

ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGY AND SUSTAINABILITY

Course Syllabus, Fall 2003
1270 Grainger Hall

IES 400, LECTURE 1
GEN BUS 600

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A Joint Effort of the
INSTITUTE OF ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES
And the
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN - MADISON

COURSE OVERVIEW

Objectives:

This course is for students interested in the relationship of environmental protection and sustainability and the ways in which these issues affect corporate strategy, public policy, public decision-making, and individual decision-making. The goal of the course is to give students the knowledge and skills so that you can help organizations understand and act on the principles of sustainability. I also expect that you will leave this class with a deeper understanding about the relationship of day-to-day decisions and the impact of those decisions on the environment and on those less fortunate than us.

Though this is not solely a class about the development of corporate strategy, it is clear that future leadership in the sustainability area will come from, and indeed must come from, the private sector. As one of, if not THE, dominant social institutions of our time, corporations have the financial resources, the technology, the know-how and the global reach to successfully respond to the challenge of sustainability. However, all segments of society have roles to play as we deal with the enormous amounts of waste that society generates which cannot be assimilated by nature or reused by industry.

Over the next two decades, corporations will be challenged to create entirely new, environmentally-sustainable and socially-responsive strategies. I expect this challenge will not come from regulators, but from society. Thus, the era of government's sole reliance on "command and control" approaches to environmental protection is coming to an end, and new strategies must be developed that encourage businesses to reduce costs and inefficiencies, and encourage innovation and technological advances. Progressive companies are investigating the financial benefits of operating in a "sustainable" manner, and the most innovative are carving out market niches that reflect the basic tenets of sustainability. The goal of these businesses is to make a profit within the conditions of sustainability through innovation – whether that innovation is in product or service design, production, distribution or end-of-life issues.

The outline of new roles for regulatory agencies, environmental groups, trade associations, and the public is being developed. This outline is premised on the belief that greater environmental gains can be achieved through a process oriented around preventing the creation of waste and more meaningful involvement of all interested and affected parties. Since effective environmental management will mean learning to work with environmental groups, regulators, and other stakeholders, this course seeks a mix of students, representing varying perspectives and disciplines. The class will consist of lectures (generally guest lectures), supplemented with student discussions based on readings and case studies, and research and writing about ways that we can change things right now so that as a society we are able to live and or make choices in a more sustainable manner.

By the end of the term, students should have gained a deeper understanding of how to answer the following questions: What will drive the next generation of environmental protection efforts? What role will the public sector play if "sustainability" does drive business decisions? How can environmental issues truly be strategic issues to companies? What role can I play as I make my major lifestyle choices?

Remember, this is essentially a survey course, and I hope to whet your appetite for more information on many of the subjects that will be covered.

WARNING: This class carries a relatively heavy reading load for most of the semester.

You will be required to indicate that you have done the readings each week (see below). You will learn as much from the preparation of the readings as you will from the lectures. It is essential therefore that you be present and be prepared to discuss the major themes from the readings.

Class participation will be a key factor in the success of the course. *This is not a course geared toward "passive learning".* Your purpose for being in this class should not be to passively receive information from "experts", but rather to actively engage in your own inquiry and restructure your thoughts about, and your relationship with, the tenets of sustainability.

A substantial amount of "out-of-class" time will be required as you work with classmates toward the production of a final paper.

This class will formally introduce the concept of personal integrity through your responses to the readings each week. This university does not teach about the importance of integrity in any systematized way; however, I believe that any individual's future success in whatever they choose to do is attributable, to a large degree, to their personal integrity.

I will ask that you send us by email each week brief comments, reflections or questions from the readings you have done. Please don't send me anything if you haven't really done all the readings--ala the integrity issue. To say it again, even with the best of intentions sometimes work just doesn't get done. If your actions are guided by your integrity, you will not submit anything that week.

As described above, each week you will be asked to send the list serve (sustain-ability@lists.students.wisc.edu), that contains brief comments, reflections or questions about the week's readings, due by 10:00 p.m. on the Sunday before class. For example, this email might reflect your understanding of the readings and the relationship of the readings to each other or to one (or more) earlier classes.

You will also be asked to write two short papers during the semester. Short means 2 pages (standard margins, **single spaced** and 10 point or 12 point font). It is important to note that you will be graded on both the content and your writing skills. This means that your factual arguments and logic are given equal weight with grammar, paper organization, development of your ideas, and other writing skills. Being able to say what you need to say concisely is an important skill to learn.

