

Environmental Activism as a Capitalist Trojan Horse, and “The Bill Gates Factor”

An Earth Day Special

By [Dr. Vandana Shiva](#) and [Michael Welch](#)

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For more than half a century, Earth Day is the time in April when all thoughts turn to love...of the planet.

Actions dedicated to conservation and reforestation of the planet, ending plastic pollution, limiting climate change and restorative agriculture are a few of the movements reflected in this giant engine of hope for all the masses on the globe. [1]

The initiative these days is supported by dozens of Non Governmental Organizations, including the Rockefeller backed Club of Rome. So, activism sanctioned by the major players world-wide. [2][3]

The problem one can run into, of course, is that as we saw with the COVID-19 “pandemic,” the Rockefellers, the Gateses, and the other higher entities are not exactly on the same page as the rest of us and are arguably using the crisis we are facing as an opportunity for some other objective.

It is true that simple corporations have jumped on the climate bandwagon each Earth Day. For example, Nestlé has pledged to cut their CO2 emissions in half by 2030. Though given their track record of child labor, pollution, price fixing and mislabeling, it is tempting to think of such commitments as old fashioned “greenwashing.”[4][5]

But the more urgent question facing all of us determined to do our part for the living world is

the far more significant attempts to mislead. When the powerful players decide to use modern environmentalism for reasons other than maintaining a strong, vibrant Earth, we the people could end up feeling more than just profoundly screwed. Our sacrifices for our natural home and hearth could ultimately be in service to their profits, and at the end of the day, it would not alter the planet one iota!

Is our Earth Day and our environmental actions as subscribed by the billionaire masters leading us to our collective desperation or some place even worse? That is a question posed in this Earth Day episode of the Global Research News Hour.

In our first half hour, Australian Michael Swifte joins us to talk about the way the American and Australian philanthropists with their bought and paid for climate NGOs have suckered us into a form of de-carbonization that will not actually reduce emissions, but help the fossil fuel industry get even MORE oil and gas out of the ground. Then in our second half hour, the legendary Indian scholar, environmental activist, and ecofeminist Vandana Shiva appears to address the role of the so-called philanthrocapitalists, and particularly of Bill Gates, in undermining food security and diversity in the supposed name of saving it.

Michael Swifte is an Australian activist and a member of the Wrong Kind of Green critical thinking collective. He writes at wrongkindofgreen.org

Vandana Shiva is a philosopher, environmental activist, and eco feminist. Shiva, currently based in Delhi, has authored more than 20 books and over 500 papers in leading scientific and technical journals. She was trained as a physicist and received her Ph.D. in physics from the University of Western Ontario, Canada. She was awarded the Right Livelihood Award in 1993. She is the founder of Navdanya <http://www.navdanya.org/>. She is a frequent contributor to Global Research.

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Transcript of Vandana Shiva, April 17, 2023

Part one

Global Research: You opened your book “Philanthrocapitalism and the Erosion of Democracy: a Global Citizens Report on the Corporate Control of Technology, Health, and Agriculture,” but talk about the land and how Indigenous communities worldwide have evolved the most ingenious farming systems over time. And then, about a century ago, traditions began to collapse due to the chemically intensive agricultural model which originated under the IG Farben companies, the “poison cartel” as you put it, that started making chemical weapons in World War I and World War II. And then, in an attempt to keep making profits, turned to use in agriculture. They saw a big opportunity in the Green Revolution to make money. This began a new area of conquest, and not just of land but of the food on which we all feed. Talk about how this system transformed the quality of diets in the world, particularly the Global South where the Green Revolution was practised.

Vandana Shiva: Yeah. Michael, actually before the industrialization of agriculture, including its Green Revolution phase when it was imposed on the Third World, is the privatization of land and the creation of private property. People think private property has always been around. In my country, land was never owned as private property. Land was a commons, and allocations were done by the community for its use. Exactly like territories were, you know, assigned to Indigenous cultures, people knew which group has which land.

For India, its as recent as '83 or '87 when Lord Cornwallis wrote with one sentence, that "All the land of India belongs to England." All the continent of Australia belonged to England. All of Canada belonged to England. All of the United States belonged to England. So all of Africa started to belong to England. And the alienation of land is really the story of colonialism. And that's why the Land Back movement of Indigenous people is so significant as de-colonisation and re-establishing our relationship with the Earth in a rightful way.

