

**"GREEN EARTH, CLEAN MOON"
A Philosophy
to Break out of Cradles by**

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It is hardly possibly to turn on a TV or radio these days with out hearing about some needless environmental disaster or another instance of criminal toxic waste dumping. As if the devil-take-the-hindmost side of American business were not enough, we are all becoming painfully aware of our own unintentional guilt in passing on to our children an Earth less green, atmosphere less fresh, water less pure, forests less vast, and wild-life less abundant than those that we had inherited.

It is understandable that many of us are beginning to think of humanity as a cancer upon the good Earth. Greenpeace, an extremely active international environmental group, is lobbying to set aside all Antarctica as a World Natural Preserve, banning even scientific bases as an infringement. Give Greenpeace a time-machine and its warriors would go back ten thousand years to prevent the first Siberian Indians-to-be from crossing the Bering Strait (or isthmus back then) so the Americas could remain unspoiled wilderness. Perhaps if they could go back further, they would have stood guard in the Sinai to limit mankind's ravages to Africa.

Both the trouble with this attitude, and the very real trouble that humankind poses for the environment, are grounded in the same 2000-year-old unquestioned acceptance of the premise that mankind and nature are opposed. Rather we are part of nature, a new part, a part that appears as

Earth-life enters puberty. Indeed, Earth-life as a whole, or Gaia as it is now coming to be called, cannot reproduce itself, scatter its seed to worlds beyond its cocoon of space, without humanity. To reproduce, Gaia must undergo the anxious pubescent changes and adolescent tribulations that being-with-humanity brings with it. By the same token, it is not humanity that will go to the Moon, Mars, and beyond, it is Earth-life-including-humanity.

Quite frequently one hears the objection, why should we go back to the Moon? Isn't polluting one world enough? The legitimate disgust the speaker feels for what is going on here on Earth is being transferred to the speaker's expectation of what must supposedly follow in space.

Mankind will not change. As our reputed ancestors cannot be housebroken, it seems that we cannot be planetbroken. We are fated to go on fouling out nest forever.'

It is impossible to argue with pessimism, because pessimism, like optimism, is grounded in temperament rather than reason. To those who wish to take the meliorist alternative, - acceptance of the given as bad as it is with the determination to take it upwards from here - there is not only hope that we will change and are changing our act here on Earth - with painful and halting steps, yes - but it is also clear that the "oppottunity" to foul our own nest will not follow us beyond our home planet!

Whether our stripes change or not, there are no forests on the Moon to cut, no air to poison, no groundwater or streams to pollute, no wildlife to drive to extinction.

We are a danger to biospheres, yes. But there is no biosphere on the Moon, nor Mars, nor anywhere else in the Solar System within our reach.

To live on the Moon, we must on the contrary bring mini-biospheres of Earth-life with us. But whereas on Earth we can do our mischief and not worry about the consequences till much later, the tiny islands of life we bring to the Moon and Mars will be far less forgiving. We sin against them, we pay the price pronto.

It becomes obvious that Lunar and Martian pioneers will have had to change their act under sentence of death. Not only will they have to live clean, work clean, and play clean, but they will, especially on the Moon, have to recycle totally (read 100%) all the things we are used to throwing away on Earth. It isn't that they will lack places to throw things. Rather, the hydrogen, carbon, and nitrogen that largely make up wood, paper, plastics, and synthetics are not easy to come by on the Moon and may have to be imported at very high expense. Everything thrown away must be subtracted from the standard of living. Indeed, pioneers will use precious little of such materials to begin with.

In learning to thrive on the Moon, hopefully before we go, we will learn many lessons and some valuable know-how that will help us improve things here on Earth. While the motivation to clean up our act on Earth is weak but growing, on the space frontier, it will be do-or-die.

What about mining? Won't we scar the 'magnificent desolation' of the Lunar land-

scape? In truth, all the resources on the Moon are already lying loose in the rego-lith, the pre-pulverized and ready-to-scoop-up-and-process upper few yards of its surface. There is no need to either strip mine or deep mine or otherwise change the appearance of the surface. The eon-long processes that worked on Earth to concentrate ores in isolated veins and strata did not operate on the Moon. Yes, we can be sloppy, littering whatever does happen to be cheap. Only public care can prevent that.

To sum up, we must reject the offered dilemma of a Virgin World versus a Raped World. Our true choice is a world, once sterile, now brought to fulfillment of motherhood by Earth-life-*with*-humanity.
LRS

For a PDF file of this flyer, go to:
http://nsschapters.org/hub/pdf/green_clean.pdf

For more suggestions of how space activists can engage the more environmentally conscious persons in a constructive discussion (not in a debate!) go to:

<http://nsschapters.org/hub/events#enviro>

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