

PERCEPTION

TALLAHASSEE SUMMER 2014



AMERICA - LAND OF PLENTY

An insincere and evil friend is more to be feared than a wild beast; a wild beast may wound your body, but an evil friend will wound your mind."
 -Buddha

Four Years Later, BP's Oil Spill Is Still Killing Gulf Wildlife

BY KATIE VALENTINE

It's been almost four years since the Deepwater Horizon oil rig explosion killed 11 people and spilled 210 million gallons of oil into the Gulf of Mexico, but the effects of the disaster are still being felt by Gulf wildlife, according to a new report.

The report, published Tuesday by the National Wildlife Federation, looked at the health of 14 Gulf species, including bottlenose dolphins, blue crabs, coral, and multiple bird species and found that many of them are still struggling with the health effects of the spill. Scientists said on a press call Tuesday that though their report provides a good framework for the years after the spill, it was difficult to find adequate reports on many species' health because much of the research hasn't yet been published due to BP's ongoing trials.

"No matter what BP and others are telling you, the oil is not gone," Doug Inkley, NWF senior scientist, said on the call. Oil continues to wash up on the Gulf's shores — as recently as April 2, Florida Department of Environmental Protection officials found more than 350 tar balls on beaches in Escambia County, Florida.



Kyla Anderson

"SUPPOSE YOU WERE AN IDIOT. AND SUPPOSE YOU WERE A MEMBER OF CONGRESS. BUT I REPEAT MYSELF."

-MARK TWAIN.

Inkley said he isn't surprised that species continue to suffer as a result of the spill, given that 25 years after the Exxon Valdez oil spill, some parts of the ecosystem in Prince William Sound still haven't recovered.

Here are three of the animals still struggling with spill effects that NWF focused on in its report:

1. Bottlenose dolphins: The report notes that between April 2010 and March 2014, 900 bottlenose dolphins have been found dead or stranded in the northern Gulf. Dolphins' health has also suffered since the spill, with dolphins that live in and around the oiled region showing signs of anemia and liver and lung disease, as well as an increased number of stillborns. But Inkley also said it was difficult to know exactly how many dolphins — and any other animal — had died as a result of the spill. "We find a very small percentage — usually less than 10 percent — of the animals that die, and that's going to be true of the Gulf oil spill as well," he said. "So the impact is certainly much greater than we are visibly seeing by the stranded dolphins that we are able to find."

2. Atlantic bluefin tuna: The Gulf of Mexico is one of only two places where Atlantic bluefin breed, and the Deepwater Horizon disaster occurred during the species' breeding season. One study noted in the report found that a chemical in the oil that spilled can lead to irregular heartbeats in yellowfin and bluefin tuna, which can lead to heart attack and death for a species whose populations have already plunged in the last several decades due to overfishing.

3. Sea turtles: Like bottlenose dolphins, strandings for the five species of sea turtle that live in the Gulf have remained above normal in the four years after the spill. Each year, about 500 dead sea turtles have been found in the region affected by the spill, and in 2013, about three-quarters of those strandings were the critically endangered Kemp's ridley turtles, which spend their entire life cycle in the Gulf of Mexico. But it will probably take decades of monitoring to determine how the 2010 spill affected young turtles, due to how slowly they mature, said Pamela Plotkin, director of the Texas Sea Grant.

"For species like the loggerhead turtle that doesn't reach maturity for maybe 20 or 30 years, we may