The next step of alienation is IG Farben and Standard Oil as the origin of "Oneness Vs. the 1%." The German companies have the technology, the chemical technology, but the fossil fuels from which the chemical industry made its fertilizers, pesticides, its chemicals to kill people, that came from Standard Oil. It came from Rockefeller. And Standard Oil, IG Farben, had one company. And at that time, too, after having established a monopoly, Rockefeller realized it had to create a philanthropic image, so they created the Rockefeller Foundation. And just here on my desk, is Operation Paperclip, of how the Nazi scientists were transported to do all this work in the United States. And it's not an accident that genetic engineering is then developed by Rockefeller on the basis of the molecular biology discipline which they financed 100%. And they're the ones who pushed the chemical farming. And the Green Revolution was pushed to close by the US government, by the World Bank, but also by the Rockefeller Foundation and the Ford Foundation.

Today, even though Rockefeller is very active still, they haven't, you know, receded from the scene. The Green Revolution for Africa, the Alliance for the Green Revolution in Africa, is a joint project of Rockefeller and Gates. Of course, since globalization, Gates has become super rich as all the tech billionaires have. Both my book "Oneness Vs. the 1%" as well as collected books through the movements of philanthrocapitalism, they're really showing how there's not a single field that doesn't directly impact human freedom and human well-being where Gates is not trying to take over right now. And he has become the biggest farmland owner of America. And he has already launched something called Gates Ag One. Exactly when the Covid was bursting, he was dreaming of one agriculture under his control, the seeds under his control, the technology under his control, the food under his control, lab food, fake food. So, if you want to see that everything that we knew was wrong with agriculture, if it has been given the fast forward, it's by the philanthrocapitalism of Gates.

In 2000, they brought the golden rice to India. We showed how it was a very inferior source of vitamin A, and there was so much more diversity. Gates took it now to The Philippines, just to address The Philippines peasants a few weeks back, because they're fighting golden rice. We stopped the BT eggplant of Monsanto, —

GR: Mm-hmm.

VS: — we put a moratorium. Mr. Gates takes it to Bangladesh. So, everything that has been failed to democracy, Gates is lifting it as long as there's money and power to be made. So, for anyone who cares about land, seed, agriculture, you must keep an eye on Bill Gates.

GR: Mm. Well, yeah, I mean, you talk about the danger of Bill Gates and philanthrocapitalism. Is this just a return of the Green Revolution of the 1960s but in different bottles, or is there, like, you say like a unique angle that's represented by Gates and the billionaires, you know? Can you talk about how it has sort of upped the ante, so to speak?

VS: Yeah. You know, at the time of the Green Revolution, the tools of destruction were chemical fertilizers. And using conventional breeding to change the plant to suit the fertilizers. But if that's about the highest level of violence they can do. Now when Mr. Gates is playing that role, we have tools not just of genetic engineering, which have already, you know, been a total failure in terms of delivering on the promises: promises of weed control, promises of pest control.

You know, I worked years with Percy Schmeiser, and I remember him so fondly, the Canadian farmer, who was sued by Monsanto after Monsanto contaminated his fields with the Roundup Ready Canola. And I know there's a film out called "Percy." And those who don't know of Percy's case, please watch that film. The first generation GMOs have failed. Gates now, just like Rockefeller, singularly created the discipline of molecular biology, of genetic reductionism of life. Not as complex as an organized system, but as a machine which they could control and own.

Right now, the tools of gene editing have been totally financed by Mr. Gates. Both the scientists who have further developed the CRISPR technology, CRISPR/Cas9 which is gene editing, financed by Gates. He even financed the fight for patenting. And he's the one who is deregulating GMO regulation and patent law regulation to push gene edited crops.

Europe and the big fight going on. UK had just passed a precision breeding law which puts GMOs outside regulation. And the most important thing that I've written, it's a chapter in the book "Philanthrocapitalism" on the seed issue. Before the Green Revolution, all the seeds of the world were collected and put in these banks, gene banks they call them, called CGIAR Systems, IRRI, the Rice Research Institute, ICRISAT, the Dire Land Crop Institute, ICARDA, the Arid Zone Institute. As the privatization has grown, the public spending has come down, and if you look at all of the CGIAR centres and all the seedlings they hold, the biggest contributor has become Mr Gates, which means he holds this genetic belt of the world, he holds the seeds of the world. He also controls the Svalbard seed bank. So, he has control of the seed, the first link in the food chain, control over the technologies through which he would take the patents and have the monopolies. And the control over the land where you would grow food.

