

"All that is necessary
for the triumph of
evil is that good
men do nothing . . ."
— EDMUND BURKE.



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THE NATURE OF REAL EDUCATION: REBUILDING AFTER A COLLAPSE

By James Reed

We consider the real possibility that the forces of darkness currently engulfing our world cannot be defeated without a price, not only of personal pain and suffering, but of a likely breakdown of civilised order as has happened in the past when civilisations collapsed. In the case of Rome, its end was a "long descent" followed by a crash as the Northern barbarians destroyed what had become a decadent and corrupt society. But breakdown for us is likely to be quicker, following the "bigger they are, the harder they fall" principle. A quicker collapse though offers a greater chance for rebuilding because there will still be some human and material resources suitable for rebuilding.

Astrobiologist Lewis Dartnell in his book "The Knowledge: How to Rebuild Our World from Scratch" (Bodley Head, London 2014) gives a fascinating science-based discussion of how the survivors of a global catastrophe (say a hyper-pandemic or asteroid strike) could rebuild civilisation. His basic starting point is that if the scientific method is preserved (observation, experiment and testing), knowledge can be regained in all fundamental areas including agriculture, food, clothing, substances, material, energy, transport and communication. This is very much a scientist's approach to the issue and largely ignores the social, cultural and linguistic dimensions. Preservation of culture is just as important as the preservation of science and technology because culture is the social glue holding societies together.

In saving, if not rebuilding a culture, where does one begin? Here I will briefly review some informative works that can help us on our journey.

Dorothy L. Sayers in "The Lost Tools of Learning" (1947) is an important document for any rebuilders of civilisation because she deals with basics. Her discussion begins with education towards the end of the Middle Ages "the point at which education began to lose sight of its true object", giving us some idea of how long the rot has been well, in rotting away. Sawyer says that today young people are often kept in a state of continued childhood, right up until finishing university, nowadays

in their mid-twenties.

In Tudor times, university was long completed before reaching 20 years of age and responsibility assumed for the conduct of their affairs. Even in 1947, Sayers had also observed that education at the time failed to endow students with a developed sense of critical reasoning and thinking. Indeed, "the intellectual skills bestowed upon us by our education are not readily transferable to subjects other than those in which we acquired them: "he remembers what he has learnt, but forgets altogether how he learned it"."

The art of learning has been lost, which is the teaching of how to think, the methodology of thought. That was true in 1947 and it is true today in 2015. It contrasts thought with the syllabus of the Middle Ages.

This syllabus was divided into two parts: the Trivium and the Quadrivium. The Quadrivium consisted of various subjects such as arithmetic, and our contemporary syllabus is essentially a Quadrivium. However the Trivium was comprised of three parts in this order: grammar, dialectic and rhetoric. These fields of knowledge are very broad and basic and aimed to teach the student the tools of learning and of thinking. This grammar taught about the structure of language, how language was composed and how it worked.

Dialectic taught how to use language, to define one's term, make statements and construct arguments, and to analyse fallacies of reason. Rhetoric was concerned about expression in language, how to communicate clearly, precisely and persuasively.

Mastering grammar, dialectic and rhetoric enabled the student to not only write and defend a thesis, but also to do so verbally and to be able to stand one's ground in debate. This skill is seldom seen even at university today where students, even in law, are ill-equipped to give talks and defend their thesis from criticisms.

In short: "modern education concentrates on teaching subjects, leaving the method of thinking, arguing, and expressing one's

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conclusions to be picked up by the scholar as he goes along; mediaeval education concentrated on first forging and learning to handle the tools of learning, using whatever subject came handy as a piece of material on which to doodle until the use of the tool became second nature".

It is of course, not possible to go back to the Medieval period in the sense of time travel, but it is in the sense of correcting an error insofar as the Medieval period represents a philosophy of education. Sayers believed that the student should first begin with grammar and as he/she ages and matures, proceeds to dialectic and then to rhetoric. I, however, believe that it is best to dive in on all three from the beginning and establish a firm foundation, building on all of them. She supports the teaching of Latin at an early age and this too is a good idea. Learning Latin is a good way of grasping the essentials of grammar, and of understanding the English language at a deeper level.

Sayers discusses science and mathematics, but sees science as a subject and sees mathematics (algebra, geometry, advance arithmetic) as part of logic. Although this view is defensible (that is, mathematics is just logic) and has weighty mathematical defenders (e.g., A.N. Whitehead and B. Russell), today it is generally rejected. Mathematics has an intimate connection with logic, but it is not itself logic. The arguments for this are highly complex (e.g., Godel's theorem) and as a former mere high school teacher (only year 8 and 9 maths), I don't understand them. But it is plausible to suppose that mathematics is *sui generis*, independent, with its own methods of reasoning. Thus I differ from Sayers in believing that from an early age something like a methodology of mathematics (baby metamathematics) and elementary set theory should be taught. I recall in my Year 1 impressing my teacher when we began set theory with "attribute blocks" (different coloured blocks with different shapes) and hoops, and I discovered the intersection set by crossing the hoops to form a common space. At that point I had grasped the concept of a set.