You will be asked to work in groups on a project that will not only satisfy the major portion of your grade, but will also satisfy a research and analysis need of the group that you are working with. This assignment is described in more detail in a separate handout. The first part of your final paper will provide the basic detail about the sustainability topic chosen. This part of the paper should then serve as background material for the preparation of a strategic recommendation. You will be asked to recommend an action or implementation plan, and describe how it could be implemented within the "client". Your recommendation is an advocacy piece to convince a decision-maker to do what you want. You must develop your most convincing argument(s) and be prepared to answer objections (it costs too much, no one would want to do this, etc.). This is NOT your traditional academic paper, and if you insist on writing a traditional research paper, you will have missed the point of this assignment. You must talk with experts as you prepare your recommendation. I think you will find it useful to distinguish the kind of writing you have learned to do in an academic setting from the kind of writing you will be asked to do in the real world.

One special note, on the two weeks that the Packers play on Monday night football, we will be ending class 25 minutes early.

GRADING

25% of your final grade will be based upon class participation, readings preparation and associated emails.

10% will be based upon your journals.

20% of your final grade will be based upon your papers.

35% of your final grade will be based upon your final project.

10% of your final grade will be based upon your presentation of your final paper.

In fairness to others in the class, late submissions of the written material will be penalized at a rate of 20% of the submission's value per day (e.g., your final papers presented one day late will receive at most a weight of 28 out of the 35 points available).

LIST OF MATERIALS

Books:

The Consumers Guide to Effective Environmental Choices, by Michael Brower and Warren Leon (New York, NY; Three Rivers Press, 1999). \$15.00.

Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things, by William McDonough and Michael Braungart (New York; North Point Press, 2002). \$25.00

Morning Earth: Field Notes in Poetry, by John Caddy (Milkweed Editions, 2003) \$13.95

REQUIRED READINGS:

Reading Packet available from Underground Textbook Exchange on State Street

Recommended Books:

[Sustainable Planet: Solutions for the Twenty-First Century](#), by Juliet Schor and Betsy Taylor, (Boston, MA. Beacon Press, 2003) \$12.50 (this book is out of print. You may be able to find it through Amazon.com or your other favorite bookdealer.)

September 8) Introduction - The current system of environmental protection: Where we've been and where we are.

The first class is designed to accomplish five things. First, the goals, purposes, structure and format of the class will be made clear through a review of the syllabus and other relevant materials. Second, students will fill out information about themselves and indicate what grade they intend to work for in the class. Third, we will discuss the purpose and structure of the poetry journals that you will be asked to keep, Fourth, we will discuss the final project with representatives from some of the potential clients. Finally, we will discuss the history of U.S. environmental protection policy. We will then talk about the three major approaches that the government uses for exerting influence over business decisions about the environment. One approach is characterized by rules and regulations that specify what a company can and can not do. This approach has been accused of creating perverse incentives and disincentives for holistically addressing environmental problems. The second approach involves managing the environment through "the market". This approach is theoretically appealing, but has been difficult to implement. The third approach involves disseminating information to the public, and allowing public pressure to influence corporate decisions.

September 15) The Concept of Sustainability: Developing a Framework for Discussion

We will start off the class by introducing ourselves with one truth and one lie (that means everyone needs to decide what truth and what lie they are going to use before they are called on). We will then define the term "sustainability" and I will explain how one group has translated the concept into issues that anyone can understand and agree on. I will then discuss factors favoring the movement toward a more sustainable society, and impediments to that movement. Finally, I want to view the events of September 11 through the lens of sustainability.

READINGS: *The Future in a Word*, by Alan AtKisson from *Believing Cassandra: An Optimist Looks at a Pessimist's World*, (White River Junction, VT, 1999) pp.133-152.

Saying Grace, by Barbara Kingsolver from *Small Wonder* (HarperCollins Publishers, 2002) pp. 22-30

The Natural Step: A Framework for Achieving Sustainability in Our Organizations by Karl Henrik Robert, from *Innovations in Management Series* (Pegasus Communications, Cambridge, MA 1997) pp. 1-14.

