

The Drawdown Challenge: An Annotated Bibliography

Cy Leise

October 8, 2018

Elders for the Earth Retreat

Note: These selections and notes are based on my personal assessments. My goal is to present many resources for you to examine as you consider how to implement ideas from *Drawdown*. My email is cyleise@cox.net.

Armstrong, Karen (2010). *Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life*. Website: [<https://charterforcompassion.org/>]

Barnard, Neal: *The Cheese Trap* and *Dr. Neal Barnard's Program for Reversing Diabetes* are examples of Dr. Barnard's integration of nutritional science with medicine. Also see his *Cookbook for Reversing Diabetes*. His books are available in bookstores and online or check the "Shop" section of the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine [<http://pcrm1.ultracartstore.com/>].

Campbell, T. Colin: Center for Nutrition Studies [<https://nutritionstudies.org>] This is a comprehensive resource for plant-based nutrition founded by the author of *The China Study*. Articles, blogs, stories, recipes, courses, and a start-up plan provide sound knowledge and practical insights for the best nutrition choices. An important insight is that it takes about three weeks to retrain one's palate to capture the previously unnoticed tastes and aromas of plant-based foods—not to mention health and environmental benefits that are an ethical concern.

Clarke, Richard A. & Eddy, R. P. (2017). *Warning: Finding Cassandras to Stop Catastrophes*. The authors, experienced analysts, reference Cassandra in their title because she was "... a beautiful princess of Troy, cursed by the god Apollo. He gave her the ability to see impending doom, but the inability to persuade anyone to believe her." They present a set of principles for better prediction of catastrophes from the major recession in 2007 to the nuclear disaster in Japan. Diffusion of responsibility and inertia are just two factors that make humans prone to ignorance about dangerous events that could be predicted. They agree that Dr. James Hanson's predictions about climate change were entirely on target. They note that most scientists generally agreed so inertia emerged that was caused by what they call "erroneous consensus"—Hanson was more right than everyone else but less precise predictions were more accepted, which resulted in slowing the reactions to the warning statements.

Cowspiracy: The Sustainability Secret "...is a groundbreaking feature-length environmental documentary following intrepid filmmaker Kip Andersen as he uncovers the most destructive industry facing the planet today - and investigates why the world's leading environmental organizations are too afraid to talk about it." [<http://www.cowspiracy.com/facts/>]

Coalition of Immokalee Workers: [<http://ciw-online.org/about/>] “Based in Immokalee, Florida, this worker-based human rights organization is internationally recognized for its achievements in the fields of social responsibility, human trafficking, and gender-based violence at work. They have created an effective way to certify fairness to agricultural workers and are activists in demanding that food corporations buy produce from fair wage farms.” The listing of companies that haven’t agreed to a one cent per pound commitment includes Kroger (Bakers) and Wendy’s. *The New York Times* [<https://www.nytimes.com/2014/04/25/business/in-florida-tomato-field-s-a-penny-buys-progress.html>] reported on the fair wage program and the history of what happened around the Immokalee area where a large proportion of organic and conventional tomatoes are grown.

Creighton University: Planetary Emergency Lecture Series. The first lecture (Feb. 7, 2018) was by Veerabhadran “Ram” Ramanathan, PhD, popularly known as “the Pope’s climate scientist,” with the title: “Climate Change: Morphing into an Existential Threat,” The series is hosted by the Creighton Global Initiative. Three more lectures are planned for 2018 and 2019.

DHL GoGreen (transportation) This division of DHL offers expertise and global presence to offer business customers a broad portfolio of green products and services. Transport, e.g., from European companies, is slower to allow fuel and other savings. [http://www.dhl.com/en/about_us/green_solutions.html]

Diamond, Jared (2011). *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed*, Revised Edition. Environmental damage, climate change, globalization, rapid population growth, and unwise political choices were all factors in the demise of societies around the world, but some found solutions and persisted. Diamond tells detailed stories about Easter Island and many other societies.

Diamond, Jared (1997) *Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies*. Diamond uses a multidisciplinary approach to understand how human cultures have been shaped over the past 13,000 years by geography. Each continent has different climates, foods, and water resources. This is a classic.

Druker, Steven M. (2015). *Altered Genes, Twisted Truth: How the Venture to Genetically Engineer Our Food Has Subverted Science, Corrupted Government, and Systematically Deceived the Public*. Clear River Press. Jane Goodall wrote the Foreword to this detailed history of GMO technology. My favorite chapter has the title “Overlooked Lessons from Computer Science,” which examines the complexity of ecosystems based on computer science principles. For example, it is not surprising that our DNA includes many sequences whose purpose is not known because so many variables have been at work during the long history of life. Epigenetic influences during the life of each organism create a dynamic process—many regulatory factors are actually outside the genome. GMOs have basic problems that are already causing unintended effects.

