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ARE CHILDREN DOGS WITHOUT FUR?

[Rachel's summary: The super-rich are using their tax breaks to buy their dogs bottled water, organically-grown beef, fake-mink beds, braces for their teeth, and Prozac for the nerves while "Increasing numbers of young American children are showing signs of serious malnourishment, fueled by a greater prevalence of hunger in the United States..."]

By Peter Montague

Americans think of themselves as a generous and caring people, and when it comes to the family pet there's no doubt that it's true. Nearly 2/3rds (69 million{1}) of all families own a pet (90 million} cats and 77 million dogs), and we give them \$35.9 billion{3} worth of pet supplies and services each year. Pets in turn soothe us, console us, amuse us, teach us responsibility, compassion and trust, connect us to the non-human world, and in some cases even prolong the lives of their elderly owners. No doubt, our pets benefit us greatly and we owe them a lot.

Among the super-well-off, however, many pets now enjoy a life as rich with indulgences and activities as any suburban child's. "Pets provide unconditional love," says Sherril Stone{4}, an expert in animal-human relations. "In lots of households, they're like surrogate children," she says.

Particularly in upper-crust locales -- like Westchester County, N.Y., Fairfield County, Connecticut, parts of northern California, the Hamptons on Long Island, and parts of the Jersey shore -- pets are benefiting from the hard-earned tax breaks that their owners have received again and again from the Bush administration and our gold-plated K-Street Congress.

As the New York Times reported in April{5} last year, "Beyond standard offerings like dog parks and running areas, there are also baby sitters, day-care and play groups available to enhance the life of the Westchester canine. High-end clothing, special food and catered parties are not uncommon. Medical care rivals what is available for humans, in both variety and cost."

A dog's birthday cake{6} can be had for \$79.00 (the dog gets a cake, a treat bag, a hat and a birthday bandanna); for \$770 you receive similar get-ups for your dog and 40 canine guests. A fake mink dog bed sells for \$199.

E&E Hallstrom Haute Couture{7} will make your dog a unique dress, coat, bathrobe or Halloween costume by hand, custom-fitted for \$90 to \$160. Presently they are dry-clean only, but the firm is working on a wash-and-wear line, according to Eva Hallstrom, who runs the company with her sister. Unlike dogs, most cats refuse to keep their clothes on, but Ms. Hallstrom says a cat looks elegant "with a simple strand of pearls."

Amanda Jones{8} has made a name for herself as a pet photographer. For \$850 she will reveal your dog's inner soul in a unique portrait.

There are now pet psychics, pet chiropractors and pet psychiatrists. You can now get your cat psychoanalyzed for \$450 per session{9}.

"They're not just pets anymore," says LuAnn Gevaza{10}, 49, who left her 23-year job with Goldman Sachs for a pet boutique and gift shop in Point Pleasant Beach, N.J. "They're fulfilling psychological needs in people, and therefore becoming more important in people's lives. People referring to themselves as their pet's "mommy" or "daddy" increased to 83% in 2003{11}, compared to 55% in 1955. Signs commonly sold in pet stores say "Dogs are just children with fur."

Taking care of our furry children has become a major business. In many high-end communities, there are specialized services for pets -- pet baby sitters (national average rate: \$28.72/hour{12}), pet day care, pet play groups and pet play dates. In a wealthy state like Connecticut or New Jersey, \$100,000/year{13} is said to be within reach for an enterprising dog walker.

Then there are the high-end pet supplies -- leather collars imported from Switzerland{14} (\$60 to \$100 each), "Char-dog-nay" wine-flavored doggie treats at \$9.95 a bag, orthopedic beds with NASA-grade foam, microwavable hot water bottles (no wires to chew on), and step ladders to help older pets get up onto the furniture.

Pet supplies are now one of the fastest-growing businesses{15} in the U.S. Petco has 756 stores and 17,000 employees and opened 90 new stores in 2005. Its competitor, Petsmart, has 750 stores, and opened about 80 new ones in 2005. Pet owners in the U.S. spent \$8.4 billion in 2005 on pet supplies (not including food). During 2005, more than 465 new pet products{16} hit the market worldwide, up from 291 the year before -- shampoos, sunburn cream for dog's noses and bellies, and scented after-bath spritzes, so when your pooch crawls in bed with you, he or she will smell like a rose instead of a dog.

In 2002, the New York Times reported{17} that medical care for pets has advanced dramatically: "Expensive medical treatments that five years ago would have been reserved almost exclusively for the human species -- CT ["cat"] scans, ultrasound, M.R.I.s and radiation therapy -- are now all performed on pets. Pharmaceutical giants like Pfizer and Bayer are marketing an ever wider selection of drugs for geriatric cats and dogs, like Rimadyl for arthritis and Anipryl for a newly recognized condition, cognitive dysfunction syndrome, or canine senility."

Many pets are now routinely given Prozac, Xanax and Anafranil to improve their dispositions and ward off depression.

Since 2002 the medical trend has, if anything, accelerated. Pacemakers and organ transplants are now available for aging pets. Pet-shop bulletin boards bristle with advertisements offering massages and acupuncture. A masseuse will come to your home and ease your pet's aches and pains for \$70 to \$100 per hour.

As more and more pets (like their owners) are getting cancer, surgery followed by chemotherapy{18} has entered the mainstream of veterinary medicine. The surgery itself costs anywhere from \$6,500 to \$7,500 and follow-up chemotherapy ranges from \$5,000 to \$10,000.

Veterinarians are now offering Credit Care, a kind of instant credit card, in order to prevent what is called "financial euthanasia." In a survey taken earlier this year by the American Animal Hospital Association, 47% of pet owners{19} said they would spend any amount of money to keep a pet alive. "I can't imagine life without a pet," says Maggie Rapp{20}, a decorative painter from Lawrenceville, N.J. "Especially now, when people are so unsure about their careers, and money, and the way this country is going. Then you come home at night and there's this animal that just wants you," she explains.

In the late 1980s, during the first Bush Presidency, dentistry for animals was the fastest-growing branch of veterinary medicine. "In a 1988 survey, 5.2 percent of pet owners said their pets had had dental work on their most recent visit to the vet. That is more than twice as many as in 1982, according to a mail survey with 30,000 respondents done by the American

Veterinary Medical Association," the New York Times reported in 1990{21}.

Pets with crooked teeth can now get them straightened with braces. Orthodontia for pets is no longer very unusual. T. Keith Grove, a dentist for humans who moonlights at a veterinary office in Vero Beach, Fla. told the New York Times in 1990, "I do two or three cases of orthodontia a week" on dogs.

In the U.S. in 2001, pet owners spent \$19 billion{22} on pet medical care.

As you might expect, pet nourishment is big business, too. Bottled water{23} for pets is booming. At \$1.49 per liter (\$2.29 for the 2-liter bottle), your 60-pound dog can drink \$400 worth of water in a year's time.