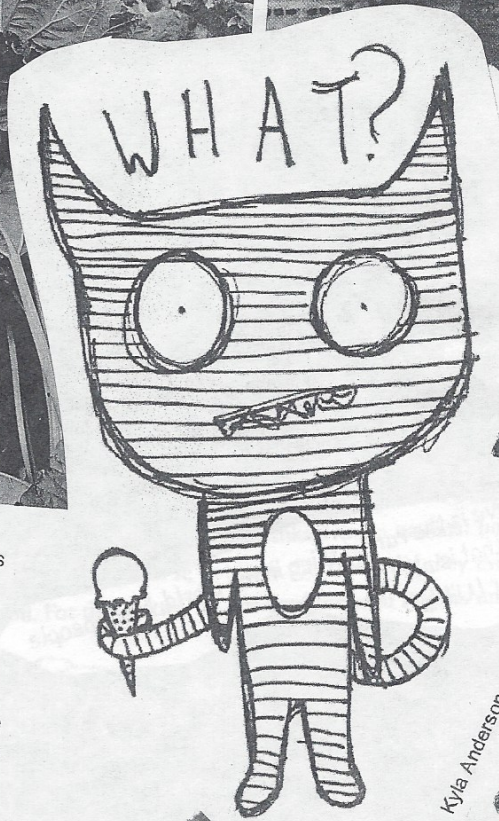
not see the impact of what occurred in 2010 until 30 years from now," Plotkin said on the press call. The report notes that, depending on the results of BP's civic trial, the oil giant could pay up to \$14.08 billion into the Gulf Coast Restoration Trust Fund, which will create plans for Gulf ecosystem restoration. Last month, the U.S. government lifted the ban on BP seeking new oil leases in the Gulf, allowing the company to expand its drilling in the region.

"WE CANNOT SOLVE OUR PROBLEMS WITH THE SAME THINKING WE USED WHEN WE CREATED THEM."
-ALBERT EINSTEIN

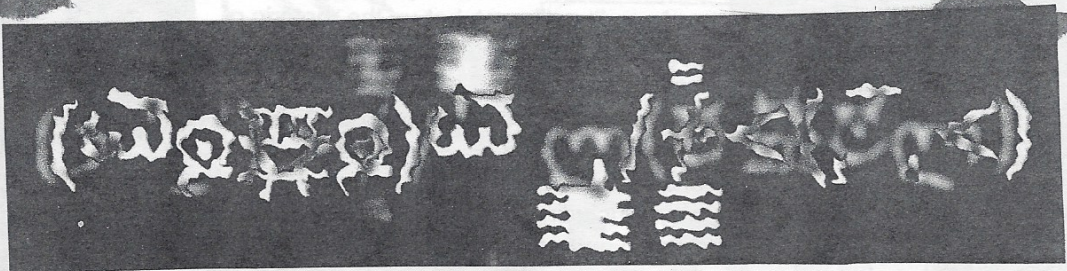


Stalk King Alaskans may grow little produce, but some of that little grows big. The long days of summer sunlight there help some rhubarb plants—the first of which were likely introduced to the region by Russian traders in the 1700s—reach heights of five feet or more.

In the early 20th century Henry Clark (above, in 1921) of Skagway, Alaska, was known as the Rhubarb King for his monster crop. Rhubarb stalks (and only stalks—the leaves and roots are toxic) like his provided vitamins, fiber, and flavor to Klondike gold rush hopefuls who had few other options for fresh produce that far north. Today descendants of Clark's rhubarbs still thrive for Skagway resident Charlotte Jewell, who runs a garden business on the site of his old farm. "Our town became famous for its rhubarb," she says, "and Henry Clark started it all." —Margaret G. Zackowitz



Kyla Anderson



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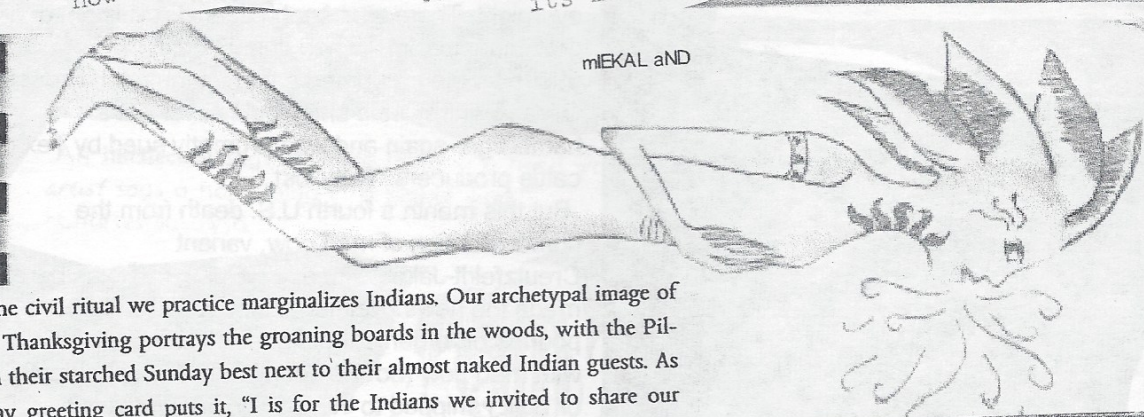
treasures in heaven