Duckworth, Angela (2016). *Grit*. Psychologist Duckworth examines the role of persistence in learning and engagement in all our life roles.

Ego lawn mowers—check *Consumer Reports*.

Environmental Working Group [<https://www.ewg.org>]

From the ewg website: “We work for you. Do you know what's in your tap water? What about your shampoo? What's lurking in the cleaners underneath your sink? What pesticides are on your food? How about the farms, fracking wells and factories in your local area? Do you know what safeguards they use to protect your water, soil, air and your kids? Which large agribusinesses get your tax dollars and why? What are GMOs? What do they do to our land and water?” Check out: <https://www.ewg.org/meateatersguide/a-meat-eaters-guide-to-climate-change-health-what-you-eat-matters/climate-and-environmental-impacts/>

Environmental Working Group: Food Guides:

[\[https://www.ewg.org/foodscores#.W6eYuJLKygw\]](https://www.ewg.org/foodscores#.W6eYuJLKygw) Check out their “Dirty Dozen” guide.

Fairley, Peter (July, 2018). Building a Weather-Smart Grid. *Scientific American*. Fairley is a freelance author on energy and the environment. In this article, he reports on demonstration studies and new models that take weather into account for optimizing sharing of electricity across wide regions. Electricity from wind turbines in one part of the country could be efficiently transmitted to another where power is needed if weather data from all areas were integrated into the grid management software. Experts argue that high-voltage DC transmission lines, which lose less energy over long distances than AC, could add enough efficiency through long-distance sharing to not only reduce the number of coal plants but lower costs to consumers. Most utility companies so far resist because they don't believe such a system will be built any time soon and they have made decisions that require purchasing electricity from their own installations.

Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Certification The FSC certification ensures that products come from responsibly managed forests that provide environmental, social and economic benefits. [<https://us.fsc.org/en-us/certification>]

Forks over Knives [<https://www.forksoverknives.com/>]

From the website: “The feature film *Forks Over Knives* examines the profound claim that most, if not all, of the degenerative diseases that afflict us can be controlled, or even reversed, by rejecting animal-based and processed foods.” FoK includes recipes and starter plans for those moving to plant-based diet. Cardiologist Robert Ostfeld, MD, MSc is the founder and director of the [Cardiac Wellness Program](#) at the Montefiore Health System in the Bronx in New York City. The hospital provides the *Forks Over Knives* movie in patient rooms and serves plant-based meals at patient beds

Gilliam, Carey (2017). *Whitewash: The Story of a Weed Killer, Cancer, and the Corruption of Science*. Gilliam’s focus is on RoundUp but he lightly covers some of the same scientific concerns that Steven M. Druker does in *Altered Genes, Twisted Truth*.

Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS) [<https://www.global-standard.org/>]

From the website: “The Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS) was developed through collaboration by leading standard setters with the aim of defining requirements that are recognized socially responsible manufacturing all the way to labelling in order to provide credible assurance to the consumer.”

Goodell, Jeff (2017). *The Water Will Come: Rising Seas, Sinking Cities, and the Re-making of the Civilized World*. Goodell follows the facts to paint a picture of the power of water as climate change worsens.

Green America: *From the website:* Our mission is to harness economic power—the strength of consumers, investors, businesses, and the marketplace—to create a socially just and environmentally sustainable society. [<https://www.greenamerica.org>]

Green American Magazine: A quarterly print/online magazine that gives in-depth information on the green economy. Subscribers get the print version but past issues are available free on the website. [<https://www.greenamerica.org/magazine>]. I first heard of Paul Hawken and *Drawdown* from this excellent magazine—scroll to the Winter 2017 archive issue. They provide background on many green certifications.

Green America: *National Green Pages: From the website:* Search the *National Green Pages* to find the green, healthy, and ethically produced products and services you need for home and work. The businesses featured here have earned Green America's Green Business Certification, so you can be assured they are dedicated to building an economy that works for people and the planet. [For food listings: [/https://www.greenamerica.org/product/national-green-pages-2018](https://www.greenamerica.org/product/national-green-pages-2018)]

Green America: *Green Business Network: From the website:* Our mission is to help small green businesses and social enterprises grow the new green economy from the ground up. With over thirty years of experience, we offer one of the most comprehensive programs for small businesses committed to social and environmental responsibility. Since 1982, Green America has certified green businesses that are committed to using business as a platform for social change. We look for entrepreneurs and business leaders who are solving social and environmental problems... by design. [<https://www.greenamerica.org/gbn/green-business-certification/>]

Gregor, Michael (2007). *Bird Flu: A Virus of Our Own Hatching*, An accessible primer on viruses and how they have crossed species to cause flu epidemics. [<http://www.birdflubook.org/g.php?id=5>]

