the escalating intensity and frequency of extreme weather events are shaping our future: long heat waves, shrinking water sources, extreme drought and permanent aridification, vast wildfires driven by high winds, stronger and wetter hurricanes with storm tides flooding coastal cities and nearby industrial waste sites, tornadoes that touch down and divide into dozens more, extreme rains and flooding, and winter blasts from the polar vortex—all resulting in cascading, interrelated catastrophes. Supply chains and the economy will surely be severely compromised.

The extent to which a community, town, or city is resilient before, during, and after a climate disaster depends on many factors, not least of which is the strength of its social fabric. Since the Greens are the only party to have been focused for 40 years on community-based economics, which is part of community cohesion and self-reliance, I wonder if there might be some way to gather relevant stories from grassroots Greens who have participated in successful projects and to make that best-practices information available. Community Emergency Preparedness has been largely ignored but will become central in future decades, including the training of Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) in every neighborhood. Multilingual training guides are available on government websites, but the key to success—which also makes for a healthier community now, not only when disaster strikes—is weaving together and expanding the existing networks in a town, transforming it from being merely aggregates of strangers. As the climate realist Roy Scranton likes to tell people: Get off your smartphones and get to know your neighbors because those are the people you will survive with ... or not.

Many communities and even large areas will have to be abandoned. Millions of climate refugees in this country will need to be relocated—unless the food system collapses first. Having lost their jobs and homes, the climate refugees will need public assistance for years. Tragically, because of the scorched-earth consequences of 40 years of neoliberal policies in all sectors and all communities of working people, our country is not well positioned to cope with what is coming. The public coffers have been raided repeatedly by tax cuts for corporations and the wealthy so we have much less public money for

Because of the scorched-earth consequences of 40 years of neoliberal policies in all sectors and all communities of working people, our country is not well positioned to cope with what is coming.

emergency funds than we should have—as well as inadequate public funding for the huge number of ongoing infrastructure repair projects, amelioration projects, rebuilding, and refugee housing that will be necessary. Money that was pilfered (legally under neoliberal laws) from the public revenue stream and from working people needs to be recovered—and soon. There will be little chance to achieve fiscal corrections once situations across the country have turned chaotic.

KEY ISSUES TO ADDRESS

The following crucial issues regarding the public treasury and corporate culpability are not solely Green Party issues, but Greens could join in a national push to get action, even in the face of opposition from both major parties. (GPUS is already involved in some of the areas.)

- It is maddening that every proposal to address financial inequality has the public revenue stream footing the bill when, in fact, it was the corporations that caused most of the inequality and should have to pay for the repair. The corporate sector, soon followed by nearly the entire business sector, largely stopped paying inflation-adjusted raises to most working-class and many of their middle-class employees after 1980, even as profits rose annually. (This is what the media refers to as “flattened wages” as if it were some mysterious Act of God.) What happened to those withheld/stolen, earned raises? That huge amount of money was moved upward, mainly to gargantuan CEO compensation and executives’ pay packages and also to plumping up the stock dividends. The corporations should have to make restitution to working people for the withheld/stolen raises.
- Similarly, the corporations and corporate trade organizations that controlled and dictated much of the renegotiating of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade in the late 1980s (which established the neoliberal premises of the World Trade Organization and the regional trade treaties)—that is,

those entities that designed the system that encouraged the gutting of American manufacturing communities—should have to make restitution to those communities now.

- It is undemocratic and indefensible that people earning more than \$147,000 (as of 2022) do not have to pay Social Security tax on the rest of their income above that cap. The moribund Scrap the Cap campaign needs to be revved up. It is only fair that everyone should have to pay the SS flat tax on *all* their earnings. This additional revenue for SS would immediately enable an increase in monthly benefits for low-income elders, which is already needed now but will be crucial in the decades ahead.
- Obviously, our current income tax brackets need to be returned to more progressive levels; also, the proposed Wealth Tax is a welcome step.

My hope is that Greens will be a constructive factor in addressing—through the Green Politics analysis and vision—the pressing issues of the new era we have entered. Factoring in the millions of guns in this country, it’s hard to imagine that large-scale relocation efforts and emergency distribution of food and water will go smoothly under high-stress conditions. Still, our community-based focus could help *now* to reach across dividing lines in advance in order to strengthen the social fabric and improve local resilience.



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From our man in Japan

RICHARD EVANOFF

I'd known of John Rensenbrink for quite some time and read his books on Green politics, but I didn't actually meet him in person until 2007 at a conference sponsored by the International Society of Universal Dialogue (ISUD) held in Hiroshima, Japan. John had introduced me to the ISUD, a group composed mainly of philosophers devoted to promoting dialogue among people from different cultures with various belief systems and worldviews. He was president at the time. John's vision for a global Green movement included a deep engagement with others around the world to promote deeper cross-cultural understanding, mutuality, and world peace. Apropos, here are some notes about the status of the Greens in the country where I reside now: Japan . . .

Green political organizing in Japan began with the formation of the Japan Green Party and the Japan Green Federation in the mid-1980s, leading eventually to establishment of the Rainbow and Greens in 1998, a network which supported Green-minded candidates who ran as independents. A member of this group, Ryuhei Kawada, was elected to the House of Councillors, the upper house in Japan's National Diet [parliament], in 2007. Kawada became famous at the time for being the first politician in Japan to come out as HIV positive (due to a blood transfusion) and for participating in a successful lawsuit against the Green Cross Corporation (similar to the American Red Cross) for knowingly distributing unsafe blood products.

In 2008 the Rainbow and Greens merged with the Japan Greens to form a wider network known as Green Future (*Midori no Mirai*). Running under the Green banner, Kazumi Inamura was elected mayor of the city of Amagasaki in Hyogo Prefecture (part of the Kansai region of Japan, which includes Osaka, Kyoto, and Kobe) in 2010 with 54% of the vote. Inamura was the first popularly elected Green mayor in the history of Japan and, at age 38, also the youngest. Green Future formally established itself as a political party in July 2012, adopting the name Green Party/Greens Japan (*Midori no Tou*...which I reported on in "New Green Party Launched in Japan" in the October 2012 issue of *Green Horizon*).

Formed shortly after the March 11, 2011, Tohoku earthquake and tsunami, which resulted in the meltdown of three nuclear reactors at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant in Fukushima Prefecture (the area has still not fully recovered from the disaster), the Green Party/Greens Japan immediately began calling for the reduction and ultimate termination of nuclear power generation in Japan. Together with various agricultural groups, the party also campaigned heavily against Japan's entry into the Trans-Pacific Partnership, a free trade agreement among countries with borders on the Pacific Ocean that was eventually ratified in modified form in 2018 (without the support of the United States, due in part to objections by Donald Trump).

More recently the Green Party/Greens Japan has expressed opposition to proposed laws that would expand the role of Japan's military and clamp down on dissent, as well as to holding the Olympic Games in Tokyo in 2021. The party has also issued statements supporting the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change accords (e.g., the COP21 Paris Climate Agreement); opposing discrimination against

LGBTQ+ and women in both politics and the workplace (in 2021 Japan ranked 120th in the world for gender equality); and condemning violence by terrorist groups (such as ISIS) and war in the Ukraine.

CLOSE TO 80 OFFICEHOLDERS NATIONWIDE

On July 4, 2021, Akiko Kando became the first member of the Green Party/Greens Japan to win a seat in the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly. Currently the party holds close to 80 local offices nationwide. The Greens are organized into local groups and coordinated by a national office based in Tokyo. The party is also a member of the Global Greens. While exact membership figures are hard to come by, the most recent estimates are in the low thousands.