"To live is the rarest thing in the world. Most people exist, that is all."
-Oscar Wilde

It is not an accident that trust in major institutions has declined on a linear track with rising inequality. Study after study has shown that trust in our fellow citizens and in institutions at large are dependent on the level of inequality and corruption in society. This stands to reason: people know when they're getting the short end of the stick, even if they can't agree on why. Conservatives wrongly blame government spending and regulation. Liberals rightly blame disproportionate rewards going to the very wealthy. Not surprisingly, then, high levels of inequality also create strong partisanship within society as politicians and pundits alike ratchet up the rhetoric of blame. As both secular and religious institutions seem equally powerless to address increasing economic and social insecurity, the social fabric begins to fray and people tend to self-segregate in many ways, including politically. Economic tension and social tension tend to go hand in hand.

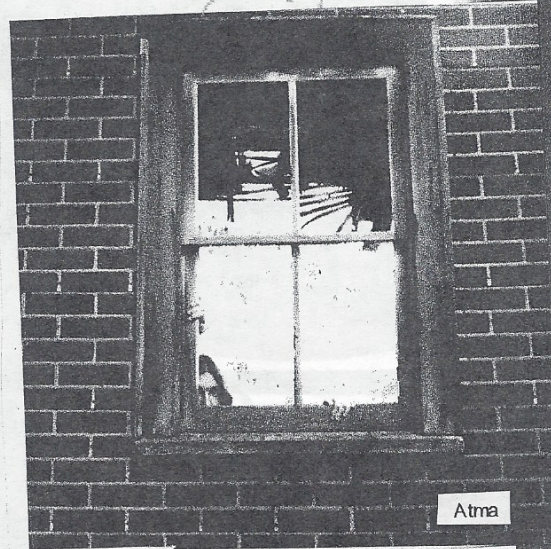
OH MY! how to convince meaning to mind its manners

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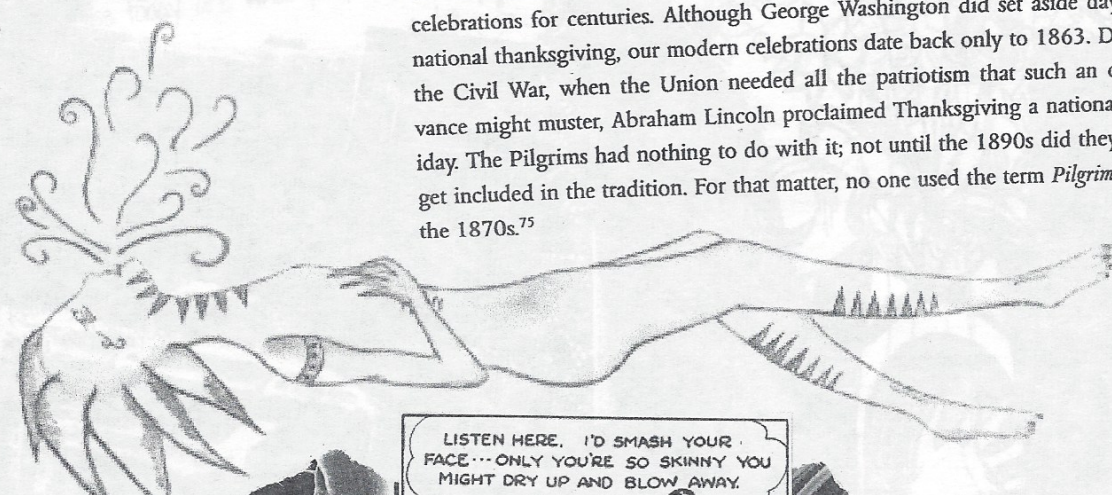
The civil ritual we practice marginalizes Indians. Our archetypal image of the first Thanksgiving portrays the groaning boards in the woods, with the Pilgrims in their starched Sunday best next to their almost naked Indian guests. As a holiday greeting card puts it, "I is for the Indians we invited to share our food." The silliness of all this reaches its zenith in the handouts that school-children have carried home for decades, complete with captions such as, "They served pumpkins and turkeys and corn and squash. The Indians had never seen such a feast!" When the Native American novelist Michael Dorris's son brought home this "information" from his New Hampshire elementary school, Dorris pointed out that "the *Pilgrims* had literally never seen 'such a feast,' since all foods mentioned are exclusively indigenous to the Americas and had been provided by [or with the aid of] the local tribe."⁷⁴