The latest trend in pet food is "holistic raw feeding{24}" -- raw meat and vegetables. Holistic diets for pets include all-organically-grown free-range chickens and additive-free beef (no steroids or antibiotics) and organic vegetables. A Golden Retriever or Labrador will eat three pounds of meat per day.

In the U.S., humans spend \$14.2 billion{25} per year on pet food. As a result, somewhere between 25% and 40% of all pets in the U.S. are obese{26} (right in line with the 30% of U.S. adults who are obese). As a result, there's a new pet product on the shelves: weight-loss supplements{27}, which work no better for pets than they do for humans.

"We live in a culture, in which we take better care of our animals than each other," says Lynne Tillman{28}, an author who sometimes writes about pets.

Indeed.

In June, 2005{29}, Agence France Presse (AFP) reported that, "Increasing numbers of young American children are showing signs of serious malnourishment, fueled by a greater prevalence of hunger in the United States, while, paradoxically, two-thirds of the US population is either overweight or obese."

AFP went on, "In 2003, 11.2 percent of families in the United States experienced hunger, compared with 10.1 percent in 1999, according to most recent available data."

In 2002, the National Association of County and City Health Officials reported that approximately one out of every six children in the U.S. (nearly 12 million children) are living in poverty{30}, including 30% of African-American children, 28% of Hispanic children and 43% of Native American children.

Chronic ailments are a serious problem among children in the U.S. One in every three American families has a child{31} with a learning disability or mental illness.

The New York Times{32} reported recently that an epidemic of diabetes is sweeping through children in the U.S. According to the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, one in every three 5-year-olds in the U.S. can now expect to get diabetes as they grow older. Among Hispanics the trend is worse: one in two can expect to get diabetes.

The Times explained, "Diabetes has no cure. It is progressive and often fatal, and while the patient lives, the welter of medical complications it sets off can attack every major organ. As many war veterans lost lower limbs last year to the disease as American soldiers did to combat injuries in the entire Vietnam War. Diabetes is the principal reason adults go blind."

As the Philadelphia Inquirer{33} editorialized Dec. 10, 2005. "Over the last 20 years, marketing poor quality foods and beverages to children has spiked dramatically. Children eagerly consume what they see advertised. Many products are high in added sugar, fat, salt and low in essential nutrients. Because childhood food preferences often last a lifetime, poor diet is contributing to health problems, such as diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease, at increasingly younger ages."

Depression{34} is showing up earlier in children, according to the National Institute of Mental Health. It reports that as many as 2.5 percent of children up to age 12 and 8.3 percent of adolescents ages 13-21 suffer from depression, an illness of the brain.

The number of children and adolescents taking psychiatric drugs more than doubled from 1987 to 1996{35}.

The BBC reported{36} in late 2004 that childhood cancers throughout the industrialized world have been steadily increasing for 30 years.

The International Agency for Research on Cancer, based in France, examined data from 19 European countries. It found cancer rates increased by around 1% a year for children, and 1.5% a year for adolescents between the 1970s and 1990s. Some -- but not all -- of the rise might be explained by better diagnosis of the disease, and better record keeping.

The increases were recorded for virtually all tumour types in children.

In adolescents the major changes were seen for:

Carcinomas that develop in tissues covering or lining organs of the body, such as the skin, the uterus, the lung, or the breast.

Lymphomas that develop in the lymphatic system, such as Hodgkins disease.

Soft tissue sarcomas that begin in the muscle, fat, fibrous tissue, blood vessels, or other supporting tissue of the body.

Germ-cell cancers that develop in the testicles or ovaries.

Tumours of the central nervous system.

Reuters{37} reported in July, 2005, that, "Unborn U.S. babies are soaking in a stew of chemicals, including mercury, gasoline byproducts and pesticides, according to a report to be released on Thursday.

"The report{38} by the Environmental Working Group is based on tests of 10 samples of umbilical cord blood taken by the American Red Cross. They found an average of 287 contaminants in the blood, including mercury, fire retardants, pesticides and the Teflon chemical PFOA."

"If ever we had proof that our nation's pollution laws aren't working, it's reading the list of industrial chemicals in the bodies of babies who have not yet lived outside the womb," said U.S. Representative Louise Slaughter (D-N.Y.).

Cord blood contains chemicals passed from the mother into the baby through the placenta.

"Of the 287 chemicals we detected in umbilical cord blood, we know that 180 cause cancer in humans or animals, 217 are toxic to the brain and nervous system, and 208 cause birth defects or abnormal development in animal tests," the report said.

Six months after this stunning report{39} was released, the Bush administration announced that it was abolishing{40} the Office of Children's Health Protection within U.S. EPA (Environmental Protection Agency).

Established in 1997, the Office of Children's Health Protection is supposed to ensure that the special vulnerability of children is safeguarded in environmental standard-setting, enforcement and prevention efforts. The EPA reorganization moved the functions of the Office of Children's Health protection into the office of Environmental Education.

An organization that represents government workers, Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER) explained in blunt terms the meaning of the E.P.A. reorganization:

"[EPA administrator] Stephen Johnson is making it clear that he does not want to hear another peep out of child health advocates within his agency," said Jeffrey Ruch, executive director of PEER, noting that putting child health under environmental education represents a serious de-emphasis. "This move is only slightly better than putting children's health in the janitor's closet, given the importance EPA assigns to environmental education."

In sum, time and again in recent years we have cut taxes for the rich, which in turn has forced cuts in child-welfare programs of all kinds. Meanwhile the rich are now spending their tax-cut windfalls on unnecessary indulgences for their

cats and dogs. Maybe we should start promoting our children as "dogs without fur" -- maybe then the super- rich would be willing to pay their fair share to help the nation's most vulnerable citizens -- our children -- get a minimally decent start in life.

- {1} http://www.precaution.org/lib/06/creatures_bask_in_high-end_comforts.051127.htm
- {2} http://www.precaution.org/lib/06/pet_supply_business_booming.051116.htm
- {3} http://www.precaution.org/lib/06/creatures_bask_in_high-end_comforts.051127.htm
- {4} http://www.precaution.org/lib/06/doggie_spa_products.051208.htm
- {5} http://www.precaution.org/lib/06/medical_care_for_pets.050403.htm
- {6} http://www.precaution.org/lib/06/medical_care_for_pets.050403.htm
- {7} http://www.precaution.org/lib/06/medical_care_for_pets.050403.htm
- {8} http://www.precaution.org/lib/06/pet_portraiture.051113.htm
- {9} http://www.precaution.org/lib/06/the_cat_on_the_couch.040912.htm
- {10} http://www.precaution.org/lib/06/creatures_bask_in_high-end_comforts.051127.htm
- {11} http://www.precaution.org/lib/06/creatures_bask_in_high-end_comforts.051127.htm
- {12} http://www.precaution.org/lib/06/when_owners_vacation.050731.htm
- {13} http://www.precaution.org/lib/06/when_owners_vacation.050731.htm
- {14} http://www.precaution.org/lib/06/pet_supply_business_booming.051116.htm
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- {20} http://www.precaution.org/lib/06/creatures_bask_in_high-end_comforts.051127.htm
- {21} http://www.precaution.org/lib/06/doggy_orthodontia.900322.htm