Other Greenish groups not directly affiliated with the Green Party/Greens Japan also participate in electoral politics, including the Seikatsu Club Consumers Cooperative, which has about 307,000 members, mostly women, throughout Japan and has elected more than 100 candidates to local office.

The website of the Green Party/Greens Japan includes a page in English at <<http://greens.gr.jp/world/english/>>. The Seikatsu Cooperative has an English website at <<https://seikatsclub.coop/en/>>. A history of early Green organizing in Japan can be found in Lam Peng-Er's *Green Politics in Japan*, published by Routledge in 2015.

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CALL FOR PAPERS: “Environmental Philosophy as World Philosophy”

GUEST EDITORS

Professor Richard Evanoff
Aoyama Gakuin University, Tokyo, Japan

Professor Charles Brown
Emporia State University, Emporia, Kansas, USA

The defining and most urgent issues in our time and place are ecological. Profound ecological disruption and change such as runaway global warming, mass extinction, and ubiquitous pollution are now existential threats to all living beings. These are simultaneously local and globally shared issues—challenges that demand a globally shared response which does not silence local voices. What can comparative/cross-cultural/intercultural/transcultural philosophy contribute to our understanding of how humans might better interact with each other across cultures to successfully resolve mutually shared problems related to the local and global environments they inhabit? For the upcoming special issue of *Dialogue & Universalism* authors are invited to submit papers which explore the possibility and need for environmental philosophy to be world or transcultural philosophy.

SUGGESTED TOPICS

- Anthropocene and world philosophy
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- Local vs. global in environmental philosophy/ethics
- Indigenous, post-colonial, and non-western approaches to environmental philosophy/ethics
- Intercultural ecological philosophy and the problem of incommensurability
- Possible forms of convergence in world environmental philosophy in the absence of shared ethical foundations
- Global human civilization and future generations as moral patients
- The possibility of a comprehensive earth ethic(s)
- The possibility of an intercultural dialogical global ethic(s)
- Does environmental philosophy need a transcultural global ethic(s)?
- Does world environmental philosophy require a single universal ethic?

Please send submissions (deadline Dec. 15, 2022) or inquiries to:

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Some Good News in 2022: Offshore Wind Power is Taking Off

BY DENISE BRUSH

The amount of US electricity generated by renewable resources hit a record 28% in April.

In June 2022, the White House announced a Federal-State Offshore Wind Implementation Partnership with eleven states on the east coast to “grow American-made clean energy.”

The reason the lease areas are 12-15 miles out to sea is that studies have found that most birds live or migrate within three miles of the shore.

Spring 2022 was a difficult time to be a Green climate activist feeling the urgency to accelerate a transition to renewable energy. Just when the COVID-19 pandemic seemed to have ended after two years, Russia invaded Ukraine. Gasoline prices reached previously unknown heights, prompting President Biden to bow to pressure to increase fossil fuel exports to Europe. Then the US Supreme Court ruled that the EPA could not use their environmental regulatory power to fight climate change.

But there is good news from New Jersey and other states on the east coast of the United States about renewable energy—offshore wind power is really happening here. According to a July 11, 2022, article in *The Record* (a *USA Today* affiliate in Bergen County, NJ), “The amount of [US] electricity generated by renewable resources hit a record 28% in April.” This was not just a one-time occurrence either—it’s finally reached the point where the cost of producing a megawatt-hour of electricity using wind or solar power is lower than the cost of producing it using fossil fuels.¹ Could the United States achieve 100% renewable energy generation by 2030, as many environmental groups are calling for? Offshore wind power could be a big part of reaching that goal.

INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL CONTEXT

The first offshore facility to use wind turbines to generate electricity opened in Denmark in 1991.² Offshore wind farms, as they are called, use wind turbines like those on land, but are located 10 to 20 miles off a coast. In the US, states have jurisdiction up to three miles offshore and the federal government regulates the zone from three to 200 miles offshore. It turns out that the ocean is an excellent location to generate renewable energy in several ways: Wind speeds are higher on the ocean than on land, so the amount of electricity generated for a given capacity is higher than with onshore wind;² there is less potential for impact on people, animals, and property than with onshore wind turbines; and developers so far have been very conscientious about mitigating environmental concerns.

With its substantial head start, Europe is the world leader in offshore wind development, but China is catching up quickly. During the 2010s, offshore wind generation worldwide grew at over 30% per year. Nine of the fifteen largest offshore wind farms in the world are British. The top five countries by installed capacity in megawatts of power are China, the United Kingdom, Germany, Netherlands, and Denmark.²

Offshore wind development is a large-scale undertaking that requires substantial investment and time. Consequently, the offshore wind market is concentrated among a small number of developers, primarily Siemens Gamesa, MHI Vestas, and Orsted.² While Greens usually prefer to support small local companies over large multinational corporations, offshore wind has a much greater impact because it is “utility scale” electric power. Unlike rooftop solar, offshore wind all by itself can be a significant part of a state or country’s plan for meeting greenhouse gas reduction goals. When it replaces local fossil fuel production in the energy mix, it also has the benefit of reducing the air pollution burden from fossil fuels in urbanized areas where most residents are not homeowners and/or cannot afford rooftop solar panels.⁴

The first operational offshore wind farm in the United States was the Block Island Wind Farm off Rhode Island, which began generating power in 2016. Offshore wind projects are in the planning phase off Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Maryland/Delaware, and Virginia. In June 2022, the White House announced a Federal-State Offshore Wind Implementation Partnership with eleven states on the east coast to “grow American-made clean energy.”³ The president’s goal is 30 gigawatts of offshore wind generation by 2030. This partnership will include steps to “make historic investments in new American energy supply chains, manufacturing, shipbuilding and servicing.” The emphasis is on creating American manufacturing jobs at home to the greatest extent possible.

OFFSHORE WIND IN NEW JERSEY

New Jersey is already throwing its weight and funding behind the full-scale development of the wind industry in that state. The goal is to have 7500 megawatts (7.5 gigawatts) of capacity up and running by 2035, as part of the 2019 Energy Master Plan renewable energy target for 2050. The state recently launched the NJ Wind Institute (part of the New Jersey Economic Development Authority) to support university training programs and research related to offshore wind development in the state.

Buildout of offshore wind power in the United States is a long and complicated process. After determining which locations are appropriate for development, the federal Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) conducts auctions for offshore

wind development leases. Companies bid and one company is selected for each open lease area. From that point it takes five to seven years of site assessment, design, and planning, with periodic reviews by the federal government, plus another year to install the turbines and begin operation. The wind turbines, which go on monopiles drilled into the seafloor, are also being built during this time. Most offshore wind farms have one hundred or more turbines, which is what makes them utility-scale. The state also does its own environmental reviews, public hearings, and other approval processes.

New Jersey has an extensive coastline with a wide continental shelf, high electricity demand, and short connection distances to the East Coast electric grid managed by PJM Interconnection, making it an extremely attractive site for offshore wind development. The two sites in New Jersey that are the furthest along in the process are Ocean Winds 1 and 2. These wind farms are to be located in lease areas off Atlantic City won by the Danish company Orsted in 2015.⁴ They received state approval of their environmental and construction plans in 2019 and hope to begin installation of Ocean Wind 1 (with about 100 turbines) in 2024. Power generation of Ocean Wind 1 should begin by 2025, with Ocean Wind 2 coming online in 2029. There is a third project (Atlantic Shores) with a different developer, planned for the area adjacent to the Ocean Winds projects, which is expected to start generating power in 2028.