This notion that "we" advanced peoples provided for the Indians, exactly the converse of the truth, is not benign. It reemerges time and again in our history to complicate race relations. For example, we are told that white plantation owners furnished food and medical care for their slaves, yet every shred of food, shelter, and clothing on the plantations was raised, built, woven, or paid for by black labor. Today Americans believe as part of our political understanding of the world that we are the most generous nation on earth in terms of foreign aid, overlooking the fact that the net dollar flow from almost every Third World nation runs *toward* the United States.

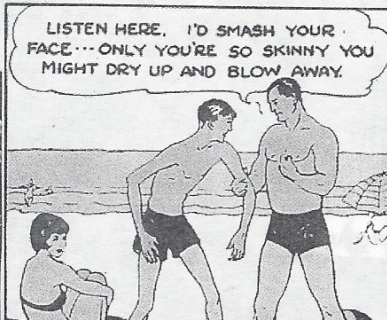


Atma

The true history of Thanksgiving reveals embarrassing facts. The Pilgrims did not introduce the tradition; Eastern Indians had observed autumnal harvest celebrations for centuries. Although George Washington did set aside days for national thanksgiving, our modern celebrations date back only to 1863. During the Civil War, when the Union needed all the patriotism that such an observance might muster, Abraham Lincoln proclaimed Thanksgiving a national holiday. The Pilgrims had nothing to do with it, not until the 1890s did they even get included in the tradition. For that matter, no one used the term *Pilgrims* until the 1870s.⁷⁵



Coral Anderson



"Human nature will only find itself when it finally realizes to be human, it has to cease to be beastly or brutal"
-Mohandas Gandhi



Kyla Anderson

"Two things are infinite: The universe, and human stupidity; and I'm not sure about the universe."
- Albert Einstein

June 23, 2014

When the first U.S. mad cow was found in late 2003, 98 percent of U.S. beef exports evaporated overnight. There was such national revulsion to cow "cannibalism" when described in the late 1990s as the presumed cause of the fatal disease, Oprah Winfrey said she would never eat a hamburger again and was promptly sued by Texas cattle producers. They lost.

