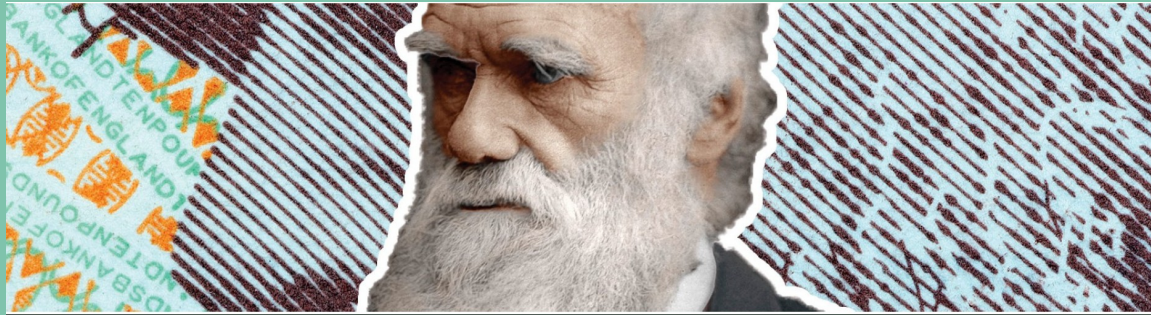


Evolution, Transition and Change



There are hundreds of stupid ways to die. The Darwin Awards are dedicated to documenting the best of them.

In groups, imagine what might have happened and write the follow-up to the narrative.

Sometimes it really is reasonable to work “harder” and not “smarter”. In 1996, a man in Bulgaria attempted to clean his chimney.

This image shows a full page of primary-ruled paper. It features ten sets of horizontal lines across the page. Each set consists of a solid top blue line, a dashed middle blue line, and a solid bottom blue line, providing a guide for letter height and placement in handwriting. The paper is otherwise blank, with no text or other markings.

Evolution, Transition and Change



In groups, keep thinking about **one or more possible ends** to the tragically stupid accident you have been attributed.

You will then be given a paper with the solution, where you will have to **sum up the conclusion in your own words** as well as **write your own hypotheses**.

You will finally choose a spokesperson. They will **read the story and all the possible endings** to the class, who will have to decide **which is the true ending**.

Evolution, Transition and Change



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Darren's death was a puzzle. The 33-year-old was found slumped in the hallway of his home, bleeding from stab wounds. Had an assailant attacked him? Police could find no supporting evidence. A year later the inquest revealed why Darren can take his place among the stars of the Darwin Awards.

Logistics was uppermost in the mind of a warehouse employee of Tansumono Logistics. The worker needed to change a light bulb ten meters overhead and the forklift could only reach 2.5 meters, clearly not close enough.

In 2008 46-year-old David Monk was on holiday in Italy, with a group of friends. After having a few beers one evening the lads decided to steal a protective mat that covered the metal barriers at the bottom of the slope and use it as a sledge.

In 2001, a story appeared in the *South Idaho Press* detailing the death of a man named Marco, who had been driving a van full of friends back from a day on the mountain when his brakes failed.



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In 2001, a story appeared in the *South Idaho Press* detailing the death of a man named Marco, who had been driving a van full of friends back from a day on the mountain when his brakes failed.

The man attempted to clean his chimney using a hand grenade. The logic behind this dangerous idea is still a mystery, but the result was predictable. The grenade exploded, destroying both the chimney and the unfortunate man. This explosive attempt at home maintenance earned him a posthumous Darwin Award.

Left alone in the house while his wife was on holiday, he decided to "look around and find out if his new jacket was stab-proof."

Expressed as a math problem: *a person can reach a light fixture 2 meters overhead -- and wants to replace a lightbulb 10 meters overhead -- so how many 15-cm wood poles must be stacked onto a 2.5 meter forklift platform, to reach the harvest bulb?*

They biked up the hill, hauled themselves down it, and promptly slammed straight into the very same barrier they'd stolen the protective matting from. David died on the spot, causing himself a Darwin award in the process. "He was a brilliant guy," David's friend Alan MacGregor told the *Daily Mail*. We're not sure "brilliant" is the word we would've chosen...