American labor is not being left out of the planning. Partnerships with the state’s trade unions (specifically: Eastern Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters; Laborers’ International Union



of North America; and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers locals 351, 400, and 456) are an important part of New Jersey's offshore wind deals. The state has not forgotten environmental justice communities like Newark, Jersey City, and Camden either—contractors are required to specify in their proposals how they will include workers in these overburdened communities in their plans. Plans being put in place now include a wind turbine manufacturing plant and two new seaports in Gloucester and Salem counties south of Camden to support transport of offshore wind equipment. The New Jersey Wind Institute is directing the development of community college programs to train technicians to manufacture, operate, and maintain offshore wind facilities.

ADDRESSING OPPOSITION ISSUES

The most frequently voiced opposition argument, and the least valid, is that the turbines will spoil the view of the beach for residents and tourists. The turbines will be 10 to 15 miles offshore. At that distance even an 863-foot-high turbine looks like a tiny spot on the horizon. More serious is the potential problem of running power connection cables across the beach and under people's homes and businesses to get wind power to the grid. For the Ocean Winds site, a decommissioned coal plant close to the shore near Atlantic City has been identified for repurposing as a grid connection. For future wind farms farther north, various possibilities are currently being debated around the state. Several good options have surfaced, including coming onshore at South Amboy, a coastal city with aging industrial infrastructure, and leasing railroad and industrial rights-of-way. Developers are committed to avoid digging of open trenches; all the plans use horizontal drilling far underground. They claim there would be little impact on the infrastructure above the cables, but that remains to be seen.

The biggest opposition to offshore wind power is currently coming from commercial fishing interests, especially large-scale operations that use mobile trawlers. While they undoubtedly don't want to hear it, their operations are already overfishing worldwide marine food resources and should be limited. Offshore wind developers are working with groups representing commercial fishing to limit impact in various ways, such as avoiding certain areas and spacing wind turbines as much as a mile apart. On the other hand, the Block Island wind farm off Rhode Island has shown that wind turbines can benefit some types of marine life (including those harvested for human consumption) by providing artificial reefs.

Considerable research has already been done on mitigation measures for various kinds of environmental impacts and they have been incorporated into agreements between the state of New Jersey and the developers. For example, the reason the lease areas are 12-15 miles out to sea is that studies have found that most birds live or migrate within three miles of the shore. In addition, wind turbines are designed so that they can be shut

down temporarily if migratory birds do pass through the area. Orsted, the Danish company building the first New Jersey offshore wind farm, has agreed to use multiple environmental mitigation measures during survey and construction operations. Whale detection buoys and Passive Acoustic Monitoring, along with Onboard Protected Species Observers, alert the crew when marine wildlife like dolphins, whales, turtles, and bats come near the project. Work must halt until the wildlife clears the area—hopefully the onboard observers will enforce that rule.

CONCLUSION

There are environmental issues that must be addressed with any kind of massive development of new infrastructure like offshore wind farms. But the advantage of building in a state with strong environmental regulations like New Jersey is that the developers are forced to take potential environmental problems seriously. I am optimistic that the planned offshore wind farms in Massachusetts, New York, Maryland/Delaware, and Virginia will be developed equally conscientiously. If that happens, and the buildout of solar and onshore wind continues around the United States, then the 2020s will truly be the decade we make the essential transition toward obtaining all our electric power from renewable sources.

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The Evidence for John Rensenbrink’s “Who Founded the Green Party of the United States?”

In early 2021 John Rensenbrink, the preeminent historian of the US Green Party, became aware that when people Googled “Green Party of the US,” what came up was “Founder: Howie Hawkins.” Hoping to reach anyone who had read this false statement online, John wrote the article “Who Founded the Green Party of the United States?” which was published in Issue 43 of *Green Horizon*. (John did not say Howie was the source of this misinformation, and Howie says he was not.) In Issue 44, *GH* published a response by Howie Hawkins, “Organizing the Green Party.” Because the two articles appeared months apart, Howie felt free to ignore all the historical evidence John presented about Howie’s central role in opposing the formation of a national Green Party. Even more surprisingly, Howie presented a far-fetched revisionist history of his role in the 1980s and early 1990s that is contrary to extensive printed and audiotaped historical documentation and to what thousands of early Greens witnessed over the first decade. I have been told by *Green Horizon* that John’s frail health precluded his responding to Howie’s article with little more than saying that he (John) “stands by” the facts in his article, so I will here respond more fully.

HISTORICAL SUMMARY

There were three phases in which Howie Hawkins maneuvered successfully to block the formation of a national Green Party:

The Founding Conference (St. Paul, August 1984)

The planning committee—David Haenke, Harry Boyte, Catherine Burton, Gloria Goldberg, and myself—sent out a letter to numerous grassroots organizations inviting each to send two representatives to the conference. Catherine donated \$10,000 for diversity airfares. Gloria, office manager of the Institute for Social Ecology (ISE) in Vermont, volunteered to be in charge of the money and sending out the letters. The Founding Conference was crashed by eight men from ISE, each of whom was given money for airfare by Gloria from the Diversity Fund. (They later claimed they didn’t know the money was misappropriated. Seriously? Did they think there was a line item in the conference budget for Airfares for 8 White Guys from ISE? After learning of this misappropriation, Catherine Burton quit the Greens forever.) Howie’s new cover story that he was there representing the Clamshell Alliance may, or may not, have been arranged after the fact, but he certainly operated throughout the weekend as part of the tight ISE group, all of whom sat together in the sessions, often dominating discussions with their anarchist ideology, foremost of which, as John notes, was their insistence that there should be Nothing Above the Local Level! *At no time did Howie break ranks from the ISE group to advocate for a national Green Party that would exist solely at the local level*, as he now claims. The word *national* was anathema to them.

By the end of the weekend, the ISE group had derailed the intention to form a party at that time—but not by themselves. Some of the other participants felt it would be

BY CHARLENE SPRETNAK

John Rensenbrink’s “Who Founded the Green Party of the United States?” was the last article he wrote.

Like all his earlier works, it is the truth.

The ISE group’s aggressive way of doing politics was evident at the first national gathering in 1987.

Murray Bookchin used his presentation to attack and demean a long list of ecological-political authors he wanted to take down.

Many Greens feel that the original radically Deep Green potential was flattened into something far less over the following decades.

better to delay forming a party for a few years while we would first seed the Green political analysis and vision across the country, explaining that this new politics was not merely another gradation on the left-right spectrum.

The conference voted to form a national steering committee of regional representatives of local proto-Green-Party groups, but the ISE group blocked the word *national* from the title, insisting that it must be called the Interregional Committee. The ISE group plus a few others even blocked the name *Green* for the new organization, substituting a name from the Revolutionary War: the Committees of Correspondence (CoC). Later people insisted that the word *Green* be inserted: GCoC. On the last morning, when the ISE group (who seemingly sought to annex the embryonic Green politics movement into their little sphere) made a strong push to get the office of the new organization located at the Institute for Social Ecology in Vermont, the rest of the participants scrambled to come up with an alternative and voted to locate the office in Minneapolis instead (soon to be relocated to Kansas City).

It is astonishing that Howie Hawkins now repudiates his close association in the 1980s with the Institute for Social Ecology, headed by Murray Bookchin, on the grounds that he was never “formally associated” with it. In reality, Howie not only hewed to the “Nothing above the local level” line but also wrote about giving talks on Green politics in which he routinely explained to audiences that the root of this new politics was anarcho-syndicalism! Moreover, he exemplified ISE’s vanguard mentality by which they pretended that the rest of us had no interest in economic change and that Green economic policy was a vacuum, which they rightfully should be the ones to fill.