PROJECT PREFERENCES DUE

September 22) The Role of Government in Sustainability

This country's approach to environmental regulation has evolved over time. While clearly many of the gains we have seen in the quality of our environment can be attributed to actions of the government, continuing trust and belief in the government as the protector of the public is at a low ebb. Many now question whether the traditional role of regulation and enforcement is likely to lead the US to a sustainable future. Peter will talk about a business perspective on the role of the government as we look toward the future. What role is there to play for this much maligned sector?

Guest Lecturer: Peter Peshek, Esq., DeWitt, Ross & Stevens, Madison

READINGS: *Government's Business: Enabling Corporate Sustainability* by Roger Cowe and Jonathon Porritt (Forum for the Future, London, UK, 2002).

Business Perspectives on Regulation, by Ans Kolk, from Economics of Environmental Management, (Essex, England , 2000) pp.27-53.

PROJECT TEAMS DISTRIBUTED

September 29 The Evolution of Environmental Regulatory Programs

Packer Game @ Bears

This country's approach to environmental regulation has evolved over time. The days of solving problems by "upping the ante" for businesses, either by increasing the potential fines, or increasing the number of enforcement people in the field, are falling behind us. This is partly because this approach to protecting the environment is best suited for a small number of large emitters of pollution. Grafting this approach onto the different problems that we now face is neither efficient nor effective. To fill this void, a number of groups, including some state regulatory programs, are recommending alternative or supplemental approaches to protecting the environment.

Guest Lecturer: Scott Hassett, Secretary of the WI Department of Natural Resources

READINGS: From Environmental Management to Environmental Strategy, by Andrew Hoffman, from Competitive Environmental Strategy, (Washington, D.C. , 2000) pp.3-26.

A New Era: The Coming Regulatory Revolution ... and What It Means for Business, published in the Green Business Letter, January, 2001.

October 6) What Does a Business Interest in Sustainability Look Like?

The carpet and rug industry has been a surprising leader in exploring what sustainability might mean in the development of corporate strategy. Two heavy-weights in the carpet industry are Collins & Aikman and Interface. Dobbin Callahan will talk about what has motivated C & A to embrace the concepts of sustainability by designing carpet in an ecologically friendly way.

Guest Lecturer: Dobbin Callahan, Collins & Aikman Floorcoverings, Dalton, GA.

READINGS: Environmental Innovation and Accountability at Collins & Aikman, by Mac Bridger, Vol. 5, No. 3 Corporate Environmental Strategy, Spring, 1998, pp. 1-4.

Toward Factories Without Smokestacks: Environmental Competition Between Interface and Collins & Aikman, published by Future 500 on the web (but no longer available), 2000.

On Course: More on the Interface Journey Toward Sustainability, by Ray Anderson, published in the Green Business Letter (originally published on the web, but no longer available) 2000.

PAPER ASSIGNMENT: Please respond to the following editorial from the New York Times. You can either write to support the author, or write to oppose him. In either case, your response may not exceed 2 pages single-spaced.

Is There a Place for DDT?

August 7, 2003

By HENRY I. MILLER

<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/08/07/opinion/07MILL.html?ex=1061270019&ei=1&en=0e04b8d90f6bb5cc>

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STANFORD, Calif.—The outbreak of West Nile virus in the United States is rapidly becoming a significant threat to public health. With the peak season just beginning, the mosquito-borne virus has been found in animals (primarily birds and horses) in 38 states, and has caused 103 serious infections and three deaths in humans in 15 states.

Last year, there were more than 4,000 cases and almost 300 deaths. We may be on the verge of an epidemic, but there is no treatment and a vaccine is at least a decade away.

Public health officials have recognized the seriousness of the problem, but too often their response has been tepid and designed to avoid controversy. The Centers for Disease Control Web site, for example, advises people to avoid mosquito bites by covering up, using insect repellent, and staying indoors during peak mosquito hours. Missing from its list of suggestions, however, is any mention of insecticides or widespread spraying. Anyone curious about the role of pesticides in battling mosquitoes and West Nile is directed to a maze of other Web sites.

In the absence of a vaccine, elimination of the organism that spreads the West Nile virus - in this case, the mosquito - is the key to prevention, but fundamental shortcomings in public policy limit the tools that are available.

In 1972, on the basis of dubious data about toxicity to fish and migrating birds, the Environmental Protection Agency banned virtually all uses of the pesticide DDT, an inexpensive and effective pesticide once widely deployed to kill disease-carrying insects. Allowing political sentiment to trump science, regulators also cited the possibility that DDT posed a cancer risk for humans - an assertion based on studies showing an increased incidence of the illness in mice that were fed extremely high doses of the pesticide.

