

COYOTE RAMBLINGS:

Thoughts That Have Taken Up Residence and Recur at the Most Inopportune of Times

* Western medical technicians (e.g., doctors) take a lot of credit for their work that is misplaced. They engage in complicated surgical techniques, in other words, they intentionally wound the body to “correct” or “fix” problems. If the body did not have the capacity to heal itself, none of their work would be of benefit. They are in fact utilizing capacities developed over 4.5 billion years of evolution as the core element of success in their work . . . but *they* take the credit. The ancient Greek legends are clear, this kind of arrogance, sooner or later, always generates a corrective response from the real world.

* There are 342 federally recognized tribes in the lower 48 states. Few of them get along with each other. While all were originally animist, most of their traditional religious ceremonies differ one from the other. Many contemporary tribal members are fundamentalist christians and disavow their tribe’s animist traditional ways; others are rapacious corporatists. There is no single tribal member that can speak for all tribal members or tribes in the United States, so it is an inaccurate universalism when one says, “We honor the Earth as sacred, as our mother.” Navajo plans to put an amusement park, hotel, and casino on the edge of the Grand Canyon with a ride to the bottom or their current massive coal mining are only two counter examples.

* Universal statements about any particular subgroup of humans are always incorrect. There is no such thing as “all white people” or “all black people” or “all men” or “all women” or “all” anything else. There is just the complexity of life in all its myriad forms. Universalist thinking saves the lazy and angry-wounded from dealing with that complexity. That is part of the point . . . to create an easy simplicity that the lazy or angry mind can easily point to as a problem that needs to be addressed. Complex social and ecological problems and solutions are never that simple.

* All indigenous tribes in North America practiced slavery prior to European contact. Five tribes fought for the confederacy: Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Seminole, and Creek. Most of them owned black slaves or had accepted escaped slaves or freedmen into their tribal groups. Intermarriage was common. In recent years most of these tribes are actively working to remove any tribal member with any trace of black blood from the tribal roles. The overt rationale is tribal purity, the unstated rationale is the desire to not share tribal money received from the US government and casino gambling. Both motivations are shameful.

* Nearly all, if not all, tribal groups in North America fermented alcoholic drinks prior to European contact.

* If you want to see the ecological impact of the rationalist objectivity and emotional dissociation common to western science and medicine you only have to look at a clear cut forest or an abandoned, decaying shopping mall or the millions of bankrupt people that live as best they can all around us. The state of mind at the core of any belief system and the exterior outcome are and will always be inseparable. They are two sides of the same coin. Each is immediately inherent in the other.

* If a story is in the newspaper, whatever they are talking about has already been going on a long time. What you now see is only the tip of the iceberg. They will never report the whole, complex story (and they will never report it early) even though every so often one of them tries to do so with one or two articles over the course of a career. Complexity in the media is always separated by long silences.

* Every news outlet has a bias, each slants the news in a particular way to meet particular political and social goals. There are no exceptions.

* The New York Times is a terrible newspaper and always has been.

* Western medicine's sole orientation and rationale, especially in the United, States is to separate as much money from the suffering as possible; it's purpose is not healing the sick.

* In Iran school children are taken to the graves of the country's great poets as part of their education. The children can easily, from memory, recite many of their most famous poems. I turn and look at my country and am ashamed.

* Mobs are mobs whether they are politically right or left. The reasons for the lynching are always loudly vocal and always morally wrong.

* When I began to die— and it became obvious — most of my friends abandoned me. I am unsure whether that says something about me or about them.

* Coca-cola in 1958 tasted a lot better than it does now. So did tomatoes (unless I buy the purple heirloom variety). As Alice Walker once said, "The minute an old black granny in Alabama said her greens tasted funny the whole country should have screeched to a halt." America always pays attention to the wrong things.

* But isn't that our problem? No matter what happens we never screech to a halt and say, "What the fuck have we been doing? We better stop and reassess and then do something different." As far as I can tell, countries are like serious alcoholics and drug addicts. Things have to hit bottom before they can admit they have a problem and will even consider doing the long slow difficult work of change, struggling to know themselves, or recognizing how seriously fucked up they are. Even then some of them prefer to keep on the same old path even though they're pretty

clear what the outcome is going to be. No one knows why this is true, self-hatred maybe, or maybe it's just a core hatred and deep rage for being born.

* The left has a very hard time understanding that many of the people who spend their lives creating clear cut forests or open pit mines or doing significantly damage to the Earth do so because they hate the Earth and the long-lived life around them. They hate the Earth for setting ecological limits on the years of a human life, that we all must die (biodegrade), that we are forced, as one writer once put it, to endure the ecological fascism of Earth. Even the humble among us, seeing the tree in the front yard that shades the house, the tree that will outlive them by a century, will cut it down just to ease the pain of the wound inside them. If we do not understand this none of us will ever understand why ecological information will never make a difference to what is happening in our world.

* Love does make a difference, in all things. We will still be wounded, we will still suffer hurts, we will still lose loved ones, we will still experience failure, we will still die. But with love, the touch of the beloved's hands upon us, the look in their eye, their companionship during the hard times, all the long years we journey in the midst of that love . . . well, that makes all the difference. Without it, the journey is just too hard to bear. With it . . . we can endure anything, even our dying.