Science itself is as basic to human thought as grammar. The scientific method of observation, theorisation, experimentation and testing can be introduced to students from an early age. They will learn to think "empirically" and to test hypotheses and statements as far as possible by observation, testing and confrontation with reality.

It is a defect in all education systems, both classical and modern that something of a two culture problem develops where there is not an integration between socio-cultural knowledge and

scientific knowledge. However the scientific mode of thinking can interact and enrich socio-cultural knowledge: thus one can approach English literature essay using an analytic evidence-based approach: what evidence is there in a text for a particular theme? Too much of so-called "creative writing" and expression is just a flow of words and fine phrases but it need not be.

The end of this cross fertilisation would be a creative critical thinker. By the age of 16 the young person would be able to tackle university, and having learnt how to learn, would be able to undertake the learning of new subjects. Most importantly once again young people would become citizens, free and creative individuals rather than brainwashed masses.

Anthony Esolen in the Foreword to Stratford Caldecott's "Beauty in the Word: Rethinking the Foundations of Education" (Angelico Press, 2012), a book following the same lines of thought as Dorothy Sayers, says in an important passage that the reason for having such a holistic view of education is "that a human being is made not for the processing of data, but for wisdom; not for the utilitarian satisfaction of appetite, but for love; not for the domination of nature, but for participation in it; not for the autonomy of an isolated self, but for communion". (p.4)

At present modern education is drowning in political correctness and outright hatred of Western traditions. Relativism is embraced – the idea that there is no objective truth and all points of view (except, of course, those of white western men) are equally valid. As Caldecott notes in opening his treatise, the search for truth has been lost, and with this has gone the quest for freedom as well. But education should not be about mouthing ideologies or even remembering information: it should be about obtaining freedom of the mind from acquiring the ability to think and learn. From this ability comes wisdom, the ability to understand the world and live in harmony with it.

Reviving a classical education, enriched with modern science and technology is a big task, perhaps an impossible one for our present education system. Report after report has shown the poor quality of teachers and their lack of basic skills, especially in mathematics. Education should involve hard work and hard thinking, such as athletic ability requires intense training: no pain, no gain. This is not so for our modern crop of teachers who have had a soft path to roll upon. Nevertheless home schooling is an option. Laura Berquist, "Design Your Own Classical Curriculum" (Ignatius Press, 1994) is written as a guide to Catholic home education, and will be useful for anyone seeking an alternative to the oppressive "total Institutions" that modern schools have become. ■

SELENIUM NEEDED FOR EBOLA TREATMENT

by Graham H. Lyons B. Agric Sci., Master of Public Health, Ph.D.

University of Adelaide, South Australia. October 2014

Ebola Crisis: Orphans Shunned...

While the outbreak of the Ebola virus is reported to be waning, the BBC (16 January, 2015) reported "More than 10,000 children are thought to have been orphaned by Ebola in West Africa, with the majority in Sierra Leone. Many of these children fell ill themselves but survived, and now they are being shunned by communities terrified of catching the virus."

Micronutrient researcher Graham H. Lyons believes selenium (Se) is a key component of treatment for Ebola victims:

I am a micronutrient researcher who has specialised in selenium (Se) since 2001. I believe Se should be a key component of treatment for Ebola patients. The correct use of Se in treatment for Ebola as recommended below is likely to reduce significantly the mortality rate and should be implemented as a matter of urgency. The current, supportive-based care is not good enough, as evidenced by the case fatality of over 60%. Selenium must be included in order to give patients their best chance of recovery.

As an RNA virus, Ebola will be more active, and indeed will mutate to more virulent forms, in a Se-deficient host, e.g., a person with a plasma Se concentration less than around 75 micrograms/litre, a level common in Sub-Saharan Africa. As the disease progresses, in the absence of supplemented Se, the patient will become progressively more Se deficient, increasing oxidative stress/lipid peroxidation and compromising immunity (Beck et al, 1995; Beck et al, 2001; Taylor et al, 1994; Taylor et al, 1997). In addition, Se plays a role in the regulation of blood clotting via its effects on the thromboxane/prostacyclin ratio, and effects on the complement system. Selenium has an anti-clotting effect, whereas Se deficiency has a pro-clotting or thrombotic effect. Proliferation of Ebola virus is likely to impose an unprecedented Se demand on the host, potentially leading to severe lipid peroxidation and cell membrane destruction, and contributing to haemorrhagic symptoms (Ramanathan & Taylor, 1997). People who are infected with the virus are more likely to recover if they can maintain an adequate Se status.