Not only did government regulators minimize scientific evidence of the safety and effectiveness of DDT, they also failed to appreciate the distinction between its large-scale use in agriculture and more limited application for controlling carriers of human disease. Although DDT can be a toxic substance, there is a big difference between applying large amounts of it in the environment - as American farmers did before it was banned - and applying it carefully and sparingly to fight mosquitoes and other disease-carrying insects. A basic principle of toxicology is that the dose makes the poison.

The regulators who banned DDT also failed to take into consideration the inadequacy of alternatives. Because it persists after spraying, DDT works far better than many pesticides now in use, some of which are toxic to fish and other aquatic organisms. (While its longevity poses risks, they are minimized with targeted use.) Also, the need to spray other insecticides repeatedly drives up costs. For example, budget problems compelled Maryland this summer to turn down requests for spraying from communities badly infested with mosquitoes.

Given the long-term ineffectiveness of other pesticides, DDT remains the best alternative to fighting mosquitoes and the West Nile virus. It's worth recalling that DDT worked before, eradicating malaria from the United States. It's worth recalling, too, that since DDT was widely banned, insect-borne diseases like malaria and dengue fever have been on the rise worldwide. The World Health Organization estimates that malaria kills about one million people annually, and that there are 300 million to 500 million new cases each year.

How can we drain the public policy swamp? First, the government should undertake a re-evaluation of the voluminous data on DDT that has been compiled since the 1970's. It should also make DDT available for mosquito control in the United States.

Second, the United States should oppose international strictures on DDT. This includes retracting American support for the United Nations Persistent Organic Pollutants Convention, which makes it exceedingly difficult for developing countries - many of which are plagued by malaria - to use DDT.

Finally, federal officials should embark on a campaign to educate local authorities and citizens about the safety and potential importance of DDT. Right now, most of what people hear is the reflexively anti-pesticide drumbeat of the environmental movement.

Because DDT has such a bad rap, it will be politically difficult to resurrect its use. But we should begin the process now. In the meantime, we'll just slather on the insect repellent, slap, scratch - and occasionally become infected with a life-threatening but preventable disease.

Henry I. Miller, a doctor, is a fellow at the Hoover Institution. He was a Food and Drug Administration official from 1979-1994

October 13) What Role for Business in Leading

Business, especially big business, is positioned to provide leadership as we as a society cope with the challenge of sustainability. However, providing leadership is not without risk. In the past, business has looked to government to provide leadership in the environmental area. Erroll will talk about what role Alliant is now playing and will talk about the larger responsibilities that business has

to society in this time of transition.

Guest lecturer: Erroll Davis, CEO, Alliant Energy

READINGS: Corporate Responsibility: Tree Huggers, Soy Lovers and Profits by Marc Gunther, Fortune, June 9, 2003.

Cradle to Cradle, chs 2 - 3

October 20) Business and Sustainability: Sustainability as an opportunity

Odessa runs a restaurant that epitomizes the concepts of sustainability. She has used her purchasing power to support the development of organic options for virtually every food she serves. She participates in a network that supports fledgling sustainable businesses and trains chefs to think sustainably. She operates her business as a model for those that are looking for models. In short, she is one of Madison's shining examples of the possibilities that open up to determined people.

Guest lecturer: Odessa Piper, Owner, L'eToile Restaurant

READINGS: Strategies for a Sustainable World by Stuart Hart, vol. 75, No. 1 of the Harvard Business Review, pp. 67-76, (January-February, 1997).

Cradle to Cradle, ch. 4.

October 27) An Environmentalist's View of Sustainability

David will talk about the changing role of environmental groups and other non-profits in working toward a more sustainable world. There has been some movement within the non-profit community toward building constructive relationships with business (as opposed to developing and maintaining an antagonistic relationship). To some, this is a sign of progress and moving forward. To others, this is an indication that the non-profit sector has been coopted by the business community.

Guest Lecturer: David Wood, Grassroots Recycling Network.

READINGS: Governance Barriers To A Sustainable World: How Do We Get There From Here? By Richard Lamm, Vol. LXVII, Vital Speeches Of The Day, NO. 21, Aug. 15, 2001.

The Johannesburg Conundrum: Do We Save the World, or Save the World's Poor? By Michael Brown, published in The Independent, Aug 13, 2002 (published on-line at http://argument.independent.co.uk/regular_columnists/michael_brown/story.jsp?story=323911).