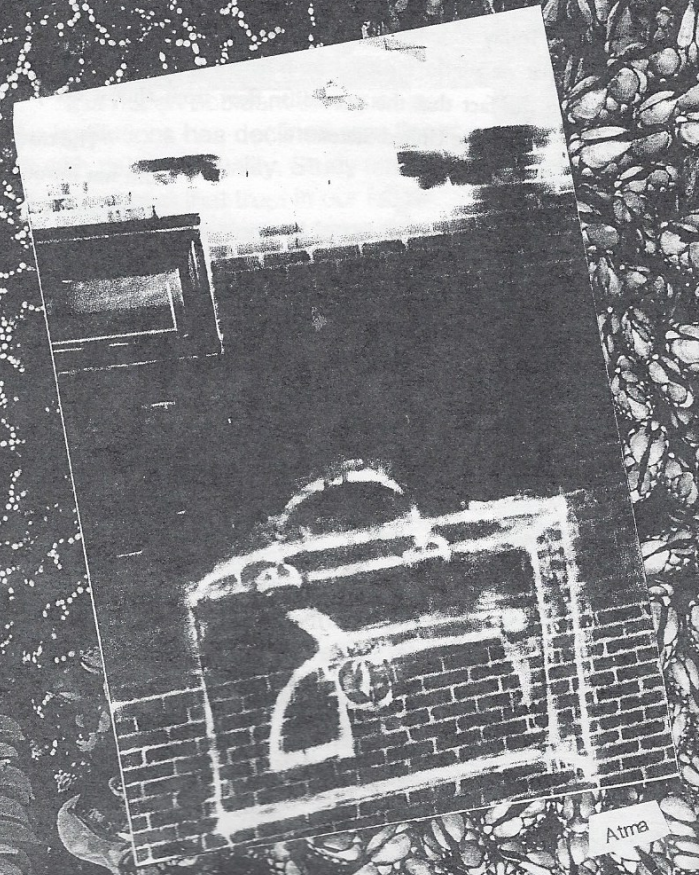
But this month a fourth U.S. death from the human version of mad cow, variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (vCJD), in Texas barely made the news. Neither did the recall of 4,000 pounds of "organic" beef possibly contaminated with mad cow (bovine spongiform encephalopathy or BSE) shipped to Whole Foods and two restaurants, in New York and Kansas City, Mo. The restaurant meat was eaten before the recall, speculated one news source.

What has changed? Health officials, overtly protecting the meat industry, have succeeded in spinning the disease so it is now considered something that "just happens" rather than a grave breakdown of our agricultural system.

Mad cow and CJD are fatal transmissible spongiform encephalopathies thought to be caused by infectious particles called prions.



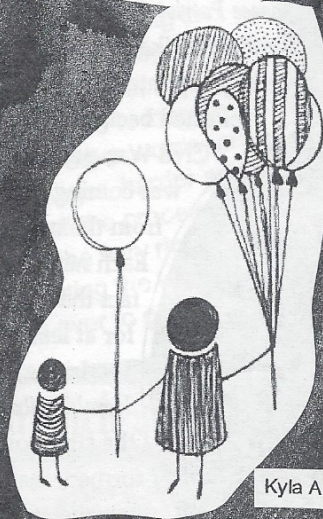
Coral Anderson



Atma

Turned the world upside

"An **intellectual** says a simple thing in a hard way. An **artist** says a hard thing in a simple way."
-Charles Bukowski



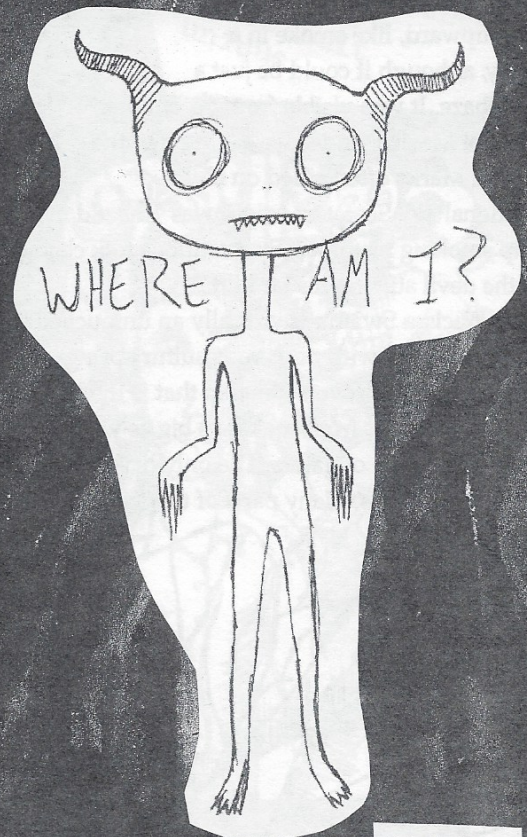
Kyla Anderson



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An eye for an eye makes the whole world blind.
We all werent born the way we are now. We all
had a clean slate to start off with.
The problems and things that have shaped us into
what we are today are what people did and taught
us along the way.
In truth, the dead are living through us. Their
nature and actions seep into our own, whether it
be good or bad.
Yes, we always have choices.
And in the end it is up to us and only us which
path we follow.
You make your own grave, you lay in it. Simple as
that.