In fact, the excellent economic sections of early platforms created by several of the Green parties in Europe by then were far more radically Green than tacking on some ecology to either capitalism or socialism. The best of those platforms called for a deep and broad rethinking of *everything* in the way modern, industrialized societies are set up and function. This included ecologizing the entire means of production, distribution, and post-consumption; rethinking economic theory (the purpose

and full ramifications of economic activity); safeguarding a democratic society through tax laws preventing huge concentrations of wealth, both personal and corporate, because they are inherently undemocratic; not permitting commerce to damage the common good of society and nature; establishing business law and community institutions that spread wealth and ownership as broadly as possible; creating a post-patriarchal society; understanding the role of nature and interpersonal relationships in health and healing; focusing attention on the formative relational reality that every child experiences from birth on, with public spending on crucial elements in the first five years and beyond, encouraging ecological and social *relationships* in school and community that encourage each child’s unique unfolding; and much, much more. It was a fertile beginning of the Green politics analysis and vision, though many Greens feel that the radically Deep Green potential was flattened into something far less over the following decades.

From 1985 to the Elkins, WV Conference (1991)

The first representative on the Interregional Committee from New England was Paul McIsaac, from the ISE group. At the first IC meeting, he unsuccessfully tried to establish that they had no authority to do party-building or do anything at all without first getting approval from every region for every IC decision. He was soon replaced, not by a Maine Green but by yet another ISE adherent, a more skillful tactician: Howie Hawkins. As the representative from New England, Howie joined the other regional reps in approving the draft of the Ten Key Values (written by a committee of three—Eleanor LeCain, Charlene Spretnak, Mark Satin—as charged by the Founding Conference). Later, however, Howie opposed the document (because the head of ISE didn’t like it?) and tried to argue that the vote had been faulty and should be reopened so he could block adoption; he failed in this attempt. The Ten Key Values stood.

After Howie timed out as the New England rep to the Interregional Committee, he created a working group attached to the IC with no term limits, giving him an excuse to participate

in every IC meeting throughout the 1980s. During those years, Howie repeatedly stated that he favored a non-party, dues-paying, mass-membership Green movement. Whenever the IC voted to move toward party formation, Howie would convince new reps that something nefarious was going on and that the vote should be retaken. He also picked apart proposals and churned out 20- to 30-page, single-spaced arguments on sundry agenda items, which jammed or slowed IC work.

In 1987 John Rensenbrink and many others pushed for a national gathering, initially intended to further outreach and organizing related to building a Green Party in this country. Howie got control of the event (as the dominant member of the planning committee): he shifted the focus to being strictly informational with no party-building; approached a donor known to ISE and rented a campus not far from ISE; admitted scores of young ISE enthusiasts for free (ostensibly in exchange for work tasks) to form a large cheering section in the front rows for Murray Bookchin and other ISE speakers; and initially loaded the program with ISE speakers until another member of the committee, David Haenke, blew up over that, causing Howie to reduce the number.

Undaunted, John next came up with the idea of having a national Green politics policy conference to create a comprehensive Green Party platform in preparation for moving toward forming a party. Howie and associates muddled the process and the outcome, a complicated assemblage of Green policy recommendations with the acronym SPAKA (Strategy & Policy Approaches in Key Areas); it was soon forgotten. In the late 1980s Howie expanded his small anti-party faction (the only faction there was) by forming the Youth Greens, which he subsequently expanded into the Left Green Network. Ever resilient, John next focused on getting state-level Green parties established.

The annual GCoC gathering in 1991, in Elkins, WV

John Rensenbrink presented a proposal that was passed, establishing a section within GCoC for people who wanted to form state Green parties. However, at that same conference Howie's Left Green Network faction finally had enough votes to take over control of the GCoC leadership positions. According to John, Howie changed the state-party agreement in the middle of the night such that the GCoC would have supervisory control of all state parties. In the following months, there was a mass exodus of Greens nationwide out of the now-Left-Green-controlled GCoC and into the energetic efforts to build state parties.

As John notes in his article, the entire process of building the state parties and then uniting them as the Association of State Green Parties (which ultimately became the Green Party of the United States) took place in spite of Howie's efforts and entirely without him. Howie tried to jump in front of the parade by changing the name of GCoC (now shrunk to a fraction

of its earlier membership) to Greens/Green Party USA (G/GPUSA) and by backing a few candidates. GPUSA filed an application with the Federal Elections Commission claiming to be the true emergent Green Party; the FEC dismissed this claim as unsubstantiated. In 2001 the FEC gave legal standing, instead, to the Green Party of the United States, the successor organization to the Association of State Green Parties.

HOWIE ADMITS TO BEING AN AGENT BLOCKATEUR!

John Rensenbrink concludes his fact-based article by noting that, far from founding the Green Party, Howie was "its long-time nemesis." Ironically, the strongest refutation of Howie's new, fictive narrative about his role in the 1980s is a public address that was delivered by Howie Hawkins himself. On May 26, 2004, an international conference on "The Origins of Green Parties in Global Perspective" was held in Washington, DC, co-sponsored by the Heinrich Böll Foundation and the German Historical Institute. John Rensenbrink, Lorna Salzman, Howie Hawkins, Brian Tokar, and myself were invited to present on the formation and history of the Green Party of the United States. Other speakers were from Green parties in Australia, Britain, Germany, and Finland.

I was the third speaker of the day and the first American. I knew I had to include the explanation for a situation that baffled Greens from other countries: why nothing much had happened here for years after the Founding Conference in 1984. After briefly describing what occurred at that conference, I summarized the years from 1985 through 1991 when Howie relentlessly blocked party-forming action in the GCoC. I saw no reason to embarrass him in front of an international audience by naming him as the main anti-party force. Instead, I referred to him only as an *agent blockateur*.

After a break, it was Howie's turn to address the conference. He walked up to the microphone and said proudly, "I was the *agent blockateur*. I did all that stuff she said." Clearly, this was one of the more memorable moments in Green Party history. Howie then spoke about his work in GCoC in the 1980s. The convener of the conference had requested a brief description of each talk, which he printed in the program. Here is how Howie described his talk: "The tension between the various green party factions. The fight between the leftist, grass-roots faction and the 'realo' electoral politics group." Note that Howie associated the term "grass-roots" solely with his group, as if Greens who wanted a party were elite lovers of the status quo. He also tried to jam the American situation into the German terms *Fundi vs Realo*, which did not fit the reality here. (Even in Germany, most Greens felt that formula misrepresented the actual complexity.)

At the end of Howie's *Green Horizon* article, he makes this response to John's citing the DC conference in his own *GH* article: "I must have missed the 2002 [sic] conference where John says I admitted to being an 'agent blockateur' to stop formation of a Green Party." Yikes, Howie. The convener audiotaped that

entire conference in preparation for his editing selected talks for the proceedings volume. It must surely give readers pause that Howie cannot remember what happened 18 years ago even as he creates a new history for himself in the 1980s. (Because Howie outed himself at the conference, I did name him in the published version of my talk.)

Only if all the historical documentation from the meetings of the Interregional Committee of GCoC from 1985-1991 were destroyed, along with the audiotape of the DC conference, and only if the thousands of pro-party Greens who were active in the GCoC in the 1980s had died would Howie be able to get away with his incredible new claim: “I supported forming a Green Party from the very first meeting [the Founding Conference].” It is puzzling that he would even attempt such a bizarre make-over. In any case, Howie’s blocking actions had only a temporary effect. It was his other efforts that had lasting effects on the Green Party.

THE LARGER PROBLEM

Green politics, at least in its early phases, was about *a new way of doing politics* as much as a radically Green analysis and vision. The traditional, patriarchal tenor of power-over politics in parties left and right was rejected for the emergence of a different political sensibility. The goal of transforming nearly everything about modern society—which is convinced it lives on top of nature, with men in control as their birthright—would entail for the Greens a political landscape in which differing opinions and ideas would be situated within a larger harmony of respect and appreciation for everyone dedicated to the Great Work, as the cultural historian Thomas Berry put it.