A role for Se in Ebola treatment is also supported by the results of Chinese researchers, who treated patients in an outbreak of viral haemorrhagic fever with oral sodium selenite, obtaining dramatic reductions in mortality: after 9 days of Se dosage, the death rate fell from 100% (untreated) to 37% (treated) in the very severe cases, and from 22% to zero in the less severe cases (Hou, 1997)

Suggested Se forms: sodium selenite or sodium selenate.

Suggested dose (based on Hou et al 1997): 2 milligrams (i.e. 2000 micrograms) of selenate/selenite per day (which equates to 800 micrograms of actual Se). Preferably, administer the Se as a split dose, e.g., 400 micrograms in the morning and 400 mcg in the evening, otherwise one dose of 800 mcg/day. Take orally with a cup of water (it has no taste

or smell). Intravenous administration is likely to be even more effective (use same dose).

Starting with selenite/selenate powder and using successive dilutions it is easy to provide the required dose in 10-50 ml of water.

Suggested duration: 10 days (followed by a maintenance dose of 0.25-0.5 of the above dose for a further 20 days).

Safety: No adverse effects would be expected at this dose over this period, or indeed up to 30 days. Doctors in Melbourne dosed prostate cancer patients with over 15 milligrams selenate per day for 2 months with minimal side-effects (Corcoran et al, 2010).

Cost: using a cost of A\$200 for one kilogram of selenate or selenite (and I believe it can be bought cheaper than this if 5 kg+ amounts are purchased, e.g., from the Lewer Corporation, Sydney), an amount which would provide enough Se for 500,000 daily doses at the above recommended rate, the cost of treating one person for 10 days is around half a cent, i.e., negligible.

The main other treatment component which is likely to be effective against Ebola (especially when used in combination with Se) (Hou, 1997) is glycyrrhizin, a triterpenoid from liquorice with liver protective and antiviral, anti-inflammatory and anti-diabetic effects (Pu et al, 2013).

Glycyrrhizin had a stronger benefit than the antiviral drug ribavirin in an animal study and was 30 times less toxic and 30 times less expensive (Utsunomiya et al, 1997). Its anti-inflammatory effect is related to its ability to inhibit the enzyme 11 beta-hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase (Asl & Hosseinzadeh, 2008). The recommended antiviral dose: 600 mg/day, preferably IV as its bioavailability will be lower via oral. There appears to be synergism between glycyrrhizin and selenium: In a mouse model, combined selenite and glycyrrhizin inhibited immune complex-mediated tissue injury more effectively than either treatment alone (Hou, 1997).

Selenium treatment (ideally together with glycyrrhizin) is urgently needed in the current Ebola epidemic. At the recommended dose it is safe, effective, inexpensive and likely to reduce mortality by at least 50%.

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GOD PROMISED ANTISEMITISM TO THE ZIONISTS?

January 28, 2015 Introduction by Gilad Atzmon: The following is an interesting article by Aaron Dover, a British Jewish peace activist. It offers a critical point of view on Holocaust politics and the primacy of Jewish suffering. (<http://www.thezionion.com/>)

My personal reflections on the Campaign Against Antisemitism survey, by Aaron Dover

In order to say what some might consider the un-sayable I first need to deconstruct some mythical terms so let me just wade into some taboo territory as though I don't even see the no-entry signs.

What is anti-Semitism?

"Antisemitism" is a word and a political construct. It has been loaded with meaning and importance like no other word in the English language. This is no exaggeration, it is not meant as hyperbole, if you want evidence of this you need look no further than the UK National Curriculum. I had a look at the core curriculum for secondary school History, and have quoted a section of it below.

- challenges for Britain, Europe and the wider world 1901 to the present day

In addition to studying the Holocaust, this could include:

Examples (non-statutory)

- women's suffrage
- the First World War and the Peace Settlement
- the inter-war years: the Great Depression and the rise of dictators
- the Second World War and the wartime leadership of Winston Churchill
- the creation of the welfare state
- Indian independence and end of Empire
- social, cultural and technological change in post-war British society

Britain's place in the world since 1945

Now take a look closely at it. It does not say that the Holocaust is a mandatory subject, but it is implied, which is interesting in itself; the optional subjects follow and are clearly marked as such. The Holocaust is the only mandatory subject in this area. Not just any holocaust; there are so many to choose from by now; with new ones happening frequently; this is the Holocaust and is a proper noun with a capital.