In a truly heroic moment, Marco leapt from the moving vehicle before it careened off a cliff edge without telling anyone else about the brake problem first. Thankfully one of the other passengers stepped in to save the day, managing to bring the van to a halt. They then walked back up the hill to find that Marco had finally misaccelerated his cowardly leap to safety and hit his head on the pavement, killing himself. No one else was injured.

Evolution, Transition and Change

Version

Population panic lets rich people off the hook for the climate crisis they are fuelling

Rising consumption by the affluent has a far greater environmental impact than the birth rate in poorer nations

When a major study was published last month, showing that the global population is likely to peak then crash much sooner than most scientists had assumed, I naively imagined that people in rich nations would at last stop blaming all the world's environmental problems on population growth. I was wrong. If anything, it appears to have got worse.

George Monbiot, *The Guardian*

Evolution, Transition and Change

Les faux-amis en anglais

Identify and correct the mistake.



- a. Fifty tourists got out of the car.
- b. Ask the conductor to drive more carefully.
- c. He parked and then took a chariot from in front of the supermarket.
- d. You must be very candid if you believe everything he says.
- e. He keeps about a thousand bottles of wine in his cave.
- f. I told him about my problem and he was very comprehensive.
- g. There was an oil-lamp on the chimney.
- h. You can make her believe what you want, she's really ingenious.
- i. The probe discovered no trace of life on the distant planet: it was inhabited.
- j. He uses very bad language, he can't help injuring people.
- k. If you don't want to waste too much energy, it's important to have good thermal isolation.

Evolution, Transition and Change

Les **propositions circonstancielles** et la **référence à l'avenir**

Translate the following sentences, paying particular attention to the future.



- a. « Quand retourneras-tu dans ton pays ? – Dès que je le pourrai. »
.....
- b. Tout ira mieux une fois que nous aurons trouvé un vaccin pour cette maladie.
.....
.....
- c. L'Union Européenne sera-t-elle affaiblie tant que les Britanniques seront réticents à réellement participer?
.....
.....
- d. Il m'avait promis de m'appeler dès que la pluie cesserait.
.....

Adapted from Rotgé, Wilfrid, Michèle Malavieille, George Mutch, *Exercices de thème grammatical anglais*.

Evolution, Transition and Change

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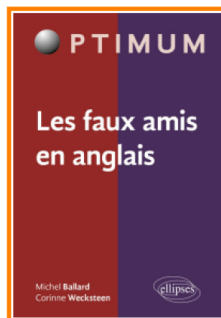
- a. « Quand retourneras-tu dans ton pays ? – Dès que je le pourrai. »
« When are you going back home / back to your country? » « As soon as I can. »
- b. Tout ira mieux une fois que nous aurons trouvé un vaccin pour cette maladie.
Things will go better once we have found a vaccine against this disease.
- c. L'Union Européenne sera-t-elle affaiblie tant que les Britanniques seront réticents à réellement participer?
Will the European Union be weakened as long as the British are reluctant to participate in it fully?
- d. Il m'avait promis de m'appeler dès que la pluie cesserait.
He had promised to call me as soon as the rain stopped.

Adapted from Rotgé, Wilfrid, Michèle Malavieille, George Mutch, *Exercices de thème grammatical anglais*.

Evolution, Transition and Change

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Evolution, Transition and Change

Les faux-amis en anglais

Identify and correct the mistake.



- a. Fifty tourists got out of the **car**. (**coach**) (voiture)
- b. Ask the **conductor** to drive more carefully. (**driver**) (chef d'orchestre)
- c. He parked and then took a **chariot** from in front of the supermarket. (**trolley/cart**) (char)
- d. You must be very **candid** if you believe everything he says. (**naive/ingenuous**) (franc)
- e. He keeps about a thousand bottles of wine in his **cave**. (**cellar**) (grotte)
- f. I told him about my problem and he was very **comprehensive**. (**understanding**) (complet/global)
- g. There was an oil-lamp on the **chimney**. (**mantelpiece**)
- h. You can make her believe what you want, she's really **ingenious**. (**ingenuous/naive**) (ingénieux)
- i. The probe discovered no trace of life on the distant planet: it was **inhabited**. (**uninhabited**)
- j. He uses very bad language, he can't help **injuring** people. (**insulting/abusing**) (blesser)
- k. If you don't want to waste too much energy, it's important to have good thermal **isolation**. (**insulation**) (isolement)

Apocalypse as revelation : new beginnings



Apocalypse as revelation : new beginnings



Apocalypse as revelation : new beginnings

BirthStrikers: meet the women who refuse to have children until climate change ends

A movement of women have decided not to procreate in response to the coming 'climate breakdown and civilisation collapse'. Will their protest be a catalyst for change?