In contrast, Howie and the others in the Institute for Social Ecology group came into the Greens with a very different orientation. They acted as if political change occurs solely through negation and intense opposition, an aggressive Hegelian clashing of opposites. This view required them to construct supposed opposites to strike against and to invent “enemies” within the Greens. They labeled people who were not totally in accord with the ISE positions “red-baiters,” even Greens who felt that certain elements in Bookchin’s model of municipal communalism could fit into the Green vision of community-based economics. Actually, most Greens in GCoC in the 1980s found the ISE model of disallowing any governance or political organization above the local level to be wildly impractical, so they ignored it. Oddly, a debate was never held within GCoC over Green economics at all—no discussion, for example, of whether Scandinavian democratic socialism would be a relevant model if radically greened and significantly decentralized.

The ISE group’s aggressive way of doing politics was evident at that first national gathering, in Amherst, MA, in 1987. On the opening night several journalists from leading publications, such as the *New York Times*, were in the audience, curious to see what Green politics was about. Instead of speaking on that subject to help launch

Green politics in this country, as we other plenary speakers did that night, Murray Bookchin used his time to attack and demean a long list of male ecological-political authors he wanted to take down. He and his ISE adherents also cultivated other conflicts during the conference, explaining afterward that (in their belief system) you have to “make some heat to get any light.” After the conference, a member of the ISE group I did not know except by sight took me aside. He apparently had an unusually humane heart, for he asked me if I knew why Murray Bookchin and his group had targeted me throughout the conference (a harrowing experience). I told him I had no idea, that I hadn’t even known who Murray was until that weekend. He then told me that Bookchin had been enraged by all the good reviews my book *Green Politics: The Global Promise* had received in major publications, attention he felt should rightfully be going to him. I was dumbfounded when I heard the real reason for the targeting, which the ISE group pretended, as usual, was merely “principled opposition.”

After Howie expanded the Youth Greens into his Left Green Network, those young people would usually glower at us pro-party Greens, perhaps because Howie depicted us as enemies. I didn’t realize how extreme this was until I happened to sit next to a young man at a Green gathering who I thought might be a member of LGN. We introduced ourselves to one another, and when he heard my name the poor kid just about jumped out of his skin as a look of horror gripped him. It was then I knew that Howie had been demonizing me. For what? Wanting a *radically Green Party*? I was hardly the only Green woman Howie and his associates targeted, though. At the GCoC conference in Elkins, WV, in 1991, as John noted, a group of Green women held a workshop in which they listed all the Green women leaders who had been harassed and driven out of GCoC in previous years by the Left Green Network. (I was not at that conference and knew nothing about that workshop; I was told about it afterwards.)

Readers may wonder why a group so bent on destructively clashing with “enemies” was invited to be part of the planning committee for the Founding Conference of a Green Party. This came about because when Gloria Goldberg, dispatched from ISE, heavily lobbied David Haenke to be included on the committee, the rest of us did not know about ISE’s reputation for aggressive interactions in left circles in New England and New York City.

Except for the one-day conference in DC in 2004, I have not been in touch with Howie Hawkins since the 1980s, nor have I or any of the other pro-party Greens from back then done anything to Howie. Yet he’s still throwing punches in my direction for some reason. An example? In 2018 when Howie was the Green Party of New York’s candidate for governor, the *New York Times* did a long interview with him, as they do with all state-level candidates. When asked how he got involved with the Green Party, I figured Howie would just state the simple facts, something like: “Some people called a founding conference; I heard about it and went.” Instead, he seized that opportunity

to tell a national audience that my book (the catalyst for the Founding Conference) was merely “her new-age take” on the German Greens and that it failed to grasp what they were about. [Reality check: many German Greens and political science professors wrote me to say that the book was a high-quality overview of the complexities there. I had interviewed 60 Green Party leaders all over West Germany.]

CORRECTING A FEW OTHER FALSE CLAIMS

- At no time did Howie question me at the Founding Conference about why the Maine Green Party had not been invited. Not only did I not talk with him then or even know who he was, but none of the “Nothing above the local level!” people would have waxed indignant about the missing Maine Greens. As John noted, the ISE people were *against* the existence of the Maine Green Party (very aggressively at times, he told me). It would have been thrilling to have Maine Green Party representatives there! However, the only committee member who lived in New England and knew about them was Gloria Goldberg of ISE, and she never told us.
- The realization that endless economic growth on a finite planet is suicidal was not unique to Howie’s Left Green Network. It was already well established in the 1970s by Herman Daly,

Hazel Henderson, and others. All Greens agreed.

- It’s pathetic that Howie is now poring over my writings in 1984-85 in order to claim that I was supposedly opposed to founding a *national Green Party*. I was committed to that option as of late May 1984, when I formed the planning committee. My name was on the inviting letter about founding a national Green Party, and I gave the welcoming remarks there about that hoped-for outcome. I then gave numerous talks on campuses and at conferences in the years that followed about the need for a Green Party. As for the chapter in our coauthored book, *Green Politics: The Global Promise* (1984), about the possibilities for Green politics in the United States, Howie purports to know which lines were written by Fritjof Capra or myself; even I don’t remember that. After speaking with many people, we presented various pros and cons of five possible options, without predicting what might happen. Our own sense was that a Green Party, if formed, would always be surrounded by a larger Green politics movement because many Green supporters keep a distance from party politics.

John Rensenbrink’s “Who Founded the Green Party of the United States?” was the last article he wrote. Like all his earlier works, it is the truth.

the Time that comedians can know the best
Homer’s comedy known by name only

Demosthenes called Alexander the Great Margites
in order to insult and degrade him.
dimwit and lustful
didn’t know which parent gave birth to him
so they sed back in the day

humo (not homo) because not a single one of us **8 billion**
the same as any other
each with a growing idioculture all Her own

ludens (not sap or sap sap) because play is the way
to ban war and work
tragedy requires masks ... comedy does not

collaborans because we can play with each other constantly
repetitively, ritually, even co-laboring together
can be humorous play

hUmo lUdens collaborans ... that is yoU
can solve the hubris/arrogance/greed problem
can banish war and the arbeit macht frei lie
can take the U turn
back to fUn

— Charlie Keil

A Green pathway toward a post-capitalist future

Samuel Alexander's growing corpus is significant in regard to what might conceivably be the most important movement "project" of our time: transitioning the ideology and praxis of the Left "from Red to Green." This is based on lessons learned over the last century and a half suggesting that transcending capitalism won't involve revolution or the chimerical idea of "the working class owning and democratically controlling" the industrial-state polity and economy. The transformation of our society necessitates evolution of our vision.

Alexander, et. al. provide that in their compilation: *Post-Capitalist Futures: Paradigms, Politics, and Prospects*. This book is part of a series: "Alternatives and Futures: Cultures, Practices, Activism and Utopias" edited by Anitra Nelson of the Melbourne Sustainable Society Institute (University of Melbourne, Australia). Launched in 2021, the series explores twenty-first-century movements that challenge the economic and political order of global capitalism by developing new cultures and new practices, and campaigning for alternative futures.

Nelson writes:

Post-Capitalist Futures is the second book in our series. It includes a smorgasbord of analyses of where we are now and radical visions of post-capitalist futures where fair and just relationships and ecological sustainability are paramount. Certain contributors have particular foci and address specific questions: What can we elicit about futures from the forces of Right and Left competing to persuade the majority of societal discontents? What are possible futures for Chinese state capitalism? Why is diversity significant, from a community economies perspective? How might we best define the appropriate uses and control of technology to drive more just and sustainable futures? Which ways are optimum to deal with debts caused by falling output due to cuts in carbon emission and extensive investments needed to develop alternative energy supplies?

