

Either you believe Tony Robinson deserved to be killed or you don't. If you do, you should pack up, drive to Waukesha, drive a little further, get in a rowboat, go to the middle of Lake Michigan, and there, wallow in your own hatred for humanity, until you're either ready to come back and be a modestly positive force in society, or stay out there and die.

There are so many voices about Tony Robinson, and none of them are right. Mine neither. *Murder. Self-defense. Crazy mushrooms. Police brutality. Black violence. Black lives matter. All lives matter. He hit him with a two by four. He should have waited for backup. He saved the tenants upstairs. That's what you get when you hit a cop. Cops are racist pigs. I would have shot him myself.*

Robinson's body is fresh underground and we bear our teeth across the rift of an inextricably black and white and very gray tragedy, and I feel okay. To me, an argument is holy as a prayer before dinner. But will these prayers be answered? Which part of the prayers? The prayer for justice? Whose justice?

Will humanity hear the prayers? Humanity doesn't have a choice but to hear itself talking. But will humanity listen? Humanity always listens. But humanity moves as slowly as a young man grows old. But that's hard, and sad, because not all young men get the chance to grow old.

The Monday after the killing of Robinson my fourth and fifth grade students wanted to talk. They didn't stop wanting to talk. I had them write whatever they wanted for the last twenty minutes of class. My favorite line, from a child weighing perhaps 65 pounds: "I'm gonna beat your popo candyass so bad you pee your pants. But wait. You're a baby. You already peed your candyass pants."

All of my students, seventeen children of color, expressed such an explosive combination of indignation, ambivalence, and a fierce thirst for the facts, truth, and justice, that I would have been a piss-poor educator not to have set the grindstone down right there, where they could sharpen their tongues and writing and reading and analyses with a genuine passion and moral sense of direction.

Three weeks later the fifth grade teachers cleared the hallway of posters of Greek Gods. My kids made covers for their essays, and they posted them in the hallway. A week and a half later, two students, who aced the quiz that the others needed to review, got the opportunity to make a big title poster for our essay exhibition. "Here, write this," I said, as I handed them a piece of paper: "The Tragic Killing of Tony Robinson."

I bit my tongue at my next impulse: *Tell them not to draw a gun! No, don't tell them that. Then they'll want to draw a gun. Don't worry, they won't draw a gun!*

They drew a gun. A really big gun, with a round of golden bullets floating beneath the black handle. The other side of the poster had a grave, grass, and Tony Robinson's body buried beneath. The center of the poster read, "THE KILLING" in humongous letters, and "of tony robinson" in tiny letters.

Oh crap. But what is a drawing of a gun but a drawing of a gun? A cop comes into the building every Tuesday to visit the fifth graders and she carries the real thing, bullets and all. A drawing is just a drawing.

But you're going to get in trouble, tell them to take it down. No, it's my fault, I didn't set parameters, I can't tell them to re-do it. They'll fight me on it. Anyways, they're right. There was a gun, bullets, and a dead black body buried beneath the grass. That's a big part of who we are, as a society, and they laid it out true and simple. A cry from the mouth of babes. "THE KILLING" is exactly what happened. There was a KILLING.

The essays were taken down within a week. The long and short of it: some white parents banded together, determined to take

down the poster with a gun and "the Killing", and all of the essays, and waged a small e-mail campaign. I waged my own e-mail campaign, which made things worse. And subsequently, quintuple the e-mails in response flew over my head, to the my boss, my boss's boss, and my boss's boss's boss, requesting that I be severely punished, or let go. I got a slap on the wrist, a great deal of respect from my co-workers, and a reputation among the district administration as a jerkoff. And the essays came down. The band of white parents won.

My boss is planning to put the essays back up, just with more discretion in terms of what images are showing. It's a nice solution, since my kids had the same idea, and are handing her letters, making that exact request, along with a couple spirited accusations of racism.

This generation will be so much better equipped at handling these racially charged conversations than we are. We just need to open this space up to them, as early and as commonly as possible.

To anyone who doesn't agree with the work me and my like-minded colleagues have been doing, not liking drawings of guns is a half-decent reason. Not liking the opinions of seventeen children is not a decent reason. Believing that a racially charged tragedy shouldn't be taught in elementary schools is an institutionally racist reason. And believing that a 19 year old got what was coming to him is a reason I urge you to take to the bottom of lake Michigan, along with your confederate flag, and Nazi paraphernalia.

As members of the public, servants to the public, and public experts on public education, the vision of a more peaceful, more equal world, keeps many of us trudging on. And so it's particularly annoying, when other people have visions of a more peaceful, more equal world that does not involve cops not shooting black men (even when black may be acting violent, or even deadly).