- {22} http://www.precaution.org/lib/06/what_we_pay_for_pets_we_love.051030.htm
- {23} http://www.precaution.org/lib/06/bottled_water_for_pets.050311.htm
- {24} http://www.precaution.org/lib/06/raw_meat_for_dogs.030317.htm
- {25} http://www.precaution.org/lib/06/doggie_spa_products.051208.htm
- {26} http://www.precaution.org/lib/06/doggie_spa_products.051208.htm
- {27} http://www.precaution.org/lib/06/doggie_spa_products.051208.htm
- {28} http://www.precaution.org/lib/06/the_cat_on_the_couch.040912.htm
- {29} <http://www.commondreams.org/headlines05/0612-05.htm>
- {30} http://www.precaution.org/lib/06/naccho_resolution_on_childrens_health.20021110.htm
- {31} http://www.precaution.org/lib/06/one-third_of_children_have_learning_disorders.20031218.htm
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- {35} http://www.precaution.org/lib/06/children_taking_psych_drugs_doubles.nas.20030117.htm
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- {38} <http://www.ewg.org/reports/bodyburden2/>
- {39} <http://www.ewg.org/reports/bodyburden2/>
- {40} http://www.precaution.org/lib/06/epa_axes_child_health_office.051109.htm

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URL: <http://www.precaution.org/lib/06/foreman.051215.htm>

From: The Sun, Dec. 15, 2005

REDNECK FOR WILDERNESS

[Rachel's summary: The Sun is one of our favorite magazines, partly because it contains so much good writing and partly because it offers such thought-provoking interviews. This interview with Dave Foreman, cofounder of Earth First!, should cause all of us to question how we've been doing our work, and what it means to be a "conservative." You can subscribe to The Sun {here}.]

Earth First! Cofounder Dave Foreman on Being a True Conservative

By Jeremy Lloyd

Before meeting Dave Foreman at his home in Albuquerque, New Mexico, I spent three days backpacking in the Pecos Wilderness Area, a two-hundred-thousand-acre tract granted the highest level of federal protection. Along the way I experienced frost, sunburn, hail, rain, dehydration, and swollen streams -- and I loved every minute of it. Clearly, like many other Americans, I have what Foreman calls the "wilderness gene."

It's thanks to the work of conservationists like Foreman, whom Audubon magazine named one of the hundred Champions of Conservation of the Twentieth Century, that places like the Pecos received protection through the 1964 Wilderness Act. Foreman served for many years as Southwest regional representative of the Wilderness Society, which received widespread bipartisan support, as had the conservation movement as a whole since its founding a century before. Men, in the 1980s, President Ronald Reagan appointed as secretary of the interior the notorious antienvironmentalist James G. Watt, who once remarked that our responsibility to the land is to "occupy" it until Jesus returns. After that, Republicans began to dismiss concerns about the environment as impediments to economic growth.

As the environmental movement matured, grass-roots organizing was replaced by more professional and career-minded staffers -- people who hardly even visited the places they were trying to save. Foreman could only watch helplessly as millions of acres in his native West -- areas that were prime candidates for federal wilderness designation -- were denied protection by the government and instead marked as fair game for the timber industry. Wilderness lovers had run out of options. The nonviolence of the civil-rights era was still fresh in the nation's memory, but the more recent writings of Edward Abbey -- particularly his novel *The Monkeywrench Gang* -- lent new appeal to the use of violence in defense of nature. One of many activists who took Abbey's message to heart, Foreman cofounded the radical environmental-protection group Earth First!

In its original manifestation, Earth First! was by no means the countercultural organization it eventually became. Overtly patriotic and steeped in cowboy mythology, it announced its goal of returning "vigor, joy, and enthusiasm to the tired, unimaginative environmental movement." Its members wanted to dream big, to slow down the machine of industrial society, and, as Susan Zakin puts it in her book *Coyotes and Town Dogs* (an account of the group's origins), to "ask for more than you can get." Forget a national park here, a wildlife preserve there, so many of them isolated islands of habitat surrounded by development. What was needed instead was conservation on a continental scale -- not primarily for humans, but for the creatures that had been living here since long before we arrived. Foreman and his allies envisioned a

future when wolves would once again be able to roam unmolested from Mexico to Alaska.

In the meantime, Earth First! took up the more immediate task of defending beloved canyons, mesas, and forests by following Abbey's dictum that "if wilderness is outlawed, only outlaws can save wilderness." In *Ecodefense: A Field Guide to Monkeywrenching* (Abzug Press) and *Confessions of an EcoWarrior* (Three Rivers Press) Foreman vigorously defends tree-spiking -- putting metal spikes in trees to damage loggers' saws -- and other forms of sabotage, placing them within the honorable American tradition of resistance exemplified by the Boston Tea Party. Human life, Foreman said, must always be respected in such acts; machines, not living beings, were the target. As for Foreman, he suffered permanent knee damage after being dragged beneath a truck whose driver was attempting to run him over at a blockade in Oregon.

"No compromise with slaveholders!" declared nineteenth-century abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison. "No compromise in defense of Mother Earth!" bellowed Foreman in 1980.

Foreman eventually left Earth First! after less than a decade. The group was outgrowing its original close-knit character and changing its focus, he says, due to the influence of Marxist and anarchist members. To Foreman, these were not changes for the better. Another sure sign that the game was up for him was the morning in 1989 when he awoke in bed to find three FBI agents pointing guns in his face. (He was arrested for conspiracy to sabotage power lines but was later acquitted of the charges against him.)

Foreman had never intended Earth First! to be revolutionary. If conservation lay at its heart, he felt, then its intent was ultimately conservative. But the Right saw it differently. "You dirty communist bastard! Why don't you go back to Russia!" screamed Les Moore, the heavy-equipment operator who tried to run Foreman over in 1983. "But, Les," Foreman replied, "I'm a registered Republican." In *Coyotes and Town Dogs*, Zakin describes the incident as "the only documented case of one-upmanship by an environmentalist lying on his back in the mud, a fat rubber tire inches from his face."

After his departure from Earth First!, Foreman returned to the hard work of wilderness preservation, founding the Wildlands Project and editing and publishing *Wild Earth* magazine for twelve years, until it folded earlier this year. According to author Michael Frome, Foreman has read and digested more books on wilderness and the environment than perhaps anyone else alive. He's written his fair share, too. Among his more recent books are *The Big Outside* (Three Rivers Press), coauthored with Howie Wolke; *The Lobo Outback Funeral Home* (Johnson Books), a novel; and *Rewilding North America: A Vision for Conservation in the 21st Century* (Island Press). He currently has two additional books awaiting publication: *The Myth(s) of the Environmental Movement* and *The War against Nature*.