GR: Mm-hmm.

VS: And he's not stopping at that. He realizes if agriculture is left as agriculture, there will be decentralization and diversity. And monopoly creators hate decentralization

and they hate diversity.

So, that's why Gates' side won. And he's working with Bayer and all of these companies. In fact, his Gates Ag One office is right next to Monsanto's office in St. Louis, Missouri, you know. That's where Monsanto is. Because the new partnership to forget about agriculture as a community producing their food. Agriculture will be uniform around the world, all based on GMOs, all based on glyphosate, producing raw material of amino acids and proteins as feed stock. Just like we turn cows into factory objects fed by animal feed, in a similar way, they want to turn us into factory objects fed by lab-made food whose raw material comes from the farms on a very large scale. And that, to me, is the summary of this plan-based language that they've created. It's really about fake food.

And if you look at who's doing what. Impossible Burger? Mr. Gates. Fake breast milk? Mr. Gates. They'll touch any crazy idea of how we should not be living on this planet. Mr. Gates' money is there for the craziness to become law.

GR: Oh boy. I mean, they say that Bill Gates, his approach to Microsoft was not so much about building a better mousetrap and having the world beat a path to your door, so much as building a lousy mousetrap and building paths to everybody else's door. You know, that's the whole - I mean, he's been appearing in court facing, you know, charges of anti-trust basically. Undermining competition and having, you know, unjustified monopolies in place. But, you know, flash forward to the present now: he is the number one - as you said - the number one holder of land in North America. What kind of a game is he now playing with owning all this land? How will it affect the food on my plate in the not-too-distant future?

VS: Yeah. The first is: the billionaires want our land and they want our food, because these are two things, without which, humanity can't live. So, at the time when he's grabbing the land, he's telling the farmers to leave the land. He's trying to make it look like farming is not for the future. It's the slogan of his minions - I call them "his minions" - people he gives the power talk to. Farming without farmers, food without farms, that's the dystopia. Farming without farmers, that means there's more chemicals, more machines. And food without farms, no food straight from the farms, no wheat that you can bake your bread with. No, just amino acids and proteins, going as feed stock for the factory and the lab. Cellular agriculture.

What is he wanting control of? As Kissinger said, when I did my book on the violence of the Green Revolution, I looked at all the literature, and Kissinger's statement that, "If you control arms, you control governments. When you control food, you control people." And that's why I say, when you control seed, you control the planet. That's what his dystopia is: total control.

GR: Hm.

VS: And the same with, he had not created the basic software. It was mathematics professors in a college in Vermont which he then claims he invented. His piracy of that time and monopolies and anti-trust, exactly the same thing he's doing with seed. He's trying to convert our food into software, he's trying to convert life into software. And that's why it's not an accident that wherever life is, he's trying to push software systems, both as a monopoly system of patents, as well as a monopoly system of

surveillance and extraction of resources.

GR: Well, that brings to mind something called Impossible Food, which is like a lab-made nourishment, I guess, that's - I guess it's made to look like meat and tastes sort of like meat, but without, I guess, the side effects of meat or animal deaths. I mean —

VS: Worse side effects. Worse side effects. Anyone who thinks that a GMO soya burger does not have side effects is not following what an industrial GMO agriculture does. GMO and glyphosate sprayed Roundup Ready soya, which is most of the soya grown in the world, is responsible for hundreds of thousands of cancer deaths of people.

GR: Mm-hmm.

VS: And this Impossible Burger has much higher residues of glyphosate than anyone allows. It has pushed the monarch butterfly to extinction. It's designed to kill everything green. Anyone who supports Impossible Burger and plant-based pretend meat as being non-violent doesn't see the violence to the butterflies, to the bees, to the human beings. And most importantly, to the plant life. You know, first humans were arrogant and drew a line between themselves and other animals to feel superior. Torture them in factory farms. But who gives you the right to say the plants are not sentient? Understand the literature to see that plants are not to be "based" and turned into meat. Plants are sentient beings and they need as much respect as the animals do. And any system that turns plants into raw materials is a violation of the plants. Any system that destroys the biodiversity of plants is a violation of the plant. So, some very basic, unscientific statements are being made. And unscientific claims.