Apocalypse as revelation : new beginnings



Apocalypse as revelation : new beginnings

News > World > Americas

IN FOCUS

They became the internet's most hated couple with their pronatalist lifestyle. Now they're telling Trump how to up the birth rate

Simone and Malcolm Collins started out with two elite degrees, a startup and a progressive vision for the future. Now, they're the internet's most hated couple, raising their kids inside a new religion in rural Pennsylvania and professing admiration for the 'new right'. Is there nuance behind the ragebait? **Holly Baxter** reports



Thursday 24 April 2025 16:11 BST • [64 Comments](#)



Apocalypse as revelation : new beginnings



Breed or Die: Inside Pronatalism

Malcolm and Simone Collins say they want people to have more babies. But which people?

By Harry Stebbins & Patrick Stebbins (Published Dec 17, 2024)



Breed or Die: Inside Pronatalism

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"If the alarming collapse in birth rate continues," Elon Musk posted on X in 2022, "civilization will indeed die with a whimper in adult diapers." The world's richest man has become one of the most ardent advocates for reversing the decline in western birth rates, claiming it is necessary to avoid societal destruction. [...] "We women produce babies in this country," Donald Trump has said on the presidential campaign trail, promising a "baby boom". [...]

The best-known activists in the transatlantic pronatalist scene are Malcolm and Simone Collins. Former tech workers and venture capitalists, they are now the de facto spokespersons for the pronatalist movement, and have landed coverage in an impressive number of publications in the UK, the US, and Canada. [...] The overlap that pronatalism has with far-right ideology is the fear that civilization is tumbling towards catastrophe. The way to fix this, pronatalists say, is by returning to a time when the functions and hierarchies of society were perceived to have been smarter, simpler, and purer — in this instance when women, even though they were confined to the domestic realm, had enough babies to sustain a population. [...] Malcolm and Simone Collins likewise say that low-fertility societies are staring down the barrel. [...] While they are careful to publicly disavow sexism, racism, and prejudice of any kind, they toy with controversial ideas to nudge birth rates in an upward direction. In April 2024, they published a podcast entitled, "Would Taking Away Women's Right to Own Property Solve the Fertility Crisis?" In the video, the fast-talking couple referred to a study that found women who win the lottery tend to leave their husbands, while men who hit the jackpot stay with their wives. [...] In their videos and writings, the Collines deny what they think has gone dramatically wrong with today's world. They stand against the "woke mind virus", and in one video [comment on] "How DEI Will Kill (More) People", [...] referring to diversity, equity and inclusion policies.

A key idea that animates the Collines is that IQ used to be higher in the early 20th century and has been steadily declining ever since, imperiling the future of society. The Collines described these fears to our undercover reporter, "With IQ declining as much as it is," Malcolm said, "I'm never going to convince the general population to fix that problem, and I don't think that there's an ethical way that you can." This is in line with their on-record views that not enough smart people are having children. In one August 2024 podcast, Malcolm said:

"These people — the dumb ones — are going to be more and more of the general population as time goes on. And so they will be electing and building bureaucracies that make it harder and harder for the geniuses to do their jobs."

In the same podcast, Malcolm claims that IQ is falling. [...] Malcolm calls this view "dysgenics", which is a sister term to eugenics. If eugenics is concerned with desirable traits, then dysgenics encompasses the fear that adverse traits are damaging the gene pool, principally via low-IQ immigration and breeding. Adam Rutherford, the UCL geneticist who has publicly criticised the scientific understanding of the Collines, told us he has not seen any meaningful data to support a view that dysgenics is occurring, adding that it is "not a term that actual geneticists would use".