It is remarkable the degree to which mainstream environmental groups have caught up with the original goals of Earth First! The removal of dams has become common policy for achieving ecological restoration of rivers. And scientists and conservationists alike are taking seriously the "megalinkage" model of preserving wildlife corridors that would connect volcanoes in Central America to the Brooks Range in Alaska -- thus saving not just individual species but whole ecosystems.

For decades Foreman has helped inject passion, courage, and muscle into the environmental movement when it needed it most. At fifty-nine, he is still doing so through the newly formed Rewilding Institute. As for his former radicalism, Foreman no longer advocates monkeywrenching, though neither does he disavow what he did. These days he appears to find it more productive to tap into what he sees as an existing social consensus favoring conservation.

Lloyd: You're currently finishing a new book called *The Myth(s) of the Environmental Movement*. What are some of those myths?

Foreman: The standard myth of the environmental movement is that with the first Earth Day, in 1970, wilderness conservation broadened its concern to include issues such as urbanization and the impact of technology and pollution on human health. I think this is a myth because I see conservation and environmentalism as two separate movements. They're sister movements, certainly, and they need to work together, but I think it's historically and operationally inaccurate to think of them as a single movement. And trying to cram the two movements together has led to problems. For example, some leftist, social justice oriented environmentalists don't know the first thing about conservation and dismiss wilderness as a bourgeois irrelevancy. Both movements would be stronger if they were kept separate.

I hate the word environment. You can love a forest. You can love a mountain. You can love a plant. But how can you love an abstract concept like the environment? To talk about forests, mountains, meadows, and rivers has much greater force. You can drill for oil in "ANWR," but it's a lot harder to drill in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, because the full name has more power. The environmental movement should have called itself "the human-health movement," because that's basically what it cares about: the impact of pollution, urbanization, and everything else on human health.

The other myth of environmentalism is the stereotype that accompanies it: that environmentalists are hip, overeducated, vegetarian urbanites who wear Birkenstocks, don't like guns, and constitute a special-interest group within the Democratic Party. There are many people out there who would otherwise support conservation but are turned off by this stereotype. These are the people we need to reach, and they include plenty of folks who hunt and fish. The Sierra Club -- 20 percent of whose members hunt or fish -- finally has a hunter-

angler outreach program to bridge this gap. And other groups of conservation-minded hunters and anglers are forming.

The base of support for both environmentalism and conservation right now is within the progressive movement and the Democratic Party, because the Republican Party has been hijacked by nut cases. I mean, even Barry Goldwater [former U.S. senator and father of the modern conservative movement] said back in 1989 that the Republican Party had been taken over by kooks. These people have destroyed the very idea of conservatism, because they aren't conservative at all; they are radicals bent on repealing the twentieth century, and they've been very effective.

Lloyd: Few people today would guess that Republican Senator Trent Lott supported the Endangered Species Act in the 1970s. At what point did the environment become such a partisan issue?

Foreman: There are historic ties between real conservatism and conservation. But in 1980 Ronald Reagan declared himself a "sagebrush rebel," appointing James Watt as secretary of the interior and Anne Gorsuch as head of the Environmental Protection Agency. The Republican Party became the corporate party, or the nationalist party, or the Christian party, depending on which constituency you belonged to. At the same time, conservationists and environmentalists began to drift more and more toward the Democratic Party and quit talking to Republican members of Congress.

I'm working right now to bridge this partisan divide and get environmentalists and conservationists to start talking to Republican politicians again. If we could get just a half dozen Republican senators and a dozen or so Republican representatives to pay attention to us, we could win some of these narrow votes on environmental issues. I think the reason these people aren't voting our way is because nobody talks to them.

Lloyd: What do you see as the prospects for conservation and environmental protection during the second term of the Bush administration?

Foreman: I think we could see some truly horrifying things happen. If President Bush gets his way and appoints these so-called Federalists to the Supreme Court, they're going to repeal some of the major legal accomplishments of the last hundred years. They're going to say that the Commerce Clause of the Constitution, which allows the federal government to regulate interstate commerce, has been overused for conservation and environmental and social legislation. And they're going to declare the Endangered Species Act unconstitutional.

Right now we're seeing a breakdown of the very idea of the national forests. Bush's reversal of the Roadless Area Rule on federal lands has transferred authority to the states. Ever since we created the first forest preserve in 1891, these have been federal lands managed under federal standards. We shouldn't

hand them off to the state governors. As badly as the federal lands are managed, the state lands are generally managed worse. But the radical Right wanted to give the national forests and parks to the states because they're more easily controlled by industry. For all practical purposes, industrial lobbyists are already in charge of the public lands and our conservation laws. And we're likely to see more of this in the coming years.

Lloyd: Do you see a new movement rising up to oppose these developments?

Foreman: I hope so, but I'm concerned that there is so much pressure on conservationists, from both the Left and the Right, to compromise. We're seeing a weakening of the movement at a time when we need it to be tougher. Groups are being pressed to sit down and "work things out" with their opponents. But you end up with bad compromises that way.

Lloyd: What special protection does federal wilderness designation provide?

Foreman: The Wilderness Act, which was enacted after World War II, grew out of the realization among citizen conservationists that they could not trust the forest service and the park service to manage federal lands properly and protect wilderness values on those lands. We needed Congress to pass a law establishing a system of national preserves within which you cannot build roads, cut timber, or set up resorts -- because the evidence shows that when you build roads for logging, for example, they bring in all kinds of other development, which has a destructive impact on wildlife and the integrity of ecosystems.

Lloyd: Many environmental woes can be traced back to the Industrial Revolution of two centuries ago, but you place the real beginning ten thousand years ago.

Foreman: In light of newer evidence, I'd place it even farther back. We know from the fossil record that there have been five major periods of extinction in the last 100 million years, and what paleontologists, ecologists, and other scientists have realized over the last thirty or forty years is that we're right in the middle of another mass extinction -- this one caused by human beings. If we examine the fossil record over the last forty thousand years, we can see that extinction occurred as human beings spread out across Africa and around the world, encountering and hunting big animals who had never before had any experience with something like us. We caused mass extinctions wherever we went, and plenty of people don't want to face up to that: that the tribes who came to the Americas caused the extinction of mammoths, mastodons, and other animals. And I acknowledge that my ancestors in Europe did the same thing; plus they probably caused the extinction of the Neanderthals, our closest relatives. It's not a matter of blaming anybody, but of acknowledging this reality, the evidence for which is pretty strong.

So first came the Stone Age, when highly skilled hunters began to spread around the world. Then came the

development of agriculture, which had an impact on nature fundamentally different from anything that had preceded it, because with agriculture we took ourselves out of the existing ecosystem and began to create our own ecosystems. That, in many ways, not only alienated us from nature but freed us from nature and led to our domesticating nature, in the sense that it removed us from the food chain to which all other creatures belong. Suddenly our population took off, since the natural controls were no longer there. Ten thousand years ago, when we first began to practice agriculture, there were probably only 5 to 10 million human beings on the entire planet.