The most important things being said here are those that are unsaid. What is unsaid? The Holocaust is the important holocaust i.e. the Jewish one. The Holocaust is exceptional. Not just important; nobody is here to argue with that; but exceptional. The other ideas suggested are important, and many, many ideas that would never appear on that list at all are also very important. The Holocaust is unique, and all students must know about it, and laws in place that criminalise Holocaust denial ensure not just that the topic is covered, but that it will be covered with the broadly accepted narrative. Every child educated in UK schools will be told about the Holocaust and they will be told the same things you were told.

Other holocausts might match it in terms of any particular respect; the brutality of the methods; the nature of the target population; the body count; the ideals of the perpetrators; their propaganda; their moral failings; and so on. But irrespective of any of those things, the proper noun Holocaust retains an exceptional a unique position in the prevailing historical narrative of all Western society.

As a result, a fully-educated Brit will certainly know that Hitler ran the Nazi party in Germany, unless he skipped class a great deal and his parents and friends never mentioned it, but may well be unaware that the British royal family are of German origin.

One of the implications of this is that every child in the UK will learn about Jew-hatred, termed anti-Semitism. No child will be left behind on this subject. They may not hear about other racial

prejudices, other holocausts, they may not know how they got what remains of a welfare state around them, but they will know about anti-Semitism and Holocaust. This then becomes the common currency in discussions as the high water mark of evil throughout history, and this is the explanation for the existence of Godwin's law (or Godwin's Rule of Nazi Analogies).

The reason people reach for Nazi analogies so frequently is a result of it being this global common currency of an ultimate evil narrative. People wouldn't write articles in the global press saying "so-and-so is behaving like Ceaucescu" the way they say so-and-so is behaving like Hitler. They know they would lose the majority of their readers on that remark, because no matter how nasty Ceaucescu is, he is just not as famous. Obviously there are countless other examples. This is quite simply because everyone knows about Hitler, and – crucially – everybody knows that everybody knows about Hitler. It's a given. The Nazis are the one-stop-shop for evilness yardsticks.

The Nazi Holocaust of the Jews (and other victims of that same holocaust) therefore enjoys the same educational status as, say, basic maths. In the same way you expect people to be able to do a bit of arithmetic, you can be confident that they have covered these educational subjects. They will know that $6 \times 7 = 42$ and also that the Jews have always suffered persecution throughout their history and were brutally slaughtered at the hands of a maniacal German tyrant who we stopped. They will not necessarily have heard of Zionism, nor have any awareness of the Nakba in Palestine that followed the war. Nor, for that matter, will they necessarily have any knowledge of any holocaust in Armenia for example.

So it follows that you can go and do a survey of people's views about attitude towards Jews, and that isn't weird to anyone, because of the Holocaust. They will know the various tropes and stereotypes associated with antisemitism, if they were listening in class, the hook noses, the greed, the blood libels and so on. Therefore if you ask someone in a survey or focus group do you think people perceive Jews to be more interested in money than other people? What will happen is that they will recognise that this view is a view that was held by antisemites, such as the Nazis. You will also know that these tropes have persisted over the ages, because you were taught that. These are ideas about Jews that wax and wane across time and society but never vanish; that is what we are taught. So to enquire as to whether these tropes that you may have first heard about during Holocaust lessons are present today and to be asked if you agree with them is a fair question, if we accept the previous fact.

Hitler was a maniac. But he was not a maniac for his antisemitic views, because these were things he found already lying around him in German society to repurpose to his ends. The antisemitism was there, it is there now, it is here, it is all around us, always, like a field. The field is stronger and weaker in places, but nowhere in space and time is it absent.

A survey therefore is simply a way to measure the field strength at a specific location and time. The questions will reflect the set of tropes that we understand to comprise antisemitism. We don't ask, in a survey; what do you think about Jews? Open questions are not suited to surveys. So instead we must create a

(Continued on page 5)

survey based on a set of preconceptions of how to measure the antisemitism field. We ask people about their own feelings in respect of the attitudes we suspect they may hold. This method is fundamentally flawed if we seek an objective answer, because the questions are leading.

If I ask; do you think Jews are more interested in money than most people? I might also ask; do you think Jews are more interested in motorsports than most people? But I do not ask the latter. Of course, you can only ask a limited number of questions so you have to stay focused; and that means discarding anything which could be used as a control for any other questions you are asking. What if we asked that second question and 99% of people responded positively? Thinking "bloody Jews, all into bloody motorsports" would not be the kind of antisemitism we are probing for. It does not fit our preconceived opinion-fingerprint of an antisemite. That's not to say a dedicated Hasbarist wouldn't try to make capital of such a statement, but it isn't one of the statements that sets off a buzzer.

