

Many Environmental Scientists Are Wayward or Cowed When Faced with an Irrefutable Truth

Too Many People Destroy Natural Resources

BY DIANA HULL, PH.D.

The construction of barriers to unwanted knowledge stretches back to antiquity in an uninterrupted line, bulging and obstructing human progress according to the changing religious and intellectual climate of the time. “Go along to get along” was a theme in the Justinian persecution that began with the inquisition. And millennia of documented history exist about resistance to views “outside of the box” and the rejection, ostracism, and punishment of dissenters.

A contemporary example of obfuscation in the heart of the Nation’s Capital is, for example, the long-time decline of Chesapeake Bay and its fish because of increased wastewaters and land degradation from the ever-increasing population in its watershed, including the Washington metropolitan area. The proposed solution from the home base of the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) is something called “smart growth,” a euphemism, which involves superficial and temporary fixes, leaving the basic problem untouched.

There is much to be appreciated and learned in this issue of *The Social Contract* about the role and position of many environmental scientists, in and outside of government, and their failure to acknowledge reality and work on real solutions. But unified thought is seldom found within the ligaments of institutions, and it is necessary to both make orthodoxy less stubborn and heresy less sharp. At some point soon, attempts at temporary “fixes” for these kinds of problems will be over, excuses will be dead on arrival, and permitting ever more people to live in the U.S. will stop.



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This transition has begun, affecting European and American belief systems on a number of fronts. Stale ideas once heartily embraced are now past their zenith and eroding. The open door once thought to be generous, accepting, and based on convictions about multiculturalism, social justice, and even world citizenship is now a millstone. But the struggle may be fierce, because the value of population growth to so many will die hard.

Although my colleague Leon Kolankiewicz and I are on essentially “the same page” about the nature of the problem described in this *Social Contract* issue, I have less confidence in the assumption that the views and actions of scientists and educated non-specialists, or people in general, are mostly rational. The most accepted notion is the claim that barriers to agreement are based mostly on self-interest and express themselves in the give and take of politics at every level, from the schoolhouse to the seats of power.

While it is reasonable to assume that most individuals and groups simply do “what’s best for me, my professional standing, reputation or family, clan and country,” a good argument can be made that we are just as often self-destructive and work against our best interests when defending and clinging to out-of-date “feel good” views. The new era we are entering is the child of dire necessity and fear, not scientific understanding of carrying capacity. So at least we should acknowledge what it takes to abandon the open arms of “yesterday land.”

We got to this place because enough Americans are now weary and angry about immigration promotion and the championing of immigrants’ “rights,” an increasingly unpopular and out-of-date position, along with the welfare state, which we can no longer afford and which was partly a vehicle for accommodating immigrant’s needs.

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But the question raised in this issue of *The Social Contract* asks: Why were and are so many environmental professionals still not on board, when immigration's effect on the land and natural resources are why much of the permanent and irreversible damage occurs. Yet, too many environmental professionals have effectively refused to acknowledge this problem. So is this perverse passivity working in their own best interest or not? How does it benefit them to ignore reality?

When examining motives for closing the border, we can't underestimate the power of mass murders and decapitations in Mexico, because the danger and the fear that engenders bring the really profound changes we are seeking. Changes won't be influenced by a policy reversal by environmental scholars on the grounds of environmental damage and resources depletion. It will be motivated by the physical fear of murderous gangs and the sight of decapitated bodies and amputated limbs. Ruthless murderers from the south and the presence of Hezbollah agents have eroded Americans' sense of security and safety. So evidently the self-interest in a sustainable environment can't hold a candle to physical danger as a motivator. That said, environmental scientists who deliberately withhold solutions to resource depletion and carrying capacity have done serious harm. Why they do this remains a psychological mystery.

The point is that it's our mistake to assume that most people are rational and will always work in their own best interest. Personal and group self-destruction is admittedly also incomprehensible to most of us, and yet we are witnessing Jihadists seeking a terrible death for themselves as well as for others. Humans are complex, perverse, and easily manipulated, and many are as deranged as those afflicted by the dancing mania of the fifteenth century, or the 1978 group suicide mission engaged in by members of the Jim Jones cult.

For the majority of us, physical danger fortunately alerts our defenses quickly, and the continuation of current immigration policy is more and more being seen as

dangerous to life, property, and country. Defenders of open borders and the easy entry of immigrants are losing ground fast, both here and in Europe, so we can count on even more pushback against mass immigration than previously. But pro-mass-immigration academics and their students have a lot at stake in this issue because of their central role in advocating the benefits of the multicultural society and refusing to acknowledge the downside. And we can expect them to be in the forefront, holding firm and ignoring the obvious evidence that too many people harm much that we care about, including the environment.

Essential discussions about the fate of natural resources, at home and worldwide, should be the focus of everyone, but especially of natural scientists in every subspecialty. Yet the cause of the negative impact of ever-increasing users of land, water, and energy, while well understood, is assiduously avoided, both by those who profit from this activity and by those who are allegedly wanting to protect these assets. Why are these disparate political factions abetting each other, and what could that mean? Their motives may be dissimilar, but as a practical matter, the results are the same.

There is much to be learned about the way humans apply knowledge, or perversely avoid it, and university culture has been very successful in defending the indefensible. The "too many people for limited resources" theory is particularly unpopular in academic circles, where multiculturalism rules, so that limiting immigration gets even conscientious and respected scholars on the wrong side of academic "wisdom." Restricting immigration is also dangerously "right wing," in that it curbs rather than advances a plethora of "rights" issues and is therefore, for them, untenable.

We can only wish that environmental scholars were more diligent truth seekers, and would stop denying that too many people will destroy what they are claiming to protect. They need to be reminded, on a regular basis, that political correctness is now halfway to the graveyard of outdated ideas. ■