-Hector Casey



Kyla Anderson

A still small voice

The Legendary Wakulla Volcano

It's a great mystery—that lonely smoke-pot in the vast Wakulla Swamp.

—Maurice Thompson's *A Tallahassee Girl*, 1881

Twenty-five miles southeast of Tallahassee there's a secret buried in the vast Wacissa Swamp that's part of Florida's great pioneer legends. For nearly two centuries, stories have been handed down about the mysterious Wacissa Smoke, which supposedly came from the long-lost Wakulla Volcano.

The first accounts of the Wacissa Smoke can be found in early Seminole Indian lore that told of "smoke rising in the swamp." In 1830, settlers blamed the mystery on smoke from Indian campfires or from a pirate's den. The smoke varied from thick black, like coal smoke, to the bluish white of wood smoke and usually swirled upward, like smoke in a chimney, although it could be just a drifting haze. It was visible from far out on the Gulf of Mexico, and ships sailing into the port of St. Marks often relied on it as a navigational aid. Seafarers said it was "the old man of the swamp smoking his pipe." Superstitious folk claimed it was "the devil stirring his tar kiln."

The Wacissa Swamp is virtually an untouched wilderness dotted with numerous sulfur springs. Its subtropical growth covers a marsh that is the habitat of a variety of creatures, from snakes as big as your arm to a healthy population of gators. The only dry spots are a few pine hammocks. Many parts of this vine-tangled

jungle are as inaccessible today as they were a century ago, which explains why very few people have ever tried to locate the origin of the smoke.

By 1840, Tallahassee residents were climbing up on rooftops to see what they thought was smoke from a camp of runaway slaves. On a clear day, the smoke could be seen from up to twenty miles away, and at night, people reported seeing a glow far out in the swamp. The *Tallahassee Patriot* described the glow in an 1880 article as "looking more like a large fire shooting its flaming tongue high up into the upper realms, frequently reflected back by passing clouds." During the

Civil War, people speculated that the smoke was coming from a camp of deserters or from the mother of all moonshine stills. Each new theory seemed to ignore the fact that the smoke had been observed for at least a hundred years.

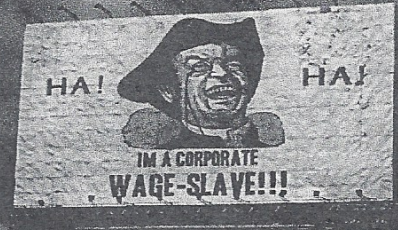
In the late 1800s, the *New York Herald Tribune* decided to investigate the situation, and an expedition was formed, made up of a New York journalist and three guides. They fought for nearly three days through saw grass, mud, mosquitoes, and cottonmouth moccasins but gave up their ill-fated quest

after one of the guides fell out of a tree while trying to get a bearing on the smoke and the unfortunate New York reporter died from swamp fever.

Then the smoke suddenly ceased on August 31, 1886, when an earthquake hit Charleston, South Carolina, sending tremors throughout northern Florida. The legend lives on, but the smoke hasn't been seen since. Did the earthquake cause a geological effect that plugged up Florida's volcano? A recent inquiry to the University of Florida's geology department brought the following response: "We are unaware of the Wakulla Volcano as described, and certainly no volcanic activity occurred." But in recent times, numerous people have accidentally stumbled upon what they believed was the elusive crater. One old-timer described seeing "a blackened, dishpan-size hole atop a rocky knoll which was scattered with rocks." Others, including one William Wyatt in 1935, have claimed to find "scattered rocks that looked like they had been burnt by extreme heat." When Highway 98 was being built in 1949, workers came upon a deep hole in the middle of the Wacissa Swamp that required six hundred tons of rock to fill, hauled by thirty-four dump trucks. Was that the crater?



