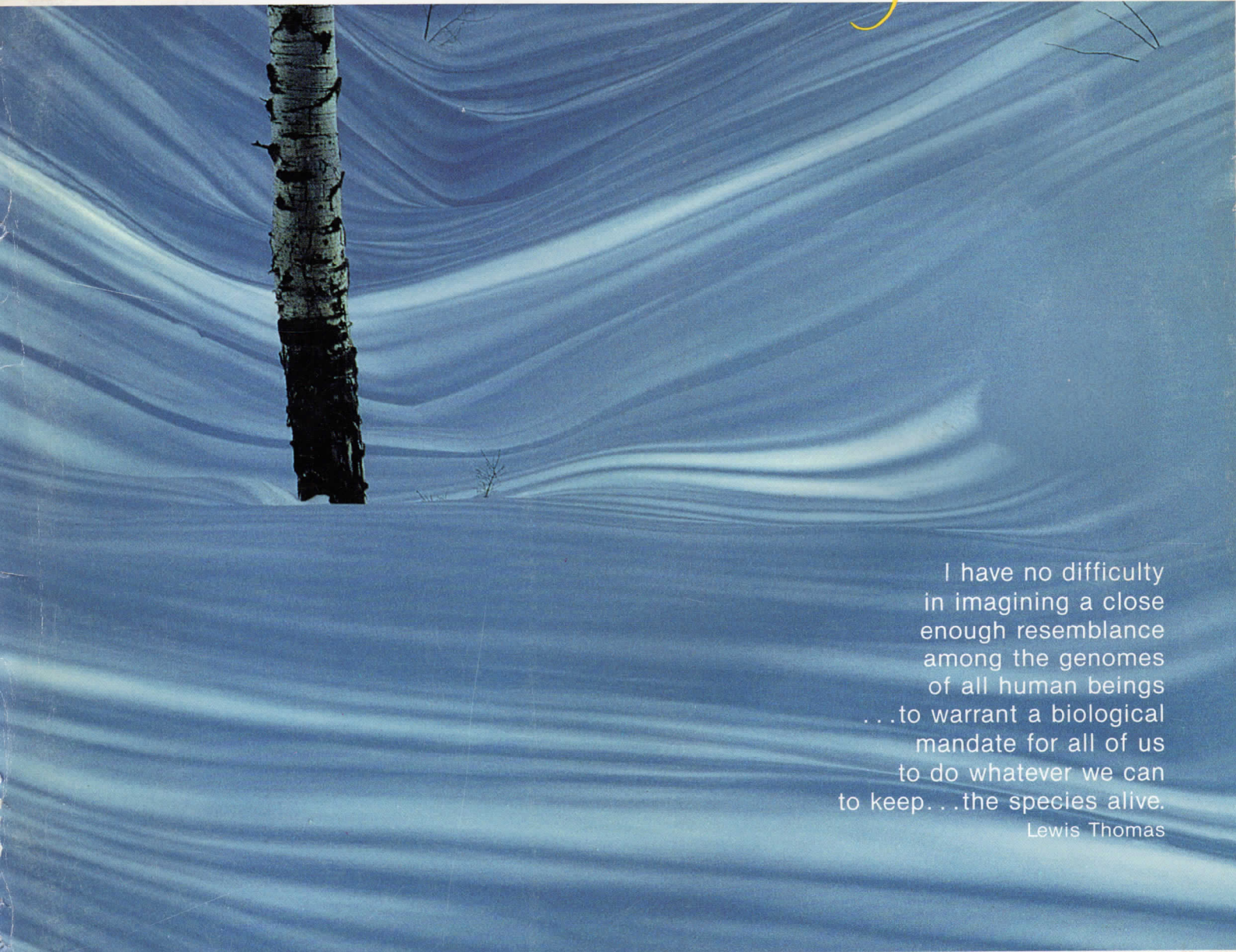


LEWIS THOMAS
VICTORIA WATSON
DAVID AND ROGER JOHNSON
ANN MEDLOCK
JOHN GRAHAM
JOHN DENVER
CHUNGLIANG AL HUANG
HAL HARVEY
AND MORE

Windstar journal



I have no difficulty
in imagining a close
enough resemblance
among the genomes
of all human beings
...to warrant a biological
mandate for all of us
to do whatever we can
to keep...the species alive.
Lewis Thomas

cooperation

FIVE DOLLARS

WINTER 1988/89

welcome to the windstar journal

Cooperation. It blossoms in times of crisis. It forms in response to earthquakes and floods, famines and tragic accidents. The winter holiday season in many parts of the world also is a time that invites and encourages cooperation. Food and clothing drives, visits to people in retirement and nursing homes, projects to bring toys to homeless and needy children and other charitable efforts fill the season. The new year arrives and—in a few weeks—many people return to a daily lifestyle that does not emphasize cooperation. As the newness of the year wears off, the resolutions fade.