More recent developments have continued to liberate us from the confines of nature, including the use of fossil fuels, industrialization, and modern medicine. This began five hundred years ago, as European countries began to explore and colonize the rest of the world, and industrialization upped the ante.

Now extinction is being caused by sheer numbers alone. There are 6 billion of us, and more of us are using heightened technology. The recent growth of the middle class in China and India is accompanied by expanded greenhouse-gas emissions, both from the industrialization of those countries and from the exploding use of automobiles there.

Lloyd: To the extent that extinction is rooted in human history and global culture, it seems a part of our historical trajectory. Is there any reason to believe, if the Europeans hadn't colonized the globe, that it wouldn't have happened eventually with, say, Native American culture?

Foreman: Well, look at what the Aztecs and the Mayans did to their ecosystems: they flayed the land just as badly as the Assyrians and the Babylonians did. It's hard to find an example of a sustainable human society. We always seem to outgrow our way, and over the last fifty thousand years, it seems that what we've done is convert more and more of the earth into living space for human beings, leaving less and less room for other species, and that's what drives extinction.

Nobody is paying much attention to population growth anymore. In 1970, when I first got involved with conservation, population growth was at the top of everybody's list. Now there are twice as many people in the world, and we pretend the problem doesn't exist. Even the Sierra Club doesn't talk about overpopulation anymore; it's too controversial. If we're not going to talk about the fundamental cause of ecological damage, then I'm not sure what can be done to reduce it in the long term. As important as it is to live more simply, I think we have to acknowledge that no matter how simply we live, the diversity of life just can't exist in the presence of too many human beings.

Lloyd: What has the developing field of conservation biology taught us?

Foreman: About thirty years ago, as field biologists all over the world began to recognize the incredible rate of extinction,

they also began to ask what we could do about it: specifically, how could we apply the lessons of ecological research to designing protected areas? Our national parks and wilderness areas were initially designed to be nice to look at -- and they were inspiring. But the question now became: how can we protect the diversity of species within the parks? That was the genesis of conservation biology, which was really launched by my friend Michael Soule. For the last twenty-five years I've been trying to explain conservation biology to conservationists, from the Sierra Club to local grass-roots groups, to show how we can use that research to accomplish much more of what we want to do on the ground.

The concept of "rewilding" was also developed by Michael Soule, about ten years ago, as research began to accumulate about the important contribution of large carnivores to the health of entire ecosystems. The research shows that when you remove large carnivores, you get all kinds of negative repercussions down through the food chain. For example, right now in the Appalachian Mountains we're seeing the disappearance of ginseng. One reason is that deer are overbrowsing it. Why? Because we've killed off the deer's natural predators, the cougars and the wolves, allowing the deer population to explode.

We also have the wonderful ecological experiment of Yellowstone National Park, where the park service exterminated all the wolves and mountain lions by 1930. After they were gone, willows disappeared from all the streams in Yellowstone because the elk were browsing the young willows away. Similarly, for seventy years, no aspen sent up shoots higher than a couple of feet, because the elk were browsing those away, too. Without the wolves to manage them, the elk grew big, fat, and lazy, and they overbrowsed. But since the wolves were reintroduced in 1995, the elk have had to hide in the tall timber and keep moving, and now willows and aspens are coming back in along the streams. And beavers are showing up again, because the waterside trees are returning.

Lloyd: Yet conservation biology has also shown that Yellowstone, as large as it is, still is not big enough.

Foreman: This is where continental-scale conservation comes in: "megalinkages." We don't have large intact habitats anymore, outside of the Arctic, so we have to explore how to link up protected areas to allow wildlife to move back and forth between them. This is one of the most exciting developments in conservation today.

Really, we've got to look at the landscape through the eyes of a wolf or a cougar and identify what parts of North America are still suitable for these animals. One thing we're recognizing is the damaging impact of highways on ecosystem health. We recently had a workshop in Arizona that looked at the spine of the continent -- the Rocky Mountains -- from this standpoint. We've gotten highway departments and rental-car companies involved in identifying which highways are barriers to lynx, mountain lions, bighorn sheep -- you name it. The highway engineers love this

problem; it's a technical challenge for them: how to design roads that aren't a barrier to wildlife movement and don't cause roadkills. Florida has already done some reengineering, putting tunnels under interstates for alligators and cougars to go through. You have to study each animal to know what it needs.

Lloyd: Why are highway departments and rental-car companies suddenly interested in working with conservationists?

Foreman: If you look at the number of people killed every year in collisions with wildlife, and at the insurance cost of damaged vehicles, you'll understand why. Also, people who work for a highway department don't like having to drag dead animals off the road all the time; it gets to you.

Lloyd: Your real reason for removing highway barriers to wildlife movement is to protect the ecosystem, but the motives of the groups you just mentioned are more human-centered.

Foreman: You're right, and that illustrates one of my main concerns about what's happened to the conservation movement: there's too much pressure to talk about things solely in terms of people. A long time ago the great conservationist Aldo Leopold warned against trying to come up with economic arguments for protecting nature, because when you do that, you basically accept the premise that nature doesn't have any value in and of itself -- that only things that are economically valuable should be protected.

Lloyd: You got into trouble once, a long time ago, when you said that a grizzly bear is just as valuable as a human being. Obviously that statement isn't going to go over well with many people.

Foreman: No, it's not. But a grizzly bear isn't here for our benefit. She's here for herself, and I think we need to recognize that. For that reason, when I go into grizzly-bear country, I don't carry a gun, because I don't want to have to deal with the possibility of shooting a bear.

I think it's ok to use economic arguments to a certain degree, but at the same time, conservationists need to make it clear that the reason we do what we do is because we love nature. I think that nature appeals to an awful lot of people. After all, why do people watch nature shows on television? Why do they buy wildlife calendars? It's not because animals are worth money. We're just fascinated by them. And so I've taken on the task, as I travel around the country, of telling conservationists: Don't apologize for loving nature. Don't apologize for caring about other species. Celebrate that. Make your motive clear even while you show how protecting nature also has other benefits.

Lloyd: You've helped reintroduce endangered black-footed ferrets to northern Chihuahua, Mexico.

Foreman: That was a huge success. The black-footed ferret, just like the ivory-billed woodpecker, had been given up as extinct. After a few were found, we were able to bring them back to zoos and do captive breeding until there were enough to release back into the wild. That doesn't mean we've saved the black-footed ferret by any means, but it does give me hope, to have actually been there and helped release them. I didn't touch a ferret, because it probably would have bitten my finger off, but just being there was really quite exhilarating.