Rules of Engagement: The Timing, Tenacity and Tact of Company-NGO Confrontations from The Green Business Letter, (Summer, 2001).

Consumers Guide to Effective Environmental Choices, chs. 1-3

PAPER ASSIGNMENT: Second paper due. In two pages (no more) develop 4 recommendations for your current employer (if you are employed) or, if you are not, develop 4 recommendations for a manufacturer or retailer of your choice, for how they can better embrace the concepts of sustainability. These need to be specific recommendations that are backed up by an explanation for why the recommendations would make a difference. For instance, you may recommend that your local coffee shop start selling fair trade coffee. You would support this recommendation by laying

out why such an action would be better for the environment, better for property owners who are growing the coffee beans, and better for the shop because customers are willing to support such an effort, and may take their business to a shop that does sell fair trade coffee. But, your coffeehouse may need to educate its customers about these benefits, so education would be included in the recommendations. You may also recommend that at first, the additional cost of fair trade coffee be absorbed by the coffeehouse while it was building up an understanding about the benefits of such coffee and building up a demand. You may recommend how advertising would be done and that the focus would be on education. In short, all of your recommendations could be linked together to accomplish one overall goal that was designed to be better environmentally and socially. This does not have to be the case though. The recommendations do not need to be linked, and may address diverse steps that lead in a more sustainable direction. Finally, present your recommendations to your boss or to the manufacturer or retailer that you are writing about. If you get a response, please share it with the class.

November 3) Another View of the Government's Role in Promoting Sustainability (or at least getting out of the way)

We will explore both where we have been (touching on the history of conservation/environmental protection efforts) and then exploring what government is doing now (both to promote and hinder our progress toward sustainability), and what it might do in the future.

Guest Lecturer: John Sharpless, Professor

READINGS: Sleepwalking to Extinction: Something about the human mind appears to prevent us from grasping the reality of climate change, by George Monbiot, *The Guardian*, August 12, 2003.

Do We Really Care Enough to Save Ourselves? By Jonathon Porritt, *The Guardian*, August 22, 2002, (published on-line at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/Print/0,3858,4485139,00.html>).

Last Gasp by Jonathon Porritt, *The Guardian*, July 17, 2002, (published on-line at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/Print/0,3858,4462437,00.html>).

Cradle to Cradle, ch. 5.

November 10) The Role of "Heart" in Sustainability – or Can We Really Change?

Packer Game

Sustainability is the touchstone for long term business survival. Traditional business interests have prevented a shift toward sustainability. Dave Boyer will talk about his efforts to develop a business that is focused on more than the bottom line and the challenges involved in developing such a model.

Guest Lecturer: David C. Boyer, CEO, Madison Cutting Die, Inc.

READINGS: The Next Industrial Revolution by Ray C. Anderson, Vol. 13, No. 2 Perspectives on Business and Global Change, June, 1999, pp. 29-42.

Mother Earth and Other Business Blather, by Harold Geneen, from The Synergy Myth, and other Ailments of Business Today, ch. 13, (1997).

Putting Your Heart Into It by Mallen Baker, published in *Ethical Corporation*, September 12, 2002 (and available on-line at www.ethicalcorp.com/content_print.asp?ContentID=198).

November 17) The Impossibility of Sustainability: Should This Change Our Commitment?

Sustainability has proven, and will continue to prove, to be a very difficult adjustment for western society, especially Americans. In fact, some commentators argue that it is inconsistent with some of the underlying beliefs of our society and that mankind is not genetically equipped to make the changes that sustainability would require. David will talk about the science behind sustainability and the social setting against which sustainability is set. After the break, we will critique the reading for today by Lomborg. This is an example of one perspective being widely picked up by the popular press. Please think about this article and be prepared to offer your thoughts.

Guest Lecturer: David Liebl, UW Extension

READINGS: Sustainable Development: History and Horizons by Alain Lipietz, lectured delivered 11/18/96 at the School of Fine Arts in Paris

(http://www.uwex.edu/ces/ag/sus/html/sustainable_development.html)

In the Beginning by Brad Allenby, The Green Business Letter, April 2003, p. 8.

USA Vs. SD: Can American Values and Sustainable Development Live Together in Peace? By Braden Allenby, Tomorrow, July/August, 1998, p. 6.