What are these tropes? The stereotyped view of a Jew by an antisemite, we learn, is made up from a number of parts. The hook nose. The evil, the clasped hands, the leering grin, the rubbing of hands in glee at either massive financial gain or the death of Christian babies. That's your antisemitic stereotype. There's plenty more to it than that, it extends from this to encompass more. The blood libels, the Jew hungry for the blood of Christians; that's a blood libel.

What do each of these tropes provide to the ever-eager antisemite hunters? A wealth of opportunity for allegations.

What is antisemitism? Antisemitism poses a very real and very present danger in the UK and Europe, and around the world. On that I will agree with CAAS and their ilk. That is by now one of the most politically powerful ilks in human history. *That ilk has made it on the one hand compulsory to learn the Holocaust; but on the other hand has made it criminal to deny or belittle the Holocaust. It has achieved this dual success in many of the developed nations.*

Antisemitism is a danger not to the purported victims of said antisemitism, but to the actual victims; those accused of it. Everyone lives in the antisemitism minefield. It is not necessary for me to spell out the consequences for anyone who falls foul of the various bodies of antisemite-hunters that span the globe. Socially, professionally, step on an antisemitism mine, and you're toast. You could be anyone; you can be the President of the United States, you are in the same minefield. You can even be a Jew, in which case the antisemite-hunter reaches into the bag for a self-hater label instead, it's not a great substitute but it's all they've got to work with. I'm not going to go into the self-hating Jew mythology here, there are more worthwhile subjects to address.

How do we fight antisemitism? In terms of containing antisemitic sentiment, we gag people and ban things from being said, and we keep everyone in fear of stepping on an antisemitism mine by making examples of public figures on a frequent basis. If people keep seeing careers destroyed by a misplaced remark on Gaza or similar, others will not become too emboldened, even if they harbour such antisemitic thoughts, to vocalise them.

To fight antisemitism, do we also stop the large scale killing of Jews by a monstrous machine of fascist brutality? No. Why? Because we did that decades ago.

How do we fight Islamophobia? In terms of containing Islamophobic sentiment, not very well at all, that's how. We could try to restrain the media from trying to link individual incidents to all Muslims, through their overt and covert propaganda. But we don't.

To fight islamophobia, do we stop the large scale killing of Muslims by a monstrous machine of fascist brutality? No. Why? Because we are the machine. The Western killing machine has run on a fuel of islamophobic sentiment for over a century.

But the media are focused more on the rise of antisemitism, or a perception of a rise. A survey of this kind signals simply by the fact that it is done, let alone the results, that antisemitism is something we should fear. The minefield is something we should fear.

But the fear of antisemitism is unrelated to incidents of antisemitism. The fear-to-incident ratio has never been higher; the perception of antisemitism and fear of that antisemitism has been boosted as hard as possible by the scaremongers of CAAS. They don't even care if their survey methodology is a joke. If they send out their survey so literally anyone can fill it in and question 1 is "are you Jewish" and question 2 is "are you British" and you fill it in from any web browser... and take the answers in good faith... allowing literally anyone to contribute to the results... well then you cannot be taking the methodology very seriously. But CAAS doesn't need to, because they know with their network they can churn out the intended results infographic and get the whole world media singing their song. It's a song of victimhood that's had so many re-hearings and re-releases that even Bob Geldof would blush.

It's a song about the poor Jews feeling scared. Not being actually murdered or gassed or blown to pieces but worrying that they might at some point. Whereas the Muslims victimhood song doesn't even chart, when they are being massacred day in day out by our stormtroopers and hired guns.

The world is tired of the Jewish victimhood song, and tired of this victimhood being used as a weapon, as a means to bully people into observing Zionist taboos.

Antisemitism is a terrorist weapon. It is used to terrify the world into observing Zionist taboos through fear of losing social standing, being labeled a racist, being fired, exiled, diminished, hounded. This terror is being escalated by CAAS and all the other antisemite-hunters.

I'm Jewish; It takes Jewish privilege to be able to say this. It should not. But to actually question the dogma around antisemitism itself, is one of the ultimate taboos. It's at the very foundations of the Zionist enterprise.

I don't think there is any special exceptional Jew-hatred, a special antisemitism field existing all around us throughout time. People are really very pissed off with Israel though.

That's why the public perception of antisemitism has to be cranked up now, because the gagging needs to be cranked up, because people are waking up smelling the bullshit and calling out Israel for its actions. Now that is the kind of antisemitism emergency that calls for a total propaganda war. Expect more assaults on free speech, the mines in the minefield are going to be increasingly sensitive. Expect increased casualties of public figures. Expect people to become more reticent about saying stuff; expect media and social media to clamp down on any anti-Israel sentiment.