The anticonservationists try to use our successes as evidence that there's not a problem, but the only reason that we've been able to reintroduce the black-footed ferret, the whooping crane, the California condor, and others is because we've worked so hard for it. Why did any of us do that? Why were people enthusiastic about it? Because there is some part of people that does care about wild creatures, and conservationists can appeal to that part. We don't have to appeal to short-term self-interest. If we do it right, these critters are going to make the argument for us.

Lloyd: Faced with the difficult task of preserving wilderness, though, aren't people ultimately going to ask what's in it for them?

Foreman: Yes, to a certain extent, but I think we can also challenge people with questions like "Do we have the generosity of spirit and the greatness of heart to share the earth with other species?" That appeals to something deep in us. And that's the way religions have always approached problems: by appealing to something beyond self-interest. I think conservationists used to do that more. That's part of the problem with the environmental movement today: the Left is afraid to talk about values and standards, to encourage people to practice good behavior -- which, ultimately, is a form of long-term self-interest anyway. After all, what kind of legacy do we want to leave for our grandkids? How do we want to be remembered?

Lloyd: Have your attempts at bipartisan appeal suffered at all because of your earlier involvement in Earth First!?

Foreman: Probably to some degree, but that connection comes up much less frequently now. It's also a serious misunderstanding of Earth First!, because we were really rednecks for wilderness. I've been a registered Republican all my life. As a college student in the sixties I was the New Mexico chairman of Young Americans for Freedom and worked on Barry Goldwater's campaign for president. I consider myself a true conservative. But true conservatism is dead in America. I hate the current Republican Party, but I'm equally disappointed with the Democrats.

Lloyd: You come from a ranching family.

Foreman: Well, a farming family. We were dry-land, pinto-bean farmers out in eastern New Mexico, not ranchers. George Bush was born with a silver spoon in his mouth; I was born with a dirt clod in mine. [Laughter.]

Lloyd: The urban/rural split that has long infected the environmental movement seems to be as bad as ever. How would you, as an activist with a rural upbringing, go about amending this?

Foreman: Well, for one thing, by combatting the stereotype -- by calling ourselves "conservationists" instead of "environmentalists," and by encouraging rural groups, like the ones in West Virginia that are fighting mountaintop removal, to stand at the front of the movement.

I also think urban environmentalists and Sierra Club people need to try harder to understand rural, small-town America. That doesn't mean we compromise or make deals with the radicals. Rather, it means that we find our friends on the other side and work with them. This is easy for me to do, because most of my extended family live in mobile homes out in the sticks. That's where I come from. But because so many urban environmentalists don't understand rural America, they don't understand that there are people out there who love nature and share some of their values. We don't have to give in to our opponents to reach those people.

Lloyd: Where I live, in rural east Tennessee, a lot of hunters and anglers have "Sportsmen for Bush" bumper stickers.

Foreman: Bush is a phony redneck, but he takes in the real rednecks, because the Right has been able to stereo-type the environmental movement as being pro-gun control. "They're going to take away your guns," the right-wingers cry, and a lot of hunters fall for it. But a lot of other hunters who voted for Bush the first time around didn't vote for him this time. "What good are the guns," they said, "if we don't have any places to hunt?"

The Sierra Club does not support gun control, and we've got to let hunters know that. Unfortunately it does do other things that play into the Right's stereotypes. For example, the Sierra Club's anti-suv campaign in the late nineties smacked of elitism. When the Sierra Club launched its campaign, I was at a meeting of the New Mexico Wilderness Alliance board of directors. We were camping out, and every one of us had an suv. How else am I going to haul my gear to the river or get back to trail heads? I've always wanted to start a group called "Four- Wheelers for Wilderness," because there are a lot of responsible four- wheelers. Sure, I wish suvs got thirty miles to the gallon, and they could if we pressured the car companies, but we won't get there by attacking the cultural idea of an suv or pickup truck.

Lloyd: Edward Abbey seemed to be able to bridge the divide between conservationists and sportsmen.

Foreman: Abbey appealed to a lot of people who did not like the Sierra Club and did not think of themselves as environmentalists. In Earth First! it was the right-wing Republicans who monkeywrenched and the leftists who chose civil disobedience. The right-wingers were the Edward Abbey crowd.

It's sort of a split between individualism and communitarianism. My Scotch-Irish ancestors were very individualistic and believed that sometimes you just have to take the law into your own hands. Earth First! was sort of a rural redneck vigilante movement to protect nature. But we always distinguished between destruction of property and harming other people.

Lloyd: Many noteworthy conservationists -- such as David Brower, John Muir, and Aldo Leopold -- grew up with deep religious roots. Your own upbringing was Christian fundamentalist. What good did it afford you?

Foreman: Well, it gave me my evangelical public-speaking style. [Laughter.] I think it also made me comfortable talking about values and encouraging people to practice good behavior, to think about something besides themselves. I think the belief in our inherent tendency to sin also gave me a realistic view of human nature. I don't expect people to be good, the way a lot of progressives do, so I'm not disappointed as often.

My upbringing also taught me something about personal responsibility. Protestant fundamentalism proposes a direct relationship between the individual and the higher powers: no intermediaries. You figure it out for yourself. That early training taught me always to question what I was told and to rely on myself.

Lloyd: Some fundamentalists believe the Bible says that we humans are here to subdue the earth. On the other hand, some conservative congregations are beginning to talk about "environmental stewardship."

Foreman: The Evangelical Environmental Network and other groups have come to the defense of the Endangered Species Act and are in favor of protecting endangered species from a purely moral standpoint: they say it's a sin to destroy God's creation. Meanwhile, secular conservation groups are backing away from ethical arguments for saving endangered species, making economic arguments or saying that we may find a cure for cancer in the Amazon.

Some national evangelical leaders are even talking about global warming. I think they're terrific allies to have. This underscores the need to promote conservation without handcuffing it to other issues, so that we can work with any allies who come along.

Lloyd: Let's say that the dream of a continent-wide linkage among national parks, national forests, preserves, and private wilderness lands becomes a reality. A hundred years from now, how do you envision humankind's relationship with that environment?

Foreman: I think that civilization and real wilderness can coexist in North America and elsewhere, but we've got to allow room for wilderness and wild creatures. A favorite

word of mine is *wildeor*, which goes back to the time of Beowulf and the origins of the English language. It means the "self-willed beast." From the very beginning, civilization has tried to domesticate the beasts, and if we can't domesticate them, then we destroy them. We've got to allow land to be wilderness, which means, in Old English, "self-willed land." Letting some things have a will of their own, not trying to control everything -- that is the challenge.

Lloyd: The United States is a relatively young country compared with the rest of the world. A number of conservation-minded observers have argued that it's time for us to grow up and out of the early pioneering-and-conquering stage of our history.

Foreman: Well, the whole world needs to outgrow that stage. It's not fair to single out the U.S. Just as America has led the world in the destruction of nature, it has also led the world in the conservation of nature. We have a kind of split-personality heritage. Progressives are much quicker to criticize the U.S. than they are to criticize other countries, but I think we can be proud of the good things the United States has done: the Bill of Rights, the Declaration of Independence, the Wilderness Act, and the Endangered Species Act are all high points of Western civilization. But pride in our achievements is different from the kind of nationalism that George Bush and the neoconservatives are pushing now.