Anyway, who doesn't want a less violent, more equal world? At least we can agree on that. It'll simply take the painstaking opening of millions of white hearts, among many other, extremely difficult things, to get us to stand from the same heights and see the same things.

Next thing we got to do is stop making so many fabulous war machines, and start figuring out a way for police to protect us without sometimes killing us. Will our young children of color get to see this day? I hope so. I think so. Maybe. Some of them will. I don't know.

I'm not black, or even brown, but I'd be an asshole not to say it and mean it. Black lives matter. I mean it, and so should you.

'NOT ALL YOUNG MEN'
BY
TEDDY MARINO

Modern science is projected as a universal, value-free system of knowledge, which has displaced all other belief and knowledge systems by its universality and value neutrality, and by the logic of its method to arrive at objective claims about nature. Yet the dominant stream of modern science, the reductionist or mechanical paradigm, is a particular response of a particular group of people. It is a specific project of western man which came into being during the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries as the much-acclaimed Scientific Revolution. During the last few years feminist scholarship has begun to recognise that the dominant science system emerged as a liberating force not for humanity as a whole, but as a masculine and patriarchal project which necessarily entailed the subjugation of both nature and women.

Bacon (1561-1626) was the father of modern science, the originator of the concept of the modern research institute and industrial science, and the inspiration behind the Royal Society. His contribution to modern science and its organisation is critical. Bacon's programme was a special programme benefiting the middle class, European, male entrepreneur through the conjunction of human knowledge and power in science.

In Bacon's experimental method, which was central to this masculine project, there was a dichotomising between male and female, mind and matter, objective and subjective, rational and emotional, and a conjunction of masculine and scientific dominating over nature, women and the non-west. His was not a 'neutral', 'objective', 'scientific' method - it was a masculine mode of aggression against nature and domination over women. The severe testing of hypotheses through controlled manipulations of nature, and the necessity of such manipulations if experiments are to be repeatable, are here formulated in clearly sexist metaphors. Both nature and inquiry appear conceptualized in ways modelled on rape and torture - on man's most violent and misogynous relationships with women - and this modelling is advanced as a reason to value science. The discipline of scientific knowledge and the mechanical inventions it leads to, do not, according to Bacon, 'merely exert a gentle guidance over nature's course; they have the power to conquer and subdue her, to shake her to her foundations'.

'We make by act trees and flowers to come earlier or later than their seasons, and to come up and bear more speedily than by their natural course they do. We make them by act greater, much more than their nature, and their fruit greater and sweeter and of differing taste, smell, colour and figure from their nature.' For Bacon, nature was no longer Mother Nature, but a female nature, conquered by an aggressive masculine mind. As Carolyn Merchant points out, this transformation of nature from a living, nurturing mother to inert, dead and manipulable matter was eminently suited to the exploitation imperative of growing capitalism. The nurturing earth image acted as a cultural constraint on exploitation of nature. 'One does not readily slay a mother, dig her entrails or mutilate her body.' But the mastery and domination images created by the Baconian programme and the scientific revolution removed all restraint and functioned as cultural sanctions for the denudation of nature. Because nature was not viewed as a system of dead, inert particles moved by external, rather than inherent forces, the mechanical framework itself could legitimate the manipulation of nature. Moreover, as a conceptual framework, the mechanical order had associated with it a framework of values based on power, fully compatible with the directions taken by commercial capitalism.

The witch hunting hysteria which was aimed at annihilating women in Europe as knowers and experts was cotemporous with two centuries of scientific revolution. It reached its peak with Galileo's Dialogue concerning the Two Chief World Systems and died with the emergence of the Royal Society of London and the Paris Academy of Sciences.⁸The interrogation

of witches as a symbol for the interrogation of nature, the courtroom as model for its inquisition, and torture through mechanical devices as a tool for the subjugation of disorder were fundamental to the scientific method as power.

For more than three centuries, reductionism has ruled as the only valid scientific method and system, distorting the history of the west as well as the non-west. It has hidden its ideology behind projected objectivism, neutrality and progress. The ideology that hides ideology has transformed complex pluralistic traditions of knowledge into a monolith of gender-based, class-based thought and transformed this particular tradition into a superior and universal tradition to be superimposed on all classes, genders and cultures which it helps in controlling and subjugating. This ideological projection has kept modern reductionist science inaccessible to criticism. The parochial roots of science in patriarchy and in a particular class and culture have been concealed behind a claim to universality, and can be seen only through other traditions - of women and non-western peoples. It is these subjugated traditions that are revealing how modern science is gendered, how it is specific to the needs and impulses of the dominant western culture and how ecological destruction and nature's exploitation are inherent to its logic. It is becoming increasingly clear that scientific neutrality has been a reflection of ideology, not history, and science is similar to all other socially constructed categories. This view of science as a social and political project of modern western man emerging from the responses of those who were defined into nature and made passive and powerless: Mother Earth, women and colonised cultures. It is from these fringes that we are beginning to discern the economic, political and cultural mechanisms that have allowed a parochial science to dominate and how mechanisms of power and violence can be eliminated for a degendered, humanly inclusive knowledge.