Because otherwise, you know at this rate, we European Jews will all going to the gas soon. Yawn. ■

Read more here... <http://uprootedpalestinians.blogspot.com.au/2015/01/god-promised-antisemitism-to-zionists.html>

WHAT THE PEOPLE OF THE AMAZON KNOW THAT YOU DON'T

From an unedited Tedtalks DVD by Mark Plotkin, November 2014

Now, I'm an ethnobotanist. That's a scientist who works in the rainforest to document how people use local plants. I've been doing this for a long time, and I want to tell you, these people know these forests and these medicinal treasures better than we do and better than we ever will. But also, these cultures, these indigenous cultures, are disappearing much faster than the forests themselves. And the greatest and most endangered species in the Amazon Rainforest is not the jaguar, it's not the harpy eagle, it's the isolated and uncontacted tribes.

Now four years ago, I injured my foot in a climbing accident and I went to the doctor. She gave me heat, she gave me cold, aspirin, narcotic painkillers, anti-inflammatories, cortisone shots. It didn't work. Several months later, I was in the northeast Amazon, walked into a village, and the shaman said, "You're limping." And I'll never forget this as long as I live. He looked me in the face and he said, "Take off your shoe and give me your machete." He walked over to a palm tree and carved off a fern, threw it in the fire, applied it to my foot, threw it in a pot of water, and had me drink the tea.

The pain disappeared for seven months. When it came back, I went to see the shaman again. He gave me the same treatment, and I've been cured for three years now. Who would you rather be treated by?

Now, make no mistake - Western medicine is the most successful system of healing ever devised, but there's plenty of holes in it. Where's the cure for breast cancer? Where's the cure for schizophrenia? Where's the cure for acid reflux? Where's the cure for insomnia? The fact is that these people can sometimes, sometimes, sometimes cure things we cannot. Here you see a medicine man in the northeast Amazon treating leishmaniasis, a really nasty protozoal disease that afflicts 12 million people around the world. Western treatment are injections of antimony. They're painful, they're expensive, and they're probably not good for your heart; it's a heavy metal. This man cures it with three plants from the Amazon Rainforest.

This is the magic frog. My colleague, the late great Loren McIntyre, discoverer of the source lake of the Amazon, Laguna McIntyre in the Peruvian Andes, was lost on the Peru-Brazil border about 30 years ago. He was rescued by a group of isolated Indians called the Matsés. They beckoned for him to follow them into the forest, which he did. There, they took out palm leaf baskets. There, they took out these green monkey frogs - these are big suckers, they're like this - and they began licking them. It turns out, they're highly hallucinogenic. McIntyre wrote about this and it was read by the editor of High Times magazine. You see that ethnobotanists have friends in all sorts of strange cultures.

This guy decided he would go down to the Amazon and give it a whirl, or give it a lick, and he did, and he wrote, "My blood pressure went through the roof, I lost full control of my bodily functions, I passed out in a heap, I woke up in a hammock six hours later, felt like God for two days." An Italian chemist read this and said, "I'm not really interested in the theological aspects of the green monkey frog. What's this about the change in blood pressure?" Now, this is an Italian chemist who's working on a new treatment for high blood pressure based on peptides in the skin of the green monkey frog, and other scientists are looking at a cure for drug-resistant Staph aureus. How ironic if these isolated Indians and their magic frog prove to be one of the cures.

Here's an ayahuasca shaman in the northwest Amazon, in the middle of a yage ceremony. I took him to Los Angeles to meet a

foundation officer looking for support for monies to protect their culture. This fellow looked at the medicine man, and he said, "You didn't go to medical school, did you?" The shaman said, "No, I did not." He said, "Well, then what can you know about healing?" The shaman looked at him and he said, "You know what? If you have an infection, go to a doctor. But many human afflictions are diseases of the heart, the mind and the spirit. Western medicine can't touch those. I cure them."

But all is not rosy in learning from nature about new medicines. This is a viper from Brazil, the venom of which was studied at the Universidade de São Paulo here. It was later developed into ACE inhibitors. This is a frontline treatment for hypertension. Hypertension causes over 10 percent of all deaths on the planet every day. This is a \$4 billion industry based on venom from a Brazilian snake, and the Brazilians did not get a nickel. This is not an acceptable way of doing business.

The rainforest has been called the greatest expression of life on Earth. There's a saying in Suriname that I dearly love: "The rainforests hold answers to questions we have yet to ask."

But as you all know, it's rapidly disappearing. Here in Brazil, in the Amazon, around the world. I took this picture from a small plane flying over the eastern border of the Xingu indigenous reserve in the state of Mato Grosso to the northwest of here. The top half of the picture, you see where the Indians live. The line through the middle is the eastern border of the reserve. Top half Indians, bottom half white guys. Top half wonder drugs, bottom half just a bunch of skinny-ass cows. Top half carbon sequestered in the forest where it belongs, bottom half carbon in the atmosphere where it's driving climate change. In fact, the number two cause of carbon being released into the atmosphere is forest destruction.