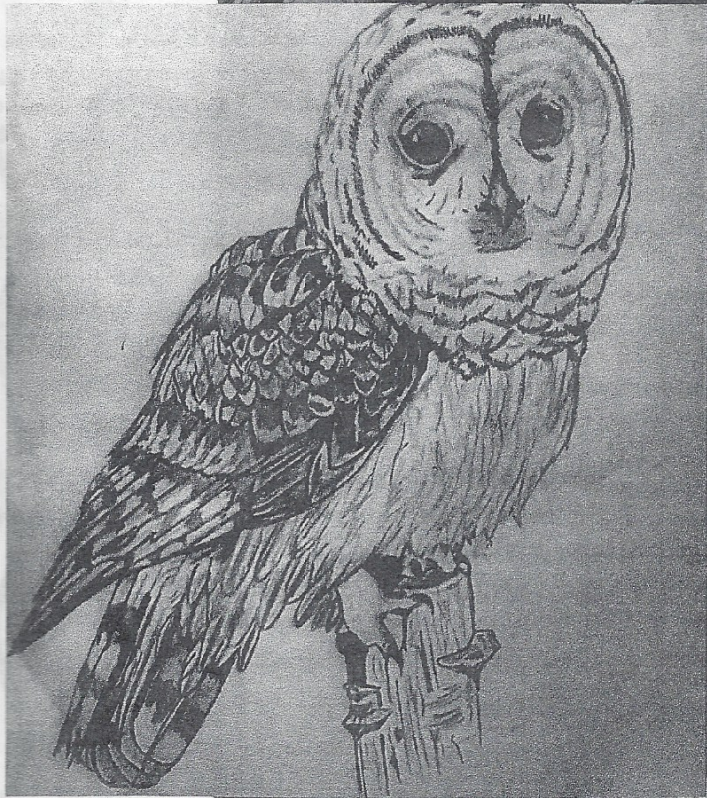
Conservatives often excuse poor wage growth and high unemployment as part of the global competitive marketplace, saying that everyone needs to tighten their belts. But not everyone is struggling—in fact, the rich are better off than ever. They control half of all the wealth, and the top 10% control almost 9/10ths of it. Corporate profits are at or near record highs, disproving the myth that the middle class must suffer due to competitive pressures. The Dow Jones index is threatening to burst past 17,000. Meanwhile, wages have stagnated since the Reagan era, even though productivity continues to increase. Corporate executives, in other words, are forcing workers to toil longer, harder and smarter than ever, but all the proceeds are going into the hands of the very rich while the people actually creating the wealth are struggling harder than ever to get by.



Beat their swords into plowshares

red is code for passion or invisible urges of sensationalary feelage every occurrence of red is by default unique

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Heather Morgan



Atra



"The only way to deal with an unfree world is to become so absolutely free that your very existence is an act of rebellion."
-Albert Camus

Landfill on the High Seas: Why's the Ocean Full of Trash?