EXCERPT FROM
'MODERN SCIENCE AS
PATRIARCHY'S
PROJECT'
BY VANADNA SHIVA

I became an “environmentalist” because of a strong emotional reaction to wild places and the other-than-human world: to beech trees and hedgerows and pounding waterfalls, to songbirds and sunsets, to the flying fish in the Java Sea and the canopy of the rainforest at dusk when the gibbons come to the waterside to feed. From that reaction came a feeling, which became a series of thoughts: that such things are precious for their own sake, that they are food for the human soul and that they need people to speak for them to, and defend them from, other people, because they cannot speak our language and we have forgotten how to speak theirs. And because we are killing them to feed ourselves and we know it and we care about it, sometimes, but we do it anyway because we are hungry, or we have persuaded ourselves that we are.

But these are not, I think, very common views today. Today’s environmentalism is as much a victim of the contemporary cult of utility as every other aspect of our lives, from science to education. We are not environmentalists now because we have an emotional reaction to the wild world. In this country, most of us wouldn’t even know where to find it. We are environmentalists now in order to promote something called “sustainability”. What does this curious, plastic word mean? It does not mean defending the non-human world from the ever-expanding empire of *Homo sapiens sapiens*, though some of its adherents like to pretend it does, even to themselves. It means sustaining human civilisation at the comfort level which the world’s rich people - us - feel is their right, without destroying the “natural capital” or the “resource base” which is needed to do so.

It is, in other words, an entirely human-centred piece of politicking, disguised as concern for “the planet”. In a very short time - just over a decade - this worldview has become all-pervasive. It is voiced by the president of the USA and the president of Anglo-Dutch Shell and many people in-between. The success of environmentalism has been total - at the price of its soul.

Let me offer up just one example of how this pact has worked. If “sustainability” is about anything, it is about carbon. Carbon and climate change. To listen to most environmentalists today, you would think that these were the only things in the world worth talking about. The business of “sustainability” is the business of preventing carbon-emissions. Carbon-emissions threaten a potentially massive downgrading of our prospects for material advancement as a species. They threaten to unacceptably erode our resource-base and put at risk our vital hoards of natural capital. If we cannot sort this out quickly, we are going to end up darning our socks again and growing our own carrots and holidaying in Weston-super-Mare and other such unthinkable things. All of the horrors our grandparents left behind will return like deathless legends. Carbon-emissions must be “tackled” like a drunk with a broken bottle: quickly, and with maximum force.

This reductive approach to the human-environmental challenge leads to an obvious conclusion: if carbon is the problem, then “zero-carbon” is the solution. Society needs to go about its business without spewing the stuff out. It needs to do this quickly, and by any means necessary. Build enough of the right kind of energy technologies, quickly enough, to generate the power we “need” without producing greenhouse-gases and there will be no need to ever turn the lights off; no need to ever slow down. The carbon must be stopped, like the Umayyad at Tours, or all will be lost.

To do this will require the large-scale harvesting of the planet’s ambient energy: sunlight, wind, water power. This means that vast new conglomerations of human industry are going to appear in places where this energy is most abundant. Unfortunately, these places coincide with some of the world’s wildest, most beautiful and most untouched landscapes. The sort of

places which environmentalism came into being to protect.

And so the deserts, perhaps the landscape always most resistant to permanent human conquest, are to be colonised by vast “solar arrays”, glass and steel and aluminium, the size of small countries. The mountains and moors, the wild uplands, are to be staked out like vampires in the sun, their chests pierced with rows of 500-foot wind-turbines and associated access-roads, masts, pylons and wires. The open oceans, already swimming in our plastic refuse and emptying of marine life, will be home to enormous offshore turbine-ranges and hundreds of wave-machines strung around the coastlines like Victorian necklaces. The rivers are to see their estuaries severed and silted by industrial barrages. The croplands and even the rainforests, the richest habitats on this terrestrial Earth, are already highly profitable sites for biofuel plantations designed to provide guilt-free car-fuel to the motion-hungry masses of Europe and America.

What this adds up to should be clear enough, yet many people who should know better choose not to see it. This is business-as-usual: the expansive, colonising, progressive human narrative, shorn only of the carbon. It is the latest phase of our careless, self-absorbed, ambition-addled destruction of the wild, the unpolluted and the non-human. It is the mass destruction of the world’s remaining wild places in order to feed the human economy. And without any sense of irony, people are calling this “environmentalism”.