But in talking about destruction, it's important to keep in mind that the Amazon is the mightiest landscape of all. It's a place of beauty and wonder. The biggest anteater in the world lives in the rain forest, tips the scale at 90 pounds. The goliath bird-eating spider is the world's largest spider. It's found in the Amazon as well. The harpy eagle wingspan is over seven feet. And the black cayman — these monsters can tip the scale at over half a ton. They're known to be man-eaters. The anaconda, the largest snake, the capybara, the largest rodent. A specimen from here in Brazil tipped the scale at 201 pounds.

Let's visit where these creatures live, the northeast Amazon, home to the Akuriyo tribe. Uncontacted peoples hold a mystical and iconic role in our imagination. These are the people who know nature best. These are the people who truly live in total harmony with nature. By our standards, some would dismiss these people as primitive. "They don't know how to make fire, or they didn't when they were first contacted." But they know the forest far better than we do. The Akuriyos have 35 words for honey, and other Indians look up to them as being the true masters of the emerald realm. Here you see the face of my friend Pohnay. When I was a teenager rocking out to the Rolling Stones in my hometown of New Orleans, Pohnay was a forest nomad roaming the jungles of the northeast Amazon in a small band, looking for game, looking for medicinal plants, looking for a wife, in other small nomadic bands. But it's people like these that know things that we don't, and they have lots of lessons to teach us.

However, if you go into most of the forests of the Amazon, there are no indigenous peoples. This is what you find: rock carvings which indigenous peoples, uncontacted peoples, used to sharpen

(Continued on page 7)

the edge of the stone axe. These cultures that once danced, made love, sang to the gods, worshipped the forest, all that's left is an imprint in stone, as you see here.

Let's move to the western Amazon, which is really the epicenter of isolated peoples. Each of these dots represents a small, uncontacted tribe, and the big reveal today is we believe there are 14 or 15 isolated groups in the Colombian Amazon alone.

Why are these people isolated? They know we exist, they know there's an outside world. This is a form of resistance. They have chosen to remain isolated, and I think it is their human right to remain so. Why are these the tribes that hide from man? Here's why. Obviously, some of this was set off in 1492. But at the turn of the last century was the rubber trade. The demand for natural rubber, which came from the Amazon, set off the botanical equivalent of a gold rush. Rubber for bicycle tires, rubber for automobile tires, rubber for zeppelins. It was a mad race to get that rubber, and the man on the left, Julio Arana, is one of the true thugs of the story. His people, his company, and other companies like them killed, massacred, tortured, butchered Indians like the Witotos you see on the right hand side of the slide.

Even today, when people come out of the forest, the story seldom has a happy ending. These are Nukaks. They were contacted in the '80s. Within a year, everybody over 40 was dead. And remember, these are preliterate societies. The elders are the libraries. Every time a shaman dies, it's as if a library has burned down. They have been forced off their lands. The drug traffickers have taken over the Nukak lands, and the Nukaks live as beggars in public parks in eastern Colombia.

From the Nukak lands, I want to take you to the southwest, to the most spectacular landscape in the world: Chiribiquete National Park.



Chiribiquete National Park.

It was surrounded by three isolated tribes and thanks to the Colombian government and Colombian colleagues, it has now expanded. It's bigger than the state of Maryland. It is a treasure

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trove of botanical diversity. It was first explored botanically in 1943 by my mentor, Richard Schultes, seen here atop the Bell Mountain, the sacred mountains of the Karijonas. And let me show you what it looks like today. Flying over Chiribiquete, realize that these lost world mountains are still lost. No scientist has been atop them. In fact, nobody has been atop the Bell Mountain since Schultes in '43. And we'll end up here with the Bell Mountain just to the east of the picture. Let me show you what it looks like today.

Not only is this a treasure trove of botanical diversity, not only is it home to three isolated tribes, but it's the greatest treasure trove of pre-Colombian art in the world: over 200,000 paintings. The Dutch scientist Thomas van der Hammen described this as the Sistine Chapel of the Amazon Rainforest.