Cooperation is necessary in human relationships. Increasingly, we are recognizing that it is also essential for humans to establish a cooperative spirit of interaction with other life forms and the whole of the planet. To the extent that we humans recognize the value of cooperation with other life forms and the environment as a whole, we believe this approach will contribute to greater peacefulness and productive cooperation among humans.

This issue of the Windstar Journal is dedicated to exploring the concept of cooperation. These few articles do not provide a comprehensive look at the topic.

Ann Medlock and John Graham inspire us with examples of people who have stuck their necks out to make a difference in their lives and the lives of others.

Victoria Watson invites each of us to contribute ideas and actions to a global effort in support of a world that works.

Chungliang Al Huang looks at the concept of cooperation in the written Chinese language—and illuminates our understanding with his beautiful interpretations and calligraphy.

Jan Rensel and Alan Howard give us a glimpse of one cultural group on the planet where cooperation is an essential part of the social fabric—among the Rotuman people in the South Pacific.

Hal Harvey takes us to the global reaches of cooperation—addressing the most fundamental issues of planetary security.

Lewis Thomas shares his perspective that cooperation is the most natural of acts—in all species, not just among humans.

Pam Stacey gives us examples of cooperation in the animal world—looking especially at some of the fascinating reports of altruism in dolphin society.

Tom Crum suggests that cooperation is a key to a healthy economy—more cost effective, productive, and encouraging of quality than traditional competitive approaches.

We are seeing examples of cooperation everywhere we look. Increasingly, there are dramatic and encouraging instances of cooperation across political, cultural, and geographic boundaries. In these early weeks and months of another new year, we can feel an invigorating and promising commitment to cooperation that is growing throughout the world.

In these times more than ever, we need to do what we can to nourish one another and our environment. Each of us begins with ourselves—to maintain our own wellness in as many dimensions of our lives as is possible. Whole humans are those best prepared to work creatively and cooperatively with others to create a healthy future. A cooperative spirit does not deny individual and autonomous actions. It is a matter of perspective. Since each action we take is in fact a part of a larger whole, we are part of a cooperative venture at all times. Thanks for your contributions to the whole.

Cheryl Charles and Bob Samples, Editors.

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The photographs on the front cover and inside back cover are by Celia Roberts. They are from her 1989 calendar, "For Love of the Rockies." See the Windstar products page for how to obtain this calendar. The photograph on page 20 is by Global Cooperation for a Better World; those on pages 40 and 41 are by Jan Rensel. All other photos are by Bob Samples.

Metaphors of Cooperation

What do racism, sexism, adultism, and ageism all have in common? There are many answers. Separation and exclusion come immediately to mind. If I possess these qualities of personality, then I have fewer degrees of freedom than I would have if I did not. I have more options if I embrace the offerings of other ethnic groups, the opposite gender, children, and long-living people. If, instead, I harbor these active forms of prejudice—I must sustain an attitude of exclusion. I am separating myself from others on the basis of pre-judged criteria. As a racist, I separate myself from others on the basis of perceived differences of biology and ethnicity. As a sexist, I perceive a superiority over the opposite gender. Adultists presume that children are naive and inexperienced. Ageists see long-living people as a “doddering set” who have grown old faster than their brain cells can keep up.

As the shadows of racism appear, I lose the sacred gifts of oneness and unity with hearts beating beneath other hued skins. I learn to perfect the dark arts of exclusion. As sexist, I relinquish the possibility of shared journeys on the shoals of gender. My adultism inflates me toward the loftiness of superiority and I am unable to see authenticity, excitement, and integrity within a child because he or she has not yet lived as many years as I have in a life journey. The ageist in me first sees the whitened hair of the slow-moving driver ahead as I rush to a manufactured urgency in my own life. All of me is lessened by each act of willful separation and darkened pre-judgement.

If I accept any or all of these forms of exclusion, then I sentence myself to a kind of isolation that forbids the possibility of being fully human. If I practice such exclusion, I may not be lonely—anyone can find a gaggle of bigots if they look hard enough—but it is impossible to feel any true fulfillment in spite of my community of mutually despairing friends. Fulfillment is the offspring of inclusion; exclusion parents despair.

For several decades, I have been trying to drive these shadows from my being. In that journey, I have met many reasons for the effort. Once I chose to open the doors of mind-body-spirit to attempt to embrace the possibilities of our species, I caught glimpses of the way things *could* be. I found laughter splashing from joyous kin of all colors, from deep within the chests of long-living people, from the shy hand-shielded mouths of children, and from the tilted-back heads of women who own their own lives.

When my mind, heart, and soul stops being dedicated to separation—I recognize a new apprenticeship. This new apprenticeship begins to turn around the reflexes of my experience—derived in an age that was, for the most part, built on the foundations of exclusion. Instead of greeting difference and novelty with fear and suspicion, I begin to embrace these new characteristics with acceptance and delight. The new apprenticeship is one of inclusion. I learn to embrace the new and find ways to connect with larger patterns of meaning.