EXCERPT
FROM
'CONFESSIONS
OF A RECOVERING
ENVIRONMENTALIST'
BY PAUL KINGSNORTH

Love the quick profit, the annual raise,
vacation with pay. Want more
of everything ready-made. Be afraid
to know your neighbors and to die.
And you will have a window in your head.
Not even your future will be a mystery
any more. Your mind will be punched in a card
and shut away in a little drawer.
When they want you to buy something
they will call you. When they want you
to die for profit they will let you know.

So, friends, every day do something
that won't compute.
Love the world. Work for nothing.
Take all that you have and be poor.
Love someone who does not deserve it.
Denounce the government and embrace
the flag. Hope to live in that free
republic for which it stands.
Give your approval to all you cannot
understand. Praise ignorance, for what man
has not encountered he has not destroyed.

Ask the questions that have no answers.
Invest in the millennium. Plant sequoias.
Say that your main crop is the forest
that you did not plant,
that you will not live to harvest.
Say that the leaves are harvested
when they have rotted into the mold.
Call that profit. Prophesy such returns.

Put your faith in the two inches of humus
that will build under the trees
every thousand years.
Listen to carrion – put your ear
close, and hear the faint chattering
of the songs that are to come.
Expect the end of the world. Laugh.
Laughter is immeasurable. Be joyful
though you have considered all the facts.
So long as women do not go cheap
for power, please women more than men.
Ask yourself: Will this satisfy
a woman satisfied to bear a child?
Will this disturb the sleep
of a woman near to giving birth?

Go with your love to the fields.
Lie down in the shade. Rest your head
in her lap. Swear allegiance
to what is nighest your thoughts.
As soon as the generals and the politicians
can predict the motions of your mind,
lose it. Leave it as a sign
to mark the false trail, the way
you didn't go. Be like the fox
who makes more tracks than necessary,
some in the wrong direction.
Practice resurrection.

' MANIFESTO: MAD FARMERS LIBERATION FRONT'

BY WENDEL BARRY

Anti-depressant Schnapps

(recipe borrowed from Margas father in Chile)

Ingredients

- 750ml bottle of Schnapps
- a bunch of St. Johns Wort
- 100ml freshly squeezed fruit juice
- 100g sugar

Method

- pour the Schnapps in to a separate container.
- persuade the St. Johns Wort into the empty bottle, then add sugar.
- shake well, marvel at the sugar encrusted leaves.
- drink a little of the Schnapps with a friend or lover.
- replace the Schnapps into the bottle, followed by the fruit juice, and agitate the bottle. With the lid on, of course.
- make sure the plant stays covered in liquid.
- use/drink as and when required.

Homemade Muesli

Ingredients

- 2kg various oats and cereals
- 100g sunflower seeds
- 100g raisins
- 50g sesame seeds
- 100g various dried fruits
- cooking oil

Method

- heat a little oil in a pan.
- lightly fry the sunflower seeds, stirring oft, relishing the scent of toasting nuts.
- add the sesame seeds, fry for a minute or so, then remove from heat, leave to cool.
- lovingly chop the dried fruits.
- by hand, in a large bowl, mix the cereals and oats with your tasty fruits and nuts.
- place in an airtight container of choice.
- enjoy at leisure, and please, feel free to experiment.

Homegrown tomatoes, with red onion and balsamic vinegar

Ingredients

- 500g lush, ripe tomatoes
- 2 red onions
- a good splash of balsamic vinegar
- salt and pepper to taste
- a pinch of sugar
- cooking oil

Method

- heat the oil¹. Use a favourite pan.
- chop the onions into 1cm pieces, add to the pan and season with salt and pepper.
- slice the tomatoes thickly and add to the pan when onions are nearly cooked.
- after a minute or so, add a generous splash of balsamic vinegar.
- shortly after, when the tomatoes have taken on the delicious flavour of the dark vinegar, remove from heat and serve to those you love.

Hand-ground peanut butter

Ingredients

- 500g unroasted peanuts
- nut oil of your choice
- a sweetner of your desire
- salt, to your taste

Method

- in an oven set to medium heat, lightly toast the nuts, taking the upmost care not to burn them.
- when satisfied, remove and cool.
- using a pestle and mortar, slowly, sensually, grind the nuts.
- add a little oil, sweetner and salt.
- test & taste.
- maybe more grinding is needed.
- more oil, salt, honey perhaps?
- continue until all the nuts are ground to butter, and triumphantly place into a container of your choice.
- enjoy spread thickly onto hot toast, or eat with a spoon straight from the jar whilst no one is looking.