To make his case that IQ is falling, Malcolm cited a study that claims the average IQ of US university students "has been dropping by 0.2 points per year since the mid 20th century". This, he said, lacks evidence of dysgenics. However, the actual paper, first published by Frontiers in Psychology, says something different. While it does find that IQ scores of US university students were higher in 1939 than 2022, it makes clear that this was a "necessary consequence of college and university education becoming a new norm rather than the privilege of a few". There were far fewer students in 1940 — approximately 10 percent of young people went to university, compared to 40 percent today. This does not prove IQ is falling, just that more Americans are going to university, lowering the average. [...] The assertions of pronatalists that IQ scores are declining has prompted speculation that the movement is less concerned with the quantity of babies being born, and more with their perceived quality.

Find in the text, and in that particular order, the words corresponding to the following definitions.

- Absorbent material wrapped around a baby's bottom and between its legs.
- A mark or series of signs left behind by the passage of someone or something.
- Complain or protest strongly and persistently about
- Surround and have or hold within.

Rephrase in your own words one of the following sentences, paying particular attention to the words underlined.

- "They toy with controversial ideas to nudge birth rates in an upward direction" (L21):
- "Low-fertility societies are staring down the barrel":

Right or wrong? Justify your answer.

- Malcolm and Simone Collins do not question equality between genders.
- Malcolm wants to use reason to persuade the American population to have more babies.
- According to the pronatalist Collines, the more babies are born, the better for the civilization.
- The Collines claim financially independent women will not increase the birth rate.
- The data and figures Malcolm Collins is quoting to support the view IQ is falling are wrong.

Answer the following questions.

- Quote one social and one political argument suggesting Malcolm Collins is on the right side of the political spectrum.
- Define "dysgenics" in simple terms.
- What would the Collines' dream world for the future be?
- Quote one strategy Malcolm Collins might have on his mind to make sure the future of society is not "imperilled".

16. Written expression
Briefly answer and discuss the following subject.
Parents should be able to choose the features of their children.



Meet the 'elite' couple breeding to save mankind

With global birth rates in free fall, Silicon Valley's elite are trying to halt the decline — by having as many babies as possible

Juddie
Business Reporter, San Francisco
April 2024 7:15pm BST

Apocalypse as revelation : new beginnings

Breed or Die: Inside Pronatalism

Malcolm and Simone Collins say they want people to have more babies. But which people?



Find in the text, and in that particular order, the words corresponding to the following definitions.

1. Absorbent material wrapped around a baby's bottom and between its legs:
2. A mark or series of signs left behind by the passage of someone or something:
3. Complain or protest strongly and persistently about:
4. Surround and have or hold within:

Rephrase in your own words one of the following sentences, paying particular attention to the words underlined.

5. "They toy with controversial ideas to nudge birth rates in an upward direction" (L21):
.....
6. "Low-fertility societies are staring down the barrel":
.....

Right or wrong? Justify your answer.

7. Malcolm and Simone Collins do not question equality between genders.
.....
8. Malcolm wants to use reason to persuade the American population to have more babies.
.....
9. According to the pronatalist Collinses, the more babies are born, the better for the civilization.
.....
10. The Collinses claim financially independent women will not increase the birth rate.
.....
11. The data and figures Malcolm Collins is quoting to support the view IQ is falling are wrong.
.....

Apocalypse as revelation : new beginnings

Breed or Die: Inside Pronatalism

Malcolm and Simone Collins say they want people to have more babies. But which people?



Find in the text, and in that particular order, the words corresponding to the following definitions.

1. Absorbent material wrapped around a baby's bottom and between its legs: **diapers**
2. A mark or series of signs left behind by the passage of someone or something: **trail**
3. Complain or protest strongly and persistently about: **rail**
4. Surround and have or hold within: **encompass**

Rephrase in your own words one of the following sentences, paying particular attention to the words underlined.

5. "They toy with controversial ideas to nudge birth rates in an upward direction" (1.21):

They play with controversial ideas to try and convince people to have more babies.

6. "Low-fertility societies are staring down the barrel":

Societies in which the birth rate is low are in danger.

Right or wrong? Justify your answer.

7. Malcolm and Simone Collins do not question equality between genders.

Wrong. In April 2024, they published a podcast entitled: "Would Taking Away Women's Right to Own Property Solve the Fertility Crisis?"

8. Malcolm wants to use reason to persuade the American population to have more babies.

Wrong. "With IQ declining as much as it is," Malcolm said, "I'm never going to convince the general population to fix that problem."