All my shadows are not yet gone. I may find the darkness of my heart arising again when I hear the rudeness of some people at the airport baggage claim area and then struggle to suppress negative feelings when I see the color of their skin. I may sense that darkness when I snatch a tool from our child's hand because he is using it clumsily. I may catch myself finishing a woman's sentence in a conversation because I am so sure that I know what she means that I say it for her—knowing I would not do that with a male. I may push my shopping cart in annoyance past a frail gray man who is confused by the myriad of cans on the supermarket shelf. I may bristle at the conversation and laughter of some people at a table in a restaurant—since they are speaking a different language, I am sure that they are laughing at me.

Lewis Thomas tell us in his article in this issue of the *Windstar Journal*

that altruism is a genetic mandate. We are predestined to discover the artforms and integrities of cooperation and continuity. He also warns us that although we have the genes for cooperation, “It is like distant music and some of us are hard of hearing.” He goes on to say that societies are “noisy affairs”—drowning out the sounds of our own connectedness to each other and all other forms of life. Perhaps it is this quiet music in our genes that is nourishing a spirit of cooperation today.

Although it is clearly simplistic, I am inspired by the thought that if I am biologically ordained to be altruistic—with associated tendencies to inclusion and cooperation—it is my responsibility to listen to the music within me. I must drown my annoyance and listen to the possibilities. I must see all people as extensions of myself.

Windstar advisor and co-host of the Windstar Symposium, Dennis Becker, uses the phrase, “the language of inclusion” when he does his magic as a facilitator. My own work with metaphor finds a true ally in Dennis' perspective. I feel that often our perceptions and even the ways we think are governed by the metaphors we choose to describe what we experience in the world. In the following section, I have listed a few metaphors and terms related to cooperation—and some of the effects they can have on how we think. It may not be necessary to remove all of these words from our language. It is, however, helpful—and can be powerful—to check our personal reflex and habit to use such words.

META-REMINDERS

Military terms Words like “tactics,” “strategy,” and “logistics” carry with them centuries of affiliation with the acts of waging war. When they are used, they tend to carry the burden of aggression and the intent to do violence. Words and phrases like “attack,” “do battle,” “shoot to kill,” “take dead aim,” “outwit the enemy,” and “crush the opposition” tend to generate an atmosphere of confrontation, adversity, and hostility. Using peaceful words and phrases counteracts violent intent.

“Yes, but” and “Yes, and” In conversations and discussions, the phrase “Yes, but . . .” is often heard. Supposedly, someone is “making a point” when such a phrase emerges. With a bit of reflection, it is clear that “Yes, but . . .” is most often a refutation of an idea or person. It is aggressive—and often a form of

“one-upmanship.” It effectively denies the importance of what had been offered. “Yes, and . . .” does not carry such a denial—rather it embraces what was said, and extends the context.

Human rather than man The use of the formal “man” and “mankind” is fundamentally insensitive. It is archaic in light of today’s emphasis on equity in gender and opportunity. “Human,” “humankind,” and the simple “people” are more inclusive and consistent with a worldview of fairness and mutually supportive respect.

Games and game playing It is common to refer to a venture as a “game.” Unfortunately, for too many, this brings about an attitude of competition—with winners and losers. Winning becomes a tacit goal and cooperation often suffers. For those who call cooperation a “game,”

consider this: When altruism becomes a game, the net effect is deceit rather than generosity.

Them and us rather than we The use of “them and us” is an intentional act of separation. “We” transforms separation into unity. Care must be taken, however, to avoid using “we” artificially, without permission, and with intent to manipulate. Manipulation takes place when people force inclusion by using the term “we” under false pretenses. This happens, for example, when someone uses “we” to effect a consensus that is not real. “We all believe . . .” is usually coercive.

Dislike rather than hate I am always surprised when I hear kindergarten age children use the word “hate” with frequency. Hate is a dark reflex. It may be one of the most exclusionary words we have.

Father, mother—and parent Gender-loaded words are often used in ways that promote exclusion. For example, “our forefathers” leaves us wondering where the women were. “Mothering” connotes nurture, while “fathering” connotes fertilization. Both parents are vital to the sacredness of creation and nurturance—so I try to honor that trust with the words “parent” and “parenting.”

These are just a few examples of ways that we can choose our words to encourage cooperative actions and environments. There is a nobility to the enterprise of caring and to the transformation of that caring into acts of compassion and cooperation. As each of us chooses the course of our own commitment, we have the privilege of listening to Lewis Thomas’ genetic music of altruism and at the same time listening to the songs of our own language. We can hear our own lyrics of inclusion and exclusion. We can make choices about our own willingness to cooperate with our design.

Sometimes our attention is drawn away from the source of lifekind’s music—the plan within each of us to cooperate and include. There is precious little silence in this world in which we live—so if we are to hear the songs of unity, we must listen carefully. We must quiet ourselves and learn again to honor our design.

