

## Editorial

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“The past defines the present because mankind has not yet mastered its destiny.”

Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization* (1955: 58)

Environmental toxicity transcends spatio-temporal constraints. Environment has no physical and cultural boundaries. While technology provides a means for escaping the heavy toll on humankind’s resources imposed by Nature’s inability to mediate its force with reason, people continue to suffer from man-made problems. Socio-cultural and politico-economic conditions shape an environment that impedes survival, let alone well-being. Technology and science do open new doors of resources for progress but such advancements are amoral. Saving humans from themselves remains a formidable challenge.

The other day, my wife and I took our three lovely grandchildren to the California Science Center to see *A Beautiful Planet*<sup>1</sup>. A few facts have a contextual relevance: if Earth’s warming continues, rising sea levels will have a horrible impact. Deforestation, in Brazil alone, has robbed humanity of much of its natural wealth. While the world’s major cities brilliantly shine and colorfully define areas of light, North Korea’s stark darkness cannot be overlooked. I couldn’t avoid noting a solid orange line dividing India into two different countries that have fought three wars with unfortunate consequences. Canaries around the global coal mines are there for nothing.

There is a worrisome order in man’s maddening affairs. The daily World News is a numbing catalogue of

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<sup>1</sup> A 3D, IMAX film, “a breathtaking portrait of Earth from space.” Our shining blue planet looks magnificent from International Space Station.

mass murder, mayhem and madness. The horror of sickness is maddening. The World Health Organization (WHO) noted that, as far as mental health is concerned, all countries are “developing” nations. The mental health industry sometimes absolves abject criminality. Banalities of mental disorders are both benign and malignant. From climate change to the plight of Syrian refugees, we find this civilization implicated in escalating the magnitude of global miseries. Nearly 200,000 women in India committed suicide in India owing to domestic stressors. Farmers in India commit suicide in appalling situations<sup>2</sup>. The malignant wounds of war, in the U.S., costs 8000 lives—22 everyday—as suicides. The extent of post-trauma stress and its consequences are immeasurable in the so-called *new world order*.

The mayhem in Orlando, Florida has shattered many a myth about guns, terror, sex and varied orientations. Fallacies of constitutional rights—without responsibilities—mock democracies. The real face of evil is lost in a politically poisonous fog of bigotry and violence<sup>3</sup>. When US President Obama laments this kind of rhetoric — “saying the presumptive Republican presidential nominee was peddling a ‘dangerous’ mind-set that recalls the darkest periods in American history” — he reminds us of the dangers

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<sup>2</sup> Shekhar Saxena asserted: “Just depression and anxiety cause a trillion dollar worth of loss every year. And this is a trillion with a T. And unfortunately, most countries in the world are ignoring this. Our question is not whether you can afford to treat mental illnesses. The question is, can you afford not to do that? Because you are incurring a lot of loss. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-35994601?SThisFB> (accessed April 14, 2016)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/ OccupyDemocrats/photos/a.3479070-68635687.81180.346937065399354/1159970890762630/?type=3&theater> (accessed June 17, 2016)

associated with living the dangerously toxic environment of America's past<sup>4</sup>.

This second issue of *Environmental and Social Psychology's* (ESP) premier volume contains stimulating original articles that strengthen the interactionality of environment and human behavior, an area that has been the middle name of social science research and, purportedly, the foundation of *Law of Civility*. Luke Barnesmore, Robert Kowlasky, Gay Backman, Mas Biswas, Phillip Hong and Stan Weeber are owed gratitude and appreciation. The six articles presented here will not prevent a mass murder; nor do they remotely indicate a utopia in sight. However, a small but honest effort, like the flutter of a butterfly, can generate a hurricane of hope. Exploration of pathways to environmental justice ostensibly sustains tran-

sformative diversity in a hopelessly troubled world.

Our upcoming international conference on *Social Transformations in a Troubled World*, sponsored by Whioce Publishing, is being organized to unravel individual-societal issues and eco-psychological problems that have manifested as broken *social* contracts and *cultural* meltdowns. The main focus of our deliberations will be on the nexus of environmental justice, humanities and policy sciences that reinforce synergetic interdependence in a complexly difficult world. A diverse group of experts, from a wide range of disciplines and countries, have been invited to keynote vital issues on a myriad of interrelated problems. Please visit our website to find out the details and participate in this important gathering of minds. There still is some hope to shape the unborn future<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/06/15/us/obama-orlando-shooting.html?hp&action=click&pgtype=Homepage&clickSource=story-heading&module=a-lede-package-region&region=top-news&WT.nav=top-news> (accessed June 14, 2016)

<sup>5</sup> This is an Editorial, *Environment and Social Psychology*, Volume 1 Issue 2, 2016 (copyrighted by author and esp@whioce.com).