9. According to the pronatalist Collinses, the more babies are born, the better for the civilization.

Wrong. The dumb ones — are going to be more and more of the general population as time goes on. And so they will be electing and building bureaucracies that make it harder and harder for the geniuses to do their jobs.

10. The Collinses claim financially independent women will not increase the birth rate.

Right. "Would Taking Away Women's Right to Own Property Solve the Fertility Crisis?" In the video, the fast-talking couple referred to a study that found women who win the lottery tend to leave their husbands, while men who hit the jackpot stay with their wives.

11. The data and figures Malcolm Collins is quoting to support the view IQ is falling are wrong.

Wrong. The interpretation of the data is wrong (last paragraph).

Apocalypse as revelation : new beginnings

Breed or Die: Inside Pronatalism



Answer the following questions.

12.Quote one social and one political argument suggesting Malcolm Collins is on the right side of the political spectrum.

.....

13.Define “dysgenics” in simple terms.

.....

14.What would the Collinses’ dream world for the future be?

.....

15.Quote one strategy Malcolm Collins might have on his mind to make sure the future of society is not “imperilled”.

.....

16. Written expression

Briefly answer and discuss the following subject.

Parents should be able to choose the features of their children.

.....

.....

.....

.....

Apocalypse as revelation : new beginnings

Breed or Die: Inside Pronatalism



Answer the following questions.

12. Quote one social and one political argument suggesting Malcolm Collins is on the right side of the political spectrum.

Woke mind virus + opposition to DEI; criticising “bureaucracy” (in favour of laissez-faire).

13. Define “dysgenics” in simple terms.

The study of the accumulation and perpetuation of defective genes and traits in a population.

14. What would the Collinses’ dream world for the future be?

A world in which the elite has a lot of babies whose genes are checked and controlled.

15. Quote one strategy Malcolm Collins might have on his mind to make sure the future of society is not “imperilled”.

“These people — the dumb ones — are going to be more and more of the general population as time goes on. And so they will be electing and building bureaucracies that make it harder and harder for the geniuses to do their jobs.”

> he might want to prevent some parts of the population from voting (something his wife has been advocating ie “Simone Collins espouses a philosophy in which voting rights would be linked to people’s contributions to society” *Guardian*)

16. Written expression

Briefly answer and discuss the following subject.

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Apocalypse as revelation : new beginnings

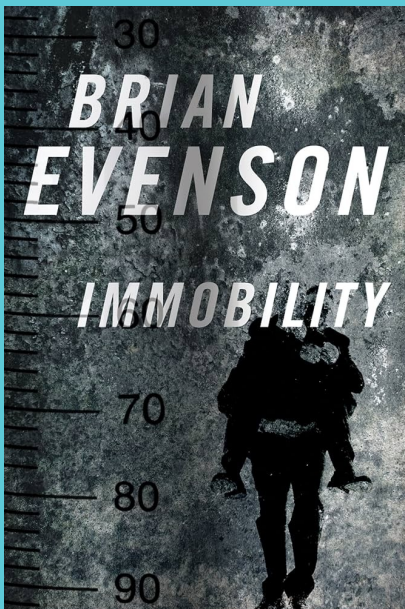
Breed or Die: Inside Pronatalism

Malcolm and Simone Collins say they want people to have more babies. But which people?



PROS	CONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technically and medically possible. • Create a "perfect" baby; give it the best chances to succeed in life. • Remove genetic diseases (Alzheimer's, Huntington's disease, Spinal Muscular Atrophy), inherited medical conditions (obesity, anemia, diabetes, cancer). • Better to be able to choose than to abort. • Prevent next generation from getting characteristics or diseases. • Increase human lifespan up to 30 years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only the rich can afford it; two-tier society. Superiority of a race. Non-designer babies: risk of missing job opportunities (second-class citizens). • Lack of individuality; uniformity. • Interfere with nature. • Unbalance: too many men or women. • Other children in the family: affected by parents' decision. Feel less loved because less perfect. • Not 100% safe; embryo could be accidentally terminated.