Other contributors explore deep system change. There are eco-socialist visions, from state-oriented and market-regulating plans for transformation to grassroots community modes of production networked across a pluriverse globe where market, money, and state dissolve into commoning and co-governance. Degrowth, which focuses on humanity living within Earth's limits in equitable and convivial ways, offers redistributive state policies and community-based economic initiatives that inspire—and are inspired by—cultural acceptance of material sufficiency versus exponential growth. Strong arguments are made for direct provision of universal basic services, incorporating participatory democracy and guaranteed work, rather than a market-oriented universal basic income scheme.

In contrast to a materials- and energy-hungry, technology-driven Green New Deal, a transformation based on core human-oriented and earth-centered infrastructure is proposed. In terms of advances for first peoples and addressing conditions wrought by global warming, there is a call for pluralist, hybrid economies and renewal of cultural diversity, based on a politics and economics of localization and resistance, with decentralization and appropriate technologies supported by international alliances. In short, this collection offers an array of insights for those seeking inspiration in dark times, for reading and discussion groups, for undergraduates and academics in a range of fields. As Malcolm X said in 1962, "The future belongs to those who prepare for it today."

SYNOPSIS OF:

Post-Capitalist Futures: Paradigms, Politics, and Prospects

EDITORS:

Samuel Alexander, Sangeetha Chandrashekeran, Brendan Gleeson

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*By Samuel Alexander, Sangeetha Chandrashekeran, and
Brendan Gleeson*

PART I: Alternative Paradigms for Post-Capitalist Futures

2. The Race to Replace a Dying Neoliberalism

By Walden Bello

The swift spread, persistence, and massive economic impact of the novel coronavirus have stunned the globe and left people seriously pondering what the future will bring. This chapter argues that while the 2008 global financial crisis did not result in a fundamental challenge to the hegemony of neoliberalism, COVID-19's coming upon a world that still had not fully recovered economically is likely to deepen neoliberalism's ideological crisis, leaving the arena mainly to a struggle between progressive alternatives and the far right. While progressives are rich in ideas for a post-neoliberal organization of economic life, these have not achieved a critical mass when it comes to political organizing. The far right, on the other hand, partly by cherry-picking some progressive ideas but situating them within a right-wing gestalt, have had more success in this area. These ideas are explored with sensitivity to developments in both the global North and South.

3. Ecosocialism from a Post-Development Perspective

By Anitra Nelson

Historically, the dominant current in anti-capitalist critiques has been socialism. It has been revived in the twenty-first century in ecosocialist thought and practice, which recently has been challenged to embrace post-development perspectives and novel post-capitalist futures. A comparison of three works—the 2001 *Ecosocialist Manifesto*, the 2008 *Belem Ecosocialist Declaration*, and the 2017 *Combined Strategy and Plan of Action of the First Ecosocialist International*—shows that ecosocialism embraces diverse visions, from state-oriented and market-regulating plans for transformation to grassroots community-based modes of production.

4. Post-Capitalism Now: A Community Economies Approach

By Jenny Cameron

Community economies scholars and activists focus their attention on the economic diversity that already exists but which

is marginalized each time the world is referred to as capitalist. For community economies proponents, diverse economic activities and relationships are the raw materials from which more ethical economies are already being wrought. Using examples from various urban contexts and ecovillages, this chapter provides examples of post-capitalist practices and highlights strategies that activists use to help strengthen them.

5. Collective Sufficiency: Degrowth as a Political Project

By Samuel Alexander and Brendan Gleeson

The degrowth movement calls for planned economic contraction of overdeveloped economies on the path to a steady-state or zero-growth economy. The deep decarbonization and resource reductions required for sustainable and equitable contraction would clearly require transformative shifts in the way economies are structured and resources distributed. This transition would also mean a cultural recognition that high consumption lifestyles are unsustainable and that only lifestyles of conservation, moderation, and “living lightly” are consistent with social justice and ecological limits. This vision of a post-capitalist political economy and culture challenges us to lay the seeds for an economics of material sufficiency. Social movements will be needed to help create the support for these structural and cultural shifts. This chapter examines degrowth as a post-capitalist *political project*, focusing on questions of transition.

6. China: Capitalism and Change?

By Michael Webber

After describing how capitalist production fits within China's social and political system, Webber identifies three principal threats that are outside the control of capitalists. One is expanded control over production by the Communist Party of China (CCP), Xi Jinping's current trajectory. Secondly, ecological limits threaten to impose the costs of pollution and climate change, against which the government offers the techno-market solution of modernization. Third is the peril of armed or cyber conflict with other countries. There are thus several possible paths for China: soft authoritarian capitalism, perhaps with market-led pro-environment policies; state-dominated organization of large-scale production, perhaps with state-led ecological modernization; and a dystopian future that involves geopolitical crises and/or internal unrest.

PART II: Governing for Post-Capitalist Futures

7. From Technological Utopianism to Universal Basic Services

By Boris Frankel

Proposals for post-capitalism can be divided into various forms. This chapter focuses on two of those: firstly, technological-utopian imaginaries based on developments within capitalist societies which theoretically can be

applied to social change goals such as creating a “fully automated” commonwealth of abundance with networks of zero-marginal-cost products and services; secondly, those proposals which reject the idea of techno-fixes and conceive alternative socio-economic policies geared to social justice based on eco-socialism and degrowth in material production and consumption. This chapter outlines the strengths of universal basic services (UBS) and argues that UBS programs are more beneficial and realizable than universal basic income schemes as both a means of advancing the transition to post-capitalist societies and ensuring that any socially just alternative becomes environmentally sustainable.

8. Ecofeminist Political Economy: Critical Reflections on the Green New Deal

By Christine Bauhardt

Can the Green New Deal (GND) point the way to a post-capitalist future? Ecofeminist political economy maintains that this is only possible if social reproduction is considered. The unpaid work of women in the private sphere and women’s undervalued work in the labor market must be taken into account in a GND that strives for gender justice as well as ecological justice. The design of public infrastructures is an essential basis for this. Not only technical, but also social infrastructures must be included in the GND. It is important to understand infrastructures as “commons” and to orient their planning and financing towards the needs of social reproduction. But this also means abandoning the postulate of economic growth, which is a primary goal of typical state infrastructure policy. The policy of a post-capitalist GND is one that places human well-being needs at the center of its deliberations.

9. The Macroeconomics of Degrowth: Can Planned Economic Contraction Be Stable?

By Steve Keen

The growth paradigm of capitalism has energy-centric foundations, exemplified by the close correlation between GDP growth and energy use globally. Furthermore, the current magnitude of debt suggests that, for economic stability, growth must continue in order for that debt to be repaid. But various ecological pressures imply that the foundations of ongoing growth may not be available if societies decarbonize deeply and swiftly. Substantial contraction of human energy and resource use may be forced upon us, especially in the most developed regions of the world. It is both too late and also not feasible to achieve this by carbon taxes or pricing alone. A dual-price mechanism whereby every transaction requires both money and tradeable Universal Carbon Credits could ensure that the burden of income reduction falls on the rich rather than the poor. At the same time, we need to avoid having past private sector financial commitments cripple the post-carbon economy, via a Modern Debt Jubilee.