Lloyd: I was surprised to learn that you received your first death threat in 1973, long before you cofounded Earth First!

Foreman: The only death threats I've ever been sent came when I worked with the Wilderness Society in the seventies.

Lloyd: Why do you think that is? Is it perhaps due in part to Earth First!'s own show of force -- at least against inanimate objects?

Foreman: I think so. When you show that you aren't going to back down, that you're going to defend yourself, your opponents are going to respect you more. Another stereotype of the environmentalists is that they're wimps, and the Right doesn't respect that.

In some ways my fight with the anticonservationists -- and particularly with the redneck anticonservationists -- is like a feud between two clans of Scots.

Lloyd: President Bush wants to allow oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. If it comes down to it, do you support using Earth First!-type tactics to prevent this?

Foreman: Well, I think civil disobedience would certainly be called for to block oil-exploration groups from going into the refuge. But as far as I'm concerned, Earth First! doesn't really exist anymore. People who call themselves members of Earth First! are basically part of the international anarchist animal-rights movement -- though there are people sitting in trees in the Pacific Northwest, and even in the East, trying to prevent

logging, and I honor them for what they're doing. To put yourself on the line like that is still appropriate.

Lloyd: What would it take to make more environmentalists defend natural resources by whatever means necessary, short of hurting people?

Foreman: I think that when the shit hits the fan with climate change, it's going to wake a lot of people up. Some of the more recent findings on the consequences of the greenhouse effect indicate that it could hit fairly soon.

What is it about humans that we don't think very long term? A problem really has to hit us over the head before we'll deal with it. What helped drive enthusiasm for Earth Day in 1970 was that people were actually feeling the effects of pollution. It was right there in the air and water. Unfortunately, I think people will have to feel the catastrophic effects of climate change before they do something about it.

The neocons and the radical libertarians and the corporatists might never wake up. Their theory is that Earth is totally resilient, an endless storehouse of resources. They don't believe in ecology. They don't believe we can affect the global climate. They have to pooh-pooh all of the damage that we're doing to Earth, because it doesn't fit their theory.

Lloyd: The fallenness of all humanity and all human institutions is a core tenet of conservative Protestant theology, but in the eyes of the neocons, the market we've created is infallible.

Foreman: The radical Right is deeply divided when it comes to views of human nature. I think traditional conservatives have been very much manipulated by corporate and neoconservative interests. The Right has been very effective at fighting a "culture war," whereas many in the progressive community for a long time didn't realize there was a culture war. They just kept doing things that reinforced the stereotype that the corporatists were feeding to the populace.

Lloyd: If we can't trust government agencies to protect our wild lands, and recycling and hybrid cars are not enough, what do you propose the average citizen do to conserve the environment?

Foreman: Conservation works best when conservationists know and love specific places and specific critters, because then they'll work their hearts out for them and make sure that the politicians do something. So we've got to know our natural areas, and then get involved with conservation groups and make our voices heard. George Bush isn't going to listen to us, and his political appointees aren't going to listen to us, but I'm convinced there are Republican members of Congress who, if they hear enough from their constituents, will make some changes.

My friend Brian O'Donnell was with the Alaska Wilderness League back in the late nineties, when Alaska Senator Ted Stevens put in a rider that would have allowed tourism

companies to land helicopters in wilderness areas in Alaska. Stevens was the chair of the Senate transportation committee and a really vindictive guy. All of the conservation groups said, "Well, we've lost this one." But Brian had a strategy. Congressmen Frank Wolf of Virginia and Ralph Regula of Ohio were the Republican chairs of the transportation committee in the House. Brian convinced hunters and anglers in their districts, groups affiliated with the NRA, to write to Regula and Wolf and say this rider was an outrage and would spoil the hunting experience in Alaska. When Stevens's bill came through the House for approval, Regula and Wolf led the fight to defeat it.

That's the kind of strategy we need nationally right now, to convince Republican senators and representatives to vote for conservation. To do this, we need to go outside the circle of people that urban environmentalists feel comfortable with and talk to those who are turned off by the environmentalist stereotype, but who agree with us on protecting wilderness and wildlife.

Lloyd: In the conclusion of Rewilding North America you say that you are not optimistic, but you are hopeful. How do you make that distinction?

Foreman: I think hope is much more realistic than optimism. People who are optimistic just aren't paying attention. But we human beings need a glimmer of hope out there. And so my task, as I see it, is to create an achievable vision of how civilization and wilderness can coexist. That doesn't mean it's going to be easy, or even that it will happen, but it allows me to have hope.

Both liberals and libertarians, who really occupy opposite ends of the same spectrum, have an optimistic view of human nature. They think that human institutions are perfectible and will work in the long run. One of my favorite books is David Ehrenfeld's *The Arrogance of Humanism*. He defines humanism as the belief that humans can solve all their problems; that if there's not a technological solution, there's a social or political solution; that all resources are either infinite or replaceable; that we will muddle through, and civilization will continue forever. And I'm here to say that it won't. We won't.

People call me a Cassandra, after the Trojan prophetess whose dire predictions no one believed. But I don't mind. After all, Cassandra was right; it's just that nobody believed her. The hope I have is that people will pay attention to the Cassandras in their midst.

{ 1 } <http://www.thesunmagazine.org>

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URL:http://www.precaution.org/lib/06/household_chemicals_double_leukemia_risk.060117.htm

From: The Times (London, UK), Jan. 17, 2006

HOUSEHOLD CHEMICALS COULD DOUBLE CHILD LEUKAEMIA RISK

[Rachel's summary: Recent research suggests a connection between household use of insect sprays, medicated shampoos, and mosquito repellants -- and childhood leukemia. Before using such chemical preparations, we can always ask, "What's the least-harmful way to achieve my goal?"]

By Sam Lister

Children frequently exposed to household insecticides used on plants, lawns and in head lice shampoos appear to run double the risk of developing childhood leukaemia, research suggests.

A study by French doctors, published today in the journal Occupational and Environmental Medicine, supports concerns raised in recent years about the use of toxic insecticides around the home and garden — including plant sprays, medication shampoos and mosquito repellents — and a possible correlation with increased rates of acute leukaemia in children.

The latest study by Inserm, France's national institute for medical research, was based on 280 children who had acute leukaemia, newly diagnosed and 288 children matched for sex and age but disease free.

Detailed interviews were carried out with each mother. These included questions about the employment history of both parents, the use of insecticides in the home and garden and the use of insecticidal shampoos against head lice.

It showed that the risk of developing acute leukaemia was almost twice as likely in children whose mothers said that they had used insecticides in the home while pregnant and long after the birth.

Exposure to garden insecticides and fungicides as a child was associated with a more than doubling of disease occurrence. The use of insecticidal shampoos for head lice was associated with almost twice the risk.