Apocalypse as revelation : new beginnings



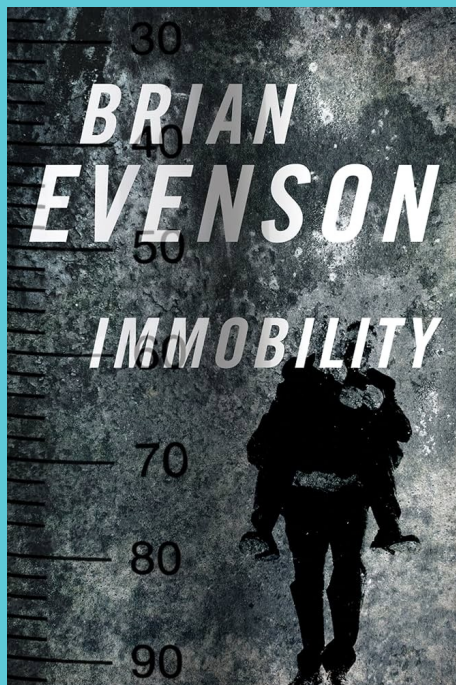
“[T]hat’s where we went wrong.

.....
What we need is not a cord tying us back to our past, to the long line of disasters building up to this last greatest disaster. What we need is a fresh start.

You have to understand [...] that we’re neither human nor not human. [...] We just *are*, [...] [w]hy can’t that ever be enough?”

(Brian Evenson, *Immobility*, 200-202)

Apocalypse as revelation : new beginnings



[T]hat's where we went wrong. [...] Back in the Garden of Eden when Adam named first his wife and then the animals. When we started thinking about names rather than the things they were supposed to designate. [...] What we need is not a cord tying us back to our past, to the long line of disasters building up to this last greatest disaster. What we need is a fresh start. [...] Names, categories, divisions. Once you label something, you learn how to hate it. [...] You have to understand [...] that we're neither human nor not human. [...] We just *are*, [...] [w]hy can't that ever be enough?

(Brian Evenson, *Immobility*, 200-202)

Apocalypse as revelation : new beginnings

What is 'nature'? Dictionaries urged to include humans in definition

Defining nature as separate from people perpetuates troubled relationship with the natural world, say campaigners



📺 The Oxford English Dictionary appears to be the only dictionary that has a definition of nature that mer humans. Photograph: Andrew Fox/Alamy



Damien Gayle

Sat 27 Jul 2024 09:00 CEST

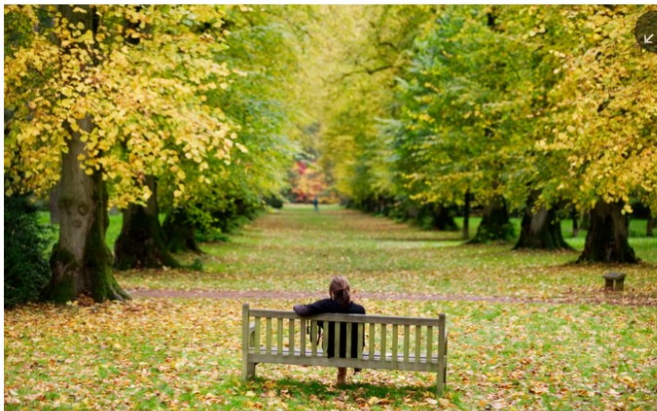
Nature:

“the phenomena of the physical world collectively, including plants, animals, the landscape, and other features and products of the earth, as opposed to humans or human creations.” (*OED*)

Apocalypse as revelation : new beginnings

What is 'nature'? Dictionaries urged to include humans in definition

Defining nature as separate from people perpetuates troubled relationship with the natural world, say campaigners



The Oxford English Dictionary appears to be the only dictionary that has a definition of nature that mentions humans. Photograph: Andrew Fox/Alamy



Damien Gayle

Sat 27 Jul 2024 09:00 CEST

“[I]n order to have “ecology,” we have to let go of “nature”. [...] [T]hinking, including ecological thinking, has set up “Nature” as a reified thing in the distance, under the sidewalk, on the other side where the grass is always greener, preferably in the mountains, in the wild. [...] Just like a reflection, we can never actually reach it and touch it and belong to it. [...] [O]ur concepts of “faceless generous mother nature” are based on “sedentary” agricultural societies with their ideas of “possession.” The myth of the faceless mother provides the very motivation for our exploitation of Earth, seen as “inexhaustible matter for things.” Wilderness areas are giant, abstract versions of the products hanging in mall windows.

Timothy MORTON. *The Ecological Thought*. Cambridge and London : Harvard University Press, 2010, 3-7.