Gregor, Michael (2015). *How Not to Die*. Flatiron Books. Gregor is the physician who founded nutritionfacts.org [<https://nutritionfacts.org/>]*—*a free website with short videos on hundreds of nutrition topics gleaned from Medline. He gives an annual report at medical conventions about the causes of the top 15 ways people die—almost all food related. He uses humor and has practical recommendations, including recipes in his book. At times he gets too “reductionist” in that he focuses on specific research studies that may not catch important risks—he missed the risk of arsenic in conventional mushrooms, and later gave a warning; organic certification requires testing for toxic risks in by organic growers of mushrooms. Augment this website with information from multiple sources, e.g., other medical sources and the Environmental Working Group. It is now clear that low-fat, plant-based eating is the foundation for health and is the control condition that should be the scientific foundation in most nutrition studies. (See Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine for updates on their research.)

Hardin, Garrett (1968/2008). “Tragedy of the Commons” in *American Earth: Environmental Writing Since Thoreau*. Bill McKibbon (Ed.) Library of America, pp. 438-450.

Bill McKibbon, the well-known environmentalist, put together a 1000 page collection of readings from arborists and park planners to politicians and novelists that provides all kinds of insights about nature and our role in the larger ecology. I consider “Tragedy of the Commons” to be a strong metaphor for what is happening with climate change—but disagree with Hardin’s assertion that coercion is necessary for population control.

Laudato si' (2015). [<https://laudatosi.com/watch>] Pope Francis published a remarkable ecological statement that interweaves the science with spiritual wisdom. It's a must-read document that powerfully addresses the full system of problems caused by environmental destruction, technology, and mistreatment of the poor.

Narwal, Bina (1994) *A Field of Their Own*. Narwal is Professor of Development Economics and Environment at the Global Development Institute, University of Manchester, UK, and also is affiliated with Delhi University in India. She is the author of many other publications. Her passion is improvement of the lives of the millions of women—and men—who live on small farms of five acres or less in India. Among their problems is pressure to buy seeds, fertilizer, and pesticides from large chemical companies like Monsanto.

Natural Grocers includes articles based on nutritional science in their sale booklets.

Nhat Hanh, Thich (2012). *The Mindfulness Survival Kit*. “Mindfulness can help us survive and thrive, both as individuals and as human beings on this Earth together.” Thich Nhat Hanh gently guides us to deeper insights about our own psychology through the wisdom of contemporary Buddhism.

Northwest Earth Institute [<https://www.nwei.org>]. The mission of this institute is represented by their large selection of Discussion Course books about environmental issues and responsible choices. Each book has short articles with discussion questions for group facilitation. One of their recent projects is described: “Project Drawdown and Northwest Earth Institute's EcoChallenge partnered to take action on the 100 most substantive solutions to global warming...”

[NutritionFacts.org](https://www.nutritionfacts.org). This is a free website created by Dr. Michael Gregor. He answers nutrition questions of all kinds by reporting on the thousands of scientific papers cited in Medline about nutrition and closely related topics. He prepares short (a few minutes each) videos on hundreds of topics and questions. See separate descriptions under Dr. Gregor's name for his books.

Oreskes, Naomi O., & Conway, Erik M. (2010). *Merchants of Doubt: How a Handful of Scientists Obscured the Truth on Issues from Tobacco Smoke to Global Warming*. Bloomsbury Press. The title tells the story. Oreskes gave the Spring 2016 Holland Lecture: “The American Denial of Climate Warming.”

Organic Consumer Association: *From the website*: “OCA educates and advocates on behalf of organic consumers, engages consumers in marketplace pressure campaigns, and works to advance sound food and farming policy through grassroots lobbying. We address crucial issues around food safety, industrial agriculture, genetic engineering, children's health, corporate accountability, Fair Trade, environmental sustainability, including pesticide use, and other food and agriculture-related topics.” [<https://www.organicconsumers.org>]

Organic food is produced without using most conventional pesticides; without using fertilizers made with synthetic ingredients or sewage sludge; and without bio-engineering or ionizing radiation.

If a fruit or vegetable is grown in accordance with government organic standards, it can bear the USDA Organic label. For food products that contain multiple ingredients, such as crackers, one of these labels may be on the package in regard to its organic ingredients.

- “100% Organic” means that the product (by weight or volume) contains only organic ingredients.
- “Organic” means that 95% of a product consists of organically produced ingredients.
- “Made with Organic Ingredients” means a product contains at least 70% organic ingredients.

Peppard, Christiana Z. (2014). *Just Water: Theology, Ethics, and the Global Water Crisis*. Orbit Books. Peppard, a Catholic theologian, makes the case for water as a right. Her presentation of Catholic social justice encyclicals over the past century is enlightening. She examines fracking in some depth because injecting millions of gallons of water into wells to extract natural gas permanently pollutes the water used.