But move from Chiribiquete down to the southeast, again in the Colombian Amazon. Remember, the Colombian Amazon is bigger than New England. The Amazon's a big forest, and Brazil's got a big part of it, but not all of it. Moving down to these two national parks, Cahuinari and Puré in the Colombian Amazon - that's the Brazilian border to the right - it's home to several groups of isolated and uncontacted peoples. To the trained eye, you can look at the roofs of these malocas, these longhouses, and see that there's cultural diversity. These are, in fact, different tribes. As isolated as these areas are, let me show you how the outside world is crowding in. Here we see trade and transport increased in Putumayo. With the diminishment of the Civil War in Colombia, the outside world is showing up. To the north, we have illegal gold mining, also from the east, from Brazil. There's increased hunting and fishing for commercial purposes. We see illegal logging coming from the south, and drug runners are trying to move through the park and get into Brazil...

What's to be done? Introduce technology to the contacted tribes, not the uncontacted tribes, in a culturally sensitive way. This is the perfect marriage of ancient shamanic wisdom and 21st century technology. We've done this now with over 30 tribes, mapped, managed and increased protection of over 70 million acres of ancestral rainforest. So this allows the Indians to take control of their environmental and cultural destiny. They also then set up guard houses to keep outsiders out. These are Indians, trained as indigenous park rangers, patrolling the borders and keeping the outside world at bay...

But let me conclude by saying, this work can be spiritually rewarding, but it's difficult and it can be dangerous. Two colleagues of mine passed away recently in the crash of a small plane. They were serving the forest to protect those uncontacted tribes. So the question is, in conclusion, is what the future holds. These are the Uray people in Brazil. What does the future hold for them, and what does the future hold for us? Let's think differently. Let's make a better world. If the climate's going to change, let's have a climate that changes for the better rather than the worse. Let's live on a planet full of luxuriant vegetation, in which isolated peoples can remain in isolation, can maintain that mystery and that knowledge if they so choose. Let's live in a world where the shamans live in these forests and heal themselves and us with their mystical plants and their sacred frogs. ■

Organic farming can feed the world if done right, scientists claim

Organic farming can feed the world if done right, scientists claim. Major new study suggests chemical fertilizers are not so vital.

TOM BAWDEN Wednesday 10 December 2014



Organic farming is much more productive than previously thought, according to a new analysis of agricultural studies that challenges the conventional “biased” view that pesticide-free agriculture cannot feed the world.

The study says that organic yields were only 19.2 per cent lower, on average, than those from conventional crops and that this gap could be reduced to just eight per cent if the pesticide-free crops were rotated more frequently.

Furthermore, in some crops - especially leguminous plants such as beans, peas and lentils - there were no significant differences in yields, the researchers from the University of California, Berkeley found.

“In terms of comparing productivity among the two techniques, this paper sets the record straight on the comparison between organic and conventional agriculture,” said Claire Kremen, professor of environmental science, policy and management at Berkeley.

The study comes amid rising concerns that intense farming practices are damaging the environment, with the widespread use of nerve agent pesticides frequently blamed for declining populations of bees and other pollinators. Meanwhile, fertilisers are producing smaller and smaller increases in yields because they are now so effective they are difficult to improve upon.

“With global food needs predicted to greatly increase in the next 50 years, it’s critical to look more closely at organic farming because, aside from the environmental impacts of industrial agriculture, the ability of synthetic fertilizers to increase crop yields has been declining,” said Prof Kremen.

The researchers based their findings on a meta-analysis of 115 studies – a dataset three times greater than any previous such paper – comparing organic and conventional agriculture.

In addition to finding a smaller – 19.2 per cent – productivity difference between the two than previously calculated, the researchers also found that optimising organic productivity through different techniques could further reduce the gap.

Multi-cropping, or growing several crops together on the same field, would cut the yield difference to nine per cent, with crop rotation reducing the gap to eight per cent.

The study, published in the journal *Royal Society B*, suggested that the gaps could be even smaller than they have calculated

because existing studies were “often biased in favour of conventional agriculture”.

“Our study suggests that through appropriate investment in agroecological research to improve organic management and in breeding cultivars for organic farming systems, the yield gap could be reduced or even eliminated for some crops or regions,” said the study’s lead author, Lauren Ponisio, a graduate student in environmental science, policy and management.

The researchers suggest that organic farming can be a very competitive alternative to industrial agriculture when it comes to food production.

“It’s important to remember that our current agricultural system produces far more food than is needed to provide for everyone on the planet,” said Prof Kremen.

“Eradicating world hunger requires increasing the access to food, not simply the production. Also, increasing the proportion of agriculture that uses sustainable, organic methods of farming is not a choice, it’s a necessity. We simply can’t continue to produce food far into the future without taking care of our soils, water and biodiversity,” she added. ■

Read more here....

<http://www.independent.co.uk/environment/organic-farming-can-feed-the-world-if-done-right-scientists-claim-9913651.html>

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- To oppose all policies eroding national sovereignty, and to promote a closer relationship between the peoples of the Crown Commonwealth and those of the United States of America, who share a common heritage.