10. Post-Capitalist Techno-Futures: Beyond Instrumental Utopianism

By Sangeetha Chandrashekeran and Jathan Sadowski

The technology sector is at the forefront of capitalist accumulation today and should be a prime focus of post-capitalist visions. Progressive politics can do much to counter the self-interested techno-utopian visions of Silicon Valley elites by conjuring radical futures based on principles of social, economic, and racial justice and attuned to questions of class. We show how these visions must be engaged with the current struggles and conditions of exploitation. We advocate for radical futures that unsettle the balance of power, but rather than prescribe a vision we outline key principles that ought to guide such: Democratic Governance, Worker Power, Socially Beneficial Production, and Meaningful Labor.

11. Crises, COVID, and the Climate State

By Peter Christof

Capitalism in its present form cannot survive the continuing use of fossil fuels. Unmitigated, climate change will overwhelm many nation-states and radically alter the interrelationship of those that remain. Yet even if we exit fossil capitalism rapidly, the future of the existing international political order will be uncertain and the internal workings of many states radically altered by global warming and our responses to it.

PART III: Post-Capitalist Geographies and Resistances

12. Localization: The World Beyond Capitalism

By Helena Norberg-Hodge

Post-capitalist futures need to be localized, moving beyond the staggering waste and destruction of corporate globalization and profiteering. This will require a two-pronged approach of resistance and renewal. We need to both oppose the political forces driving further corporate domination, and actively create—or protect—a multiplicity of living, localized alternatives that can provide genuine material needs and social well-being while respecting and enhancing ecological diversity. The chapter discusses key structural changes towards localization in the following areas: land and farming, post-global business, finance and money, post-consumerism, reducing energy consumption, and reigning in tech.

13. Indigenous Australians and Their Lands: Post-Capitalist Development Alternatives

By Jon Altman

This chapter explores development alternatives that are emerging in remote Australia for Indigenous peoples who have repossessed their ancestral lands. Altman’s exploration is based on over 40 years of research as an economic anthropologist/comparative economist. He deploys a grounded model of actually-existing economies termed “the hybrid economy” to

illustrate how, through their agency, Indigenous landowners are creatively reconfiguring and recombining elements of capitalist and non-capitalist forms of production. Customs and traditions that need to be legally demonstrated to secure landownership are being activated in pursuit of diverse livelihoods that include self-provisioning, the controlled commodification of culture, and the production of environmental services, including carbon emissions avoidance/sequestration and renewable energy mega-projects. The hybrid economy theorization challenges the envisioning of capitalism as the singular dominant mode of economy and could prove a harbinger of post-capitalist futures essential for Indigenous and non-Indigenous survival.

14. Environmental Justice Movements as Mediums of Post-Capitalist Futures: Perspectives from India

By *Brototi Roy*

Environmental justice movements provide resistances against and alternatives to projects of resource extraction that embody pre-existing inequalities. The latter tend to be envisioned in the name of “development,” yet deleteriously affect marginalized communities. Hence, those communities are often the frontline environmental defenders. For India, the Indigenous population called the Adivasis have faced the brunt of this capitalist growth model. In this chapter, Roy discusses how Adivasis have been resisting and providing alternate visions for post-capitalist futures, first by looking at a brief history of Adivasi mobilizations within the environmental justice movement in India, and then analyzing a case study from Kerala in South India. He also highlights what an Adivasi understanding of post-capitalist utopia entails. He concludes that future-oriented visions of universal well-being should include a decolonizing approach of learning from and with Adivasis.

15. Careful Thinking: Pesar Cuidando—Henvupen Yaconso

By *Camila Marambio, Hema'ny Molina, and Bárbara Saavedra*

Three authors and activists write collaboratively about the Patagonian peatbogs. The peatbogs have been degraded and continue to be endangered by numerous practices related to capitalist irresponsibility. The authors link the threat of exploitation of the Fuegian peatbog to the colonization of the First Nations' Selk'nam peoples through state-sanctioned extermination policies. Repudiating the narrative of extinction, the authors compose a multi-vocal score that imagines futures of conservation, self-determination, and care.

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The book's index can be viewed at:

<https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/bbm%3A978-981-16-6530-1%2F1>

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Jon Altman initially trained as a development economist then as an anthropologist. He has undertaken field-based research on Indigenous development alternatives in remote Australia for over four decades. His approach deploys the theoretical lenses of economic hybridity emphasizing the resilience of non-capitalist production relations based on kinship and custom. He is currently an emeritus professor at the School of Regulation and Global Governance, the Australian National University, and a director of several not-for-profit organizations that support alternate development thinking, activism, and practice.

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Walden Bello is the co-founder of and current senior analyst at the Bangkok-based Focus on the Global South and is International Adjunct Professor of Sociology at the State University of New York at Binghamton. He received the Right Livelihood Award, also known as the Alternative Nobel Prize, in 2003, and was named Outstanding Public Scholar of the International Studies Association in 2008. He is the author or co-author of 25 books, the latest of which is *Counterrevolution: The Global Rise of the Far Right* (2019). He served in the Philippines' House of Representatives from 2009 to 2015, during which time he was the chairman of that body's Committee on Overseas Workers' Affairs.

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Camila Marambio (Papudo, Chile) is a curator and founded Ensayos in 2010 motivated by the strong sentiment that Tierra del Fuego is the center of the world. Marambio holds a PhD in Curatorial Practice from Monash University, Naarm/Melbourne; an MA in Modern Art: Curatorial Studies from Columbia University, NYC; and a Master of Experiments in Art and Politics, Sciences Po, Paris. She is postdoctoral fellow at The Seedbox: A Mistra-Formas Environmental Humanities Collaboratory, Linköping University, Sweden. She is co-author of the books *Slow Down Fast, A Toda Raja* with Cecilia Vicuña (2019) and *Sandcastles: Cancer as Dangerous Talent* with Nina Lykke (forthcoming, 2022).

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Helena Norberg-Hodge is a pioneer of the new economy movement, and has been promoting an economics of personal, social, and ecological well-being for more than 40 years. She is a recipient of the Alternative Nobel Prize, the Arthur Morgan Award, and the Goi Peace Prize. Author of the inspirational classic *Ancient Futures*, she is also producer of the award-winning documentary *The Economics of Happiness*. Helena is the founder and director of Local Futures and The International Alliance for Localization.

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Correcting the Money System

BY HOWARD SWITZER

Capitalism is a parasite on the back of free enterprise.

I don't believe we will ever get public policy that favors the general welfare until the money power is removed from the banks and becomes the responsibility of the elected government.



HOWARD SWITZER

is an ecological architect and student of monetary science. He is a former co-chair of the Green Party of Tennessee (2002-2003) and has served a number of terms as a TN delegate on the Green Party National Committee. In 2006 he began the 'Moving the Money to Main Street Campaign,' adopted by GPUS in 2007, which has since been taken up by other groups. Howard is an active advocate for monetary reform and was invited to join with the American Monetary Institute. He's also a founding member and former president of the Alliance for Just Money and co-chair of the GPUS Banking and Monetary Reform Committee.

The conventional Marxist definition of capitalism, “the private ownership of the means of production,” is widely accepted by the capitalists themselves and is generally unquestioned. Could it be that the mis-definition of capitalism *serves capitalism*? Could it be that it serves to dilute the issue—with a simplistic and incomplete definition?

The conventional definition describes more what capitalism *does*, rather than what it *is*. In fact, we can go into great detail about what capitalism does without knowing what capitalism is.

So, then, what is capitalism? (Capital = money) + (ism = system) = money system. The central feature and source of awesome power for capitalism is the debt-based private global monetary system we have been harnessed to. It enslaves much of the world. That must change if we are to implement good public policy. *Capitalism is a parasite on the back of free enterprise*. The two are often and wrongly conflated.