Piketty, Thomas (2014). *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University.

Piketty examines historical patterns of inequality in the U. S. and Europe. The ratio of private to public wealth was six to one before WWI. The two world wars destroyed much of that private capital but the three decades after WWII were a time of prosperity and relative economic equality. The ratio since then has returned again to about six times more private than public wealth. This is a deep read that has interesting stories and valuable data presented in understandable tables.

Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine (PCRM). Dr. Neal Barnard, the founder and leader of this effective organization since 1985, has advocated for a healthful plant-based diet, written books about diabetes, Alzheimer's and heart disease and has been a successful activist leader to replace use of animals with more accurate and effective simulation teaching labs for training in medical and EMT schools. This website gathers news on the latest legislative accomplishments for sustainability, ethical practices, and products. Check out their "Factsheets." PCRM has a free 21-day kick start program for achieving success with satisfaction in moving to a plant-based diet. [<https://www.pcrm.org>]. Go to [<https://www.pcrm.org/clinical/about>] for PCRM research updates.

Rhodes, Richard (2018). *Energy: A Human History*. Simon & Schuster. Rhodes is a great story teller who documents the technological changes we have adapted to and how.

Riverblue is a documentary film [<http://riverbluethemovie.eco/>] that captures the extreme environmental damage caused by the textile industry around the world. Growing of cotton requires only 3% of arable land but 25% of global insecticides and 11% of herbicides and defoliants. Check out the situation in Uzbekistan: [<http://www.ethicalcorp.com/brands-urged-continue-boy-cott-uzbek-cotton-despite-promised-reforms>]. Unsustainable irrigation practices since Soviet times have destroyed the Aral Sea.

Shiva, Vandana (2016). *Who Really Feeds the World? The Failures of Agribusiness and the Promise of Agroecology*. Dr. Shiva is an Indian scholar, environmental activist, food sovereignty advocate, and anti-globalization author currently based in Delhi. Her strong anti-GMO (genetically modified organisms) stand has been controversial but consistent with her argument: seeds should not be patented because seed saving is a traditional right and assures plant diversity which is a better farming method and eliminates the need for expensive GMO seeds, fertilizers, RoundUp, and pesticides.

Tavris, Carol, and Aronson, Elliot (2007). *Mistakes Were Made (but not by me)*. Self-justification is a cause of many of our illogical and unsupportable beliefs about our and others' actions. Tavris and Aronson use many examples to illustrate that if someone has undergone a difficult experience to attain something, it will be more valued and actually result in deeper belief.

Textile Exchange [textileexchange.org]

From the website: "Textile Exchange is a global non-profit that works closely with our members to drive industry transformation in preferred fibers, integrity and standards and responsible supply networks. We identify and share best practices regarding farming, materials, processing, traceability and product end-of-life in order to reduce the textile industry's impact on the world's water, soil and air, and the human population."

UN: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations:
[<http://www.fao.org/about/en/>] The goal of this organization is food security through multiple means.

UN: The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is a scientific and [intergovernmental body](#) under the auspices of the [United Nations](#), set up at the request of member governments, dedicated to the task of providing the world with an objective, scientific view of [climate change](#) and its political and economic impacts. [<http://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar5/>]

Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS). Founded in 1968, the founders... called for scientific research to be directed away from military technologies and toward solving pressing environmental and social problems. Their website includes up-to-date articles on a large range of environmental problems. [<https://www.ucsusa.org>]

Williams, Terry Tempest. (2002). *Red: Passion and Patience in the Desert*. Vintage. Williams is a renowned nature writer and activist who writes prose that reads like poetry. *The Hour of the Land* (2016) is her reflection on our national parks.

Wilson, Edward O. (2014). *The Meaning of Human Existence*. The problem of greed that Hardin described in “Tragedy of the Commons” is enhanced by identity politics and “tribalism.” Wilson presents the scientific evidence that the evolution of humans has made us group-oriented in our emotions, thinking, and behavior. Wilson quotes Carl Jung to make the important point that because of the tribal nature of human nature the goal must be to outgrow our biases and limited vision.

Wood, Mary Christina (2013) *Nature’s Trust: Environmental Law for a New Ecological Age*. Wood is the Philip H. Knight Professor of Law at the University of Oregon and teaches property law, natural resources law, public trust law and federal Indian law. She is also the faculty director of the school’s Environmental and Natural Resources Law Program. She originated the approach called Atmospheric Trust Litigation to hold governments worldwide accountable for reducing carbon pollution within their jurisdictions, and her research is being used in cases and petitions brought on behalf of children and youth throughout the United States and in other countries.

Wright, Robert (2017). *Why Buddhism is True*. Simon & Schuster. Wright, an evolutionary psychologist, explores the boundaries between contemporary psychology and Buddhist insights about meditation, reality, choices, and ethics.