Describing the links as "significant", the authors said that preventive action should be considered to ensure that the health risks to children were as small as possible. A group of pesticides known as carbamates, which are present in plant treatments, lice shampoos and insect sprays, are most commonly linked to cases of leukaemia.

There are three main carbamates used in the UK — carbaryl, carbofuran and carbosulfan.

Head lice products containing carbaryl are now restricted to prescription after a report by a government committee that gave warning of potential carcinogenic properties.

Florence Menegaux, the lead researcher based at the Paris headquarters, and her fellow authors said that no one agent could be singled out and a causal relation between insecticides and the development of acute childhood leukaemia "remains questionable". But they said that the patterns revealed suggested that the results should be acted on and "preventative action" considered.

Leukaemia is the term used to describe a number of cancers of the blood cells. In children about 85 per cent of these are acute lymphoblastic leukaemia, and acute myeloid leukaemia accounts for most of the rest.

Leukaemia makes up about a third of all cancers in children and currently kills more than any other disease in the UK. Of the 500 children under the age of 15 who have the disease diagnosed each year, about 100 die. Research has shown that boys are 10 per cent more likely than girls to suffer the disease.

In the late 1960s, the mortality rate for leukaemia among children was about 26 deaths per million of the population in England and Wales. This dropped to about 10 by the late 1990s. But the incidence rate increased — from about 40 to 45 cases per million — over the same period.

The number of new cases being diagnosed has been rising for at least 40 years, particularly in the under-5s.

Scientists believe that the cancer starts in the womb, with a second event triggering the disease's development in childhood. Studies are continuing to determine whether this trigger is genetic, environmental, dietary or related to other factors.

The possible link to pesticides remains hotly debated, with many scientists disputing the suggestion that it is a significant factor. Some have drawn attention to a potential "cocktail effect", when apparently safe chemicals cause problems if combined with others.

Although products sold for use in homes and gardens are tested, mixtures of pesticides are not generally tested because of the number of permutations involved.

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URL:http://www.precaution.org/lib/06/corporate_watchdog_radio.060118.htm

From: Corporate Watchdog Radio, Jan. 18, 2006

CORPORATE WATCHDOG RADIO LAUNCHES PODCAST

[Rachel's summary: For almost 25 years, Sanford Lewis -- lawyer, writer, film maker, activist-strategist, and computer guru -- has been helping grass-roots community groups figure out what's important and how to fight the good fight. Now, with Bill Baue, Sanford has started a web-based radio

program and podcast service, focused on the heart of the problem: corporate power.]

Already broadcast on radio stations from Alaska to Vermont, Corporate Watchdog Radio{1} holds companies accountable for their social, environmental, and economic impact

Corporate Watchdog Radio (CWR), a half-hour show broadcast twice monthly, is a new hybrid radio show and podcast launched using both platforms simultaneously.

Freely accessible on the internet, on broadcast radio, and through the iTunes Music Store, Corporate Watchdog Radio is designed for financial professionals, corporate social responsibility activists, and investors concerned about the social ethics and environmental impact of the corporations in their portfolios.

CWR exposes corporate wrongdoing and applauds businesses that do the right thing. The program investigates how corporate malfeasance can adversely impact the well-being of people and the planet, and commends companies making healthy financial returns by supporting social and environmental progress.

With its lively dialogue and interview format, CWR teams journalist Bill Baue with environmental attorney and filmmaker Sanford Lewis. Baue and Lewis bring a wealth of investigative, legal, and reporting experience to the matter at hand. Lewis, a leading national expert on corporate disclosure to investors on environmental and social liabilities, has represented shareowners and activists for over 23 years, and has produced films on corporate accountability issues. Baue has covered socially responsible investing (SRI) and corporate social responsibility (CSR) for SocialFunds for half a decade. Together, they analyze hot topics and breaking stories, and interview experts who are holding corporations accountable in traditional and innovative ways.

On the latest show (available January 18) Lewis interviews Glenn Evers, a former DuPont scientist, and Attorney Alan Kluger, who is suing DuPont regarding Teflon. Evers, who worked for DuPont for more than 20 years, recently flagged concerns regarding health and environmental impacts of

Dupont products used to coat fast food wrappers. Kluger has filed a \$5 billion lawsuit against Dupont over the alleged toxicity of Teflon coated cookware. While the Wall Street Journal, MSNBC, and other mainstream media outlets have only skimmed the surface of this story, CWR distinguishes itself by offering in- depth exploration of impacts and implications--including the potential public health hazards the chemical PFOA poses in ubiquitous products such as paper wrapping for microwave popcorn, fast food, and pizza. Lewis is himself a representative of DuPont Shareholders for Fair Value, a group of DuPont shareholders including Amalgamated Bank, United Steelworkers and others concerned about the financial impacts of PFOA on DuPont.

Recent editions of CWR include interviews with Cristobal Bonifaz, lead lawyer in the ongoing lawsuit against ChevronTexaco for the environmental destruction of the Ecuadorian rainforest, and reports from Dow Chemical activist Diane Wilson, author of *An Unreasonable Woman*, just prior to her arrest at a Tom Delay fundraiser in Houston.

Corporate Watchdog Radio is produced for broadcast on Valley Free Radio, a low power FM station in Northampton, Massachusetts, a Pacifica network affiliate. Other radio stations broadcasting CWR include The Journey Radio webcasting from St. Louis, Missouri; WOOL-LP in Southern Vermont; WRCT in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; KWMD in Anchorage, Alaska; and WRFU in Urbana-Champaign, Illinois. Additional radio stations can pick up CWR from the Pacifica Audioport{2} website or from the CWR website{3}. The webcast and audio archive is available through the website{4}, or as a podcast feed{5} and by searching Corporate Watchdog Media on the iTunes music store.

Additional Information:

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{1} <http://corporatewatchdogmedia.org>

{2} <http://www.audioport.org/>

{3} <http://corporatewatchdogmedia.org>

{4} <http://feeds.feedburner.com/CorporateWatchdogMedia>

Rachel's Democracy & Health News (formerly Rachel's Environment & Health News) highlights the connections between issues that are often considered separately or not at all. The natural world is deteriorating and human health is declining because those who make the important decisions aren't the ones who bear the brunt. Our purpose is to connect the dots between human health, the destruction of nature, the decline of community, the rise of economic insecurity and inequalities, growing stress among workers and families, and the crippling legacies of patriarchy, intolerance, and racial injustice that allow us to be divided and therefore ruled by the few. In a democracy, there are no more fundamental questions than, "Who gets to decide?" And, "How do the few control the many, and what might be done about it?"

As you come across stories that might help people connect the dots please Email them to us at dhn@rachel.org. Rachel's Democracy & Health News is published as often as necessary to provide readers with up-to-date coverage of the subject. Editors: Peter Montague - peter@rachel.org; Tim Montague - tim@rachel.org