The Environmentalists are Wrong by Bjorn Lomborg, published in the New York Times, August 26, 2002 and found online at

<http://www.nytimes.com/2002/08/26/opinion/26LOMB.html?pagewanted=print&position...>

Global Sustainability, Local Responsibility: Tackling Global Environmental Challenges in Your Own Life and Making a Difference

This is a lecture that Jon gave at the Madison Doers Offering Emergency Relief Support 2003 kick-off meeting

Guest Lecturer: Jon Foley, Director of the Center for Sustainability and Global Environment, UW-Madison

READINGS:

Cradle to Cradle, ch. 6.

Consumers Guide to Effective Environmental Choices, chs 4-6.

November 24) Sustainability and Personal Decisions: What You Can Do to Promote Sustainability

Sustainability is not a concept that is only applicable to large institutions. In fact, if our society is truly to move in a sustainable direction, it must start with individual decisions. Decisions on what to buy, how to react to advertising (how much to buy), how to allocate our energy and resources and general lifestyle choices. In addition, you might consider the following four guidelines: 1) conserve; 2) use decentralized energy sources, especially renewables, and buy as locally as possible; 3) actively seek out and support those that follow sustainable practices. That goes for making purchases as well as investing in socially responsible companies; and 4) watchdog the big boys to help hold them to their word. Let people know when they falter and bring class action lawsuits when they break environmental regulations. Robt. F. Kennedy Jr. and his Riverwatch Network have had great success with this last. Support the Environmental Resource Defense fund, Sierra Club and others that initiate legal actions. In short, every decision that you make during the day does make a difference. Make those decisions with an eye toward acting sustainably.

Guest Lecturer: Cal DeWitt, Director, Au Sable Institute, UW Institute for Environmental Studies

Video: The Man Who Planted Trees.

READINGS: In Search of the Future: Notes for Spiritual Adventurers by Dexter Dunphy (provided by the author)

Dying of Consumption: The More we Spend, the Happier we Become. Probably. By George Monbiot, published in The Guardian, Dec 28, 2000.

Gold Footprints by Sara Ryan, published in Sustainability Network Update 24E, March 27, 2003 (available on-line at www.bml.csiro.au/Snnewsletters.htm).

Walking North on a Southbound Train by David Orr, published by Rachel's Environment and Health News, April 3, 2003 at www.rachel.org.

Consumers Guide to Effective Environmental Choices, chs 7 and Epilogue.

December 1) Final papers due and first presentations of Final Papers to entire class.

December 8) Presentation of remainder of Final Papers to entire class.

Schedules and Procedures: Scheduled meetings are summarized immediately below.

Summary Schedule:

September 16: Project preferences due

September 23: Project teams created

October 7: 1st paper due

October 28: 2nd paper due.

December 2: Final papers due. Presentation of first papers (this is a formal presentation).

December 9: Presentation of rest of papers (this is a formal presentation).

Summary of Guest Lecturers:

Oct. 20: Odessa Piper

Sept. 22: Peter Peshek

Oct. 27: David Wood

Sept 29: Scott Hassett

Nov 3: John Sharpless

Oct. 6: Dobbin Callahan

Nov 10: Dave Boyer

Oct. 13: Eroll Davis

Nov 17: David Liebl

Nov 24: Cal DeWitt

A Vision

If we will have the wisdom to survive,
to stand like slow-growing trees on a ruined place, renewing, enriching it,
if we will make our seasons welcome here,
asking not too much of earth or heaven,
then a long time after we are dead
the lives our lives prepare will live
here, their houses strongly placed
upon the valley sides, fields and gardens
rich in the windows. The river will run
clear, as we will never know it, and over it, birdsong like a canopy.
On the levels of the hills will be green meadows, stock bells in noon shade.
On the steeps where greed and ignorance cut down
the old forest, an old forest will stand,
its rich leaf-fall drifting on its roots.
The veins of forgotten springs will have opened.

Families will be singing in the fields.
In their voices they will hear a music
risen out of the ground. They will take
nothing from the ground they will not return,
whatever the grief at parting. Memory,
native to this valley, will spread over it
like a grove, and memory will grow
into legend, legend into song, song
into sacrament. The abundance of this place,
the songs of its people and its birds,
will be health and wisdom and indwelling
light. This is no paradisaal dream.
Its hardship is its possibility.

-Wendell Berry