Just about every household, business and government in this world is in debt to and dependent on the global banking system. Nations need to reclaim their sovereign right to issue debt-free money, the most vital prerogative of democratic self-governance, and reclaim their resources for the general welfare. Any government that does not control its money is controlled by those who do and is an oligarchy—it cannot be a democracy. Money is power embodied in law and thus must be made a public function.

The 2014 *Princeton Study* on political influence found that from 2009 to 2014, the two hundred most politically active companies in the US spent \$5.8 billion influencing our government with lobbying and campaign contributions. Those same companies got \$4.4 trillion in taxpayer support—a 750% return on their investment. In fact, the banks learned long ago, as far back as the 1600s, that by far their most profitable investments were in governments. Using war debt, the banks gradually got governments to give them control of their monetary systems. They set up a central bank for each country for management purposes. We the people, the taxpayers, the citizens of this nation, have little influence on public policy.

I don't believe we will ever get public policy that favors the general welfare until the money power is removed from the banks and becomes the responsibility of the elected government. Legislation to accomplish this is already written and has been vetted by the office of legislative council. It was introduced in 2011 and is referenced in the Green Party's platform. We just need to elect a Congress willing to act.

Shifting the money power from banks to elected governments would:

- end the systematic concentration of wealth in the hands of the wealthiest;
- stabilize the economy by eliminating the bank-driven boom/bust cycle;
- set the economy onto an income basis instead of a debt basis;
- empower Congress to serve the people.

We live in a culture that tends to retard the creative imaginations of the people, but the issue of shifting the money power underlies many other issues. Once understood, I hope it will set Green imaginations on fire with creative praxis toward implementing remedies that are badly needed.

Life in cohousing (in rhyme)

Hypermodern life tends to be hyper-mobile and ultra-transient. Cohousing renews the old concepts of community and neighborliness. People make a commitment to a place and to a stable group of familiar others.

Typically, in cohousing, modest-sized private homes are clustered around shared space. Community members benefit from participatory process (including neighborhood design), common facilities, resident management, and democratic decision-making.

Since the start of the cohousing movement thirty years ago, denizens have become increasingly aware of the environmental issues that humanity is facing. At this point just about all cohousing communities have embraced the interrelated ideas of ecological and social sustainability. So it's not surprising to see that many ecovillages in the US use the cohousing residential model.

The sharing aspect of cohousing fosters sustainability. The term 'ecovillage' embodies it directly: 'eco' for the ecological aspect; 'village' for the social aspect.

Encouragingly, both the cohousing and the ecovillage movements have been resonating more and more worldwide. Their visions of sustainability have been melding toward what the United Nations calls "best practices." A good example (check it out online) is the EcoVillage at Ithaca, NY (EVI).

EVI is one of the most fully-developed ecovillage communities in the United States. Located on 175 acres two miles from downtown Ithaca it has 100 homes grouped into three clustered neighborhoods, each with its own Common House. They have a ten-acre organic fruit and vegetable farm on-site that provides produce for residents as well as the wider Ithaca area, and a five-acre CSA berry farm that features organic u-pick berries. They also host a ten-acre teaching farm which offers support for beginning, low-income farmers. Ninety percent of the land is preserved as green space for organic agriculture and wildlife habitat, including fifty acres in a conservation easement held by the Finger Lakes Land Trust.

The village features cooperative dining in the common houses, a swimming pond, neighborhood community gardens, hiking trails, children's play spaces, a number of passive-house-standard homes, and some rental units, all in a multigenerational village-scale community.

EVI's goal has been to build a replicable model of a cooperative, environmentally sensitive village that can also serve as a demonstration site for teaching principles of sustainability and permaculture. Ecovillages—rural, suburban, and urban—will be key components of the overall movement for the greening of our society.

What would a cohousing community be without an annual talent show? At EVI, one household accumulates the past year's emails, compiles them, sets them to verse, and reads out . . .

Every year right about this time
We put your emails into rhyme.

"I need a container for transporting cupcakes."
Just send an email; that's all it takes.

"I hope it's not too much to ask.
But I quickly need a KN 95 mask."

"I've an extra doggie sweater I will give away.
Can you stay with my pup while I am away?"

Hundreds of requests last year in our inbox.
(Though not one asked for bagels and lox.)

"Looking for a home for my sweet little fishes."
And cooks at common meals need help with the dishes.

"At the airport I am stuck.
Please come get me in a car or a truck!"

Has anyone seen the yellow ladder?
A plumbing snake please (not a cobra or adder).
Oh, the ladder's been found and also the snake.
A cookie swap's coming . . . who's going to bake?

Some people have stuff they don't want any more.
Like a sofa (no need for a furniture store).

Well, I need help . . . putting in a bidet.
Don't ask what that is, I'd rather not say.

Some emails tell us how to act.
Let's all learn a bit of tact.
Pleasant we should try to be
Even when we don't agree.

(thanks to ecovillage pioneers Barbara Chasin and Dick Franke)

The Music has Stopped

"How can you expect the birds to sing when their groves are cut down?"

—Henry David Thoreau

When I went back the following spring,
the trees had all been felled.

The stumps are sliced clean.
Sawdust sprinkles the ground.
Trunks span the restless creek
like abandoned, broken bridges,
the leaves on the branches still green.

I remember when these trees,
music-replete, were still towers
we sat beneath without speaking,
looking up at the stained glass of the sky
through leaves fluttering in the wind.

The night it stormed
we were caught without shelter.
We made our way in the dark
through the corridors of the forest.
The stars were hidden, the moon obscure.
Lightning flashed now and then.

Everything melted that night.
Everything seemed to die.
We had broken away, alone to ourselves,
drenched to the skin and
afraid of what we might become.

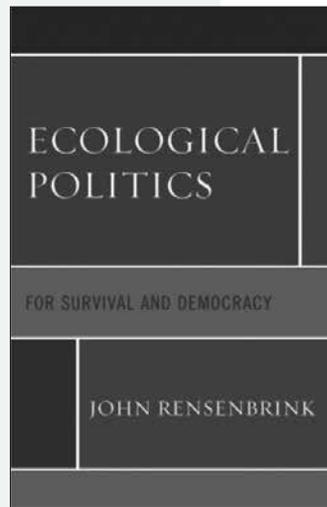
You clung to my arm
Rain filled the creek.
Water slipped down off the rocks.

The water still flows.
But the music has stopped.

— *Richard Evanoff*

JR understood what's so badly needed in our time

In the movement there are, of course, endless (and often enervating) discussions and debates about theory and praxis. Progressives have alternative analyses; activists have differing perspectives; even among Greens there are a whole variety of viewpoints. Electoralism? reform? revolution? transformation? John Rensenbrink understood what's essential. An ecological ontology is imperative. Politics is unavoidable. In appreciation of his legacy, we encourage you to read his book:



Two Haiku

A traditional Japanese haiku is a three-line poem with seventeen syllables, written in a 5/7/5 syllable count. Haikus tend to emphasize simplicity, intensity, and directness of expression. Ted Becker and Patricia Lantz have compiled over a hundred into "The Haiku Blues" (Wipf & Stock; Eugene, OR; 2017). They've graciously given us permission to share these with you:

**When a people know
their system's been choked and nixed,
... it needs to be fixed.**

**The facility
of the technology has
enabled too much.**

The production of Green Horizon is funded by the generous contributions of the Sustainers who are listed on the following page (though some are anonymous). We're the only print magazine in this country focusing on Green politics and related movements. We endeavor to provide vital coverage and thought-provoking discussions, but we need your support. Please join the Sustainers list by sending a check to the address on the back cover or via PayPal at our website: www.Green-Horizon.org.



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