BY THOMAS SUEN

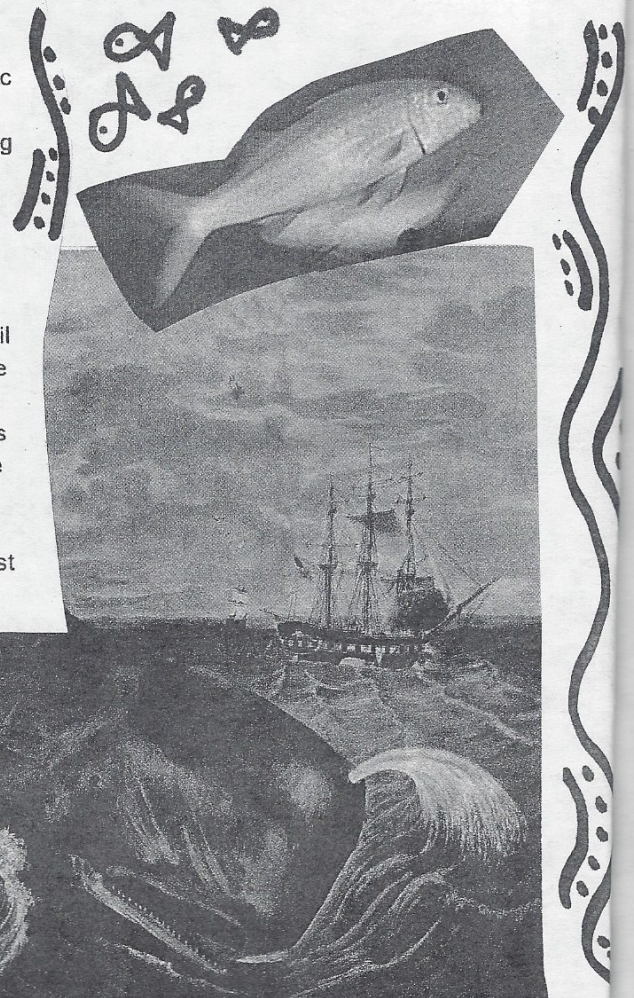
The search for flight MH370 that has now entered its second month and covered tremendous swaths of ocean has brought attention to a pressing environmental issue: the tons of trash floating in the sea. Searchers have found hundreds of objects floating in the remote waters. So far, they have all turned out to be trash. The junk not only complicates the hunt for the missing jet but highlights the huge and growing problem of sea garbage. "The ocean is full of literally hundreds of millions of tons of junk," Dr. Simon Boxall of the National Oceanography Center in Southampton told NBC News. "It has gone into the oceans from land, it's come off ships over many many years and it takes a long time to break down."

Complicating efforts even more is the fact that the search off Australia is concentrated near one of the world's garbage hot spots or "gyres." "These gyres bring together the surface debris," Boxall said. "It's a bit like the plug hole in the sink. As water goes down the plug hole, any surface stuff goes towards the center of that gyre." Kathleen Dohan of Earth and Space Research, a Seattle-based non-profit, is in charge of a project that illustrates the circulation of the trash in the world's five main gyres. "What I did for the animation was put 'particles' in the ocean on a regular grid and let them be carried along by the real currents over 10 years," Dohan said.

There are five main regions of garbage concentration in the oceans — in the North and South Pacific, North and South Atlantic and Indian oceans. MH370 searchers are looking for wreckage near the Indian Ocean gyre, and that garbage-suck is complicating and hampering their efforts, said Marcus Eriksen, the founder of the research and campaign group 5Gyres.

"They are there," he said. "There are hundreds of thousands of objects there and that is the garbage patch." The North Pacific gyre is the size of around 9 million soccer field, and contains 30 percent of the world's ocean garbage. "If you leave LA and you sail towards Hawaii, after maybe 400, 500 miles you begin to see little tiny fragments of plastic trash," Eriksen said.

The challenge of scouring the oceans is huge. "The ocean covers 72 percent of our planet" said Boxall. "If we took every ship on the planet and went out and started picking the rubbish up, we'd be out there for hundreds of years." "Ocean clean-up is not a viable option" agrees Eriksen. "If you want to clean up the ocean the best way is to go to the beach and pick up the trash."



Soldiers of Time



Troops of the weeks
 Seniors of the years
 Elders of the decades
 We are the soldiers of time
 For as time marches on we constantly try to stop it
 And we fail never to try again
 For once you battle time
 There is no going back
 No restarting.
 No redoing.
 Just nothing...



Time consumes us
 Some believe as nourishment
 Others believe as a pass-time
 I believe as a part of the cycle
 For what is the one question you can't answer
 What is the meaning of life
 For decades we have lived with this question
 And for decades it has gone unanswered I believe that time is the answer
 We live for time
 We breath for time
 We love for time
 All because of time
 So I believe we march on for the sake of time
 Just as time marches on for that very same reason



-Jonathan Howard



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