There are 14 patents associated with Impossible Burger. And from what I gather, the European patent has just been withdrawn. So, sadly there are a lot of people who don't know farming, who don't know anything about food. Who lap up Mr. Gates' propaganda, and in a way, hand over their brains to Mr. Gates. This is the time to know what food is, to know what healthy food is. To know what plants are like and plant diversity is like. To understand the symbiotic relationship between plants and animals. Because surely there's a symbiotic relationship between plants and animals that will give us a non-violent system. A system that says, 'Kill all the plants and kill all the animals, except the soya bean that we want is Roundup resistant.' Now people are not thinking their way through. They are not thinking.

-intermission-

Part two

GR: Talk a bit about on the climate change front, Bill Gates and the philanthrocapitalists, but particularly Bill Gates was active in prescribing solutions to climate change. Bill Gates came up with the Breakthrough Energy, which is an umbrella of organizations dedicated to sustainable energy and high-tech projects. President Obama complemented him with Mission Innovation. And his approach was being adopted by the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and countries all over the world. I mean, what concerns do you have with his approach to climate change as currently modelled?

VS: Yeah. First, it's unscientific.

GR: Yeah.

VS: The more they talk of science, the less science they do. It's unscientific, because to blame the cow for having four stomachs for the climate problem is just bad science. It's the bad diets that's giving us the methane. The biogenetic methane just goes right back into the cycle. In ten years, it's gone, it turns into carbon dioxide and back into the system.

Impossible Burger is one of his climate solutions. Not for climate solutions. Spraying Roundup everywhere to kill the plants that give you the photosynthesis that solves the climate problem, is not a climate solution. Geo-engineering, changing the climate. Changing the weather with pollution is not a climate solution.

His Breakthrough Energy supports Biomilq, you know. I am a mother, I had a baby, and I did breastfeeding. Now, the distance between my baby and me is zero miles. I don't have any emissions while I'm feeding my baby. And he has lab - fake lab milk called Biomilq patented as a solution to climate change. Shipping the synthetic meat all over the world will add to climate emissions. We already know with the Nestlés and all the baby food how much sickness and death of babies took place. No one has done the safety test on this synthetic lab milk as a pretend breast milk.

Another reason he is grab-buying up land is because that's where all the orders they're creating for carbon offsets, which is - they are dreaming that will be the new economy. As he says clearly in his book, "Climate Catastrophe," it's not - net-zero doesn't mean we've stopped polluting. Net-zero just means we have to find the sinks and the offsets. And as repeated, he said in debates when people promote net-zero. Listen, we are not your sinks, you've polluted us enough, you've dumped enough on us. But our land is our mother, and our land is not there for your pollution. Our land is there for sustaining life on Earth.

GR: Hm. You know, I think that there's the sense that - well, I mean, the early colonizers of America, I mean, yes, they plundered and they were after gold and land and other ways of making money. But at the same time, they also seemed to have perpetuated this idea that they were actually going to try to help the people, you know, bring them civilization and such stuff. And I'm wondering if, like, with Bill Gates, if he isn't - I mean, if he actually believes that he's going to achieve good for people. Because he wants to, you know, make money and have all these accomplishments met. But I think he probably wants to, at the same time, ease his conscience in saying that, well, it's a win-win for us. I mean, is that your take? Or is he just a nasty -

VS: Well, as I've written in my book "Oneness Vs. the 1%," you know, he is on a civilizing mission. He does think we are all primitive. He does think he is out to deliver us. He has so little knowledge of how cultures live, of how human beings live, how life on this Earth lives. He has no knowledge. He just knows he made money out of stealing other people's software. And he knows how easy it is to make money. And he now, in the form of philanthrocapitalists, has convinced himself just like the missionaries who massacred the Indigenous people and wiped out 90% of the Indigenous people of the Americas. They did it in the name of civilizing mission.

Gates is doing exactly the same, he's on a civilizing mission to wipe us out, while he pretends he's civilizing us.

GR: Hm.

VS: It's no different. It's no different, it's just that instruments are more violent now.

GR: Yeah, and he doesn't see that - yeah, the Green Revolution —

VS: He doesn't see too much. He doesn't see too much. You know, we talk to ordinary people, you watch their eyes, you see the words that's in their eyes.

GR: Yeah.

VS: Gates has a limited vocabulary of about 20 words. He cannot go beyond it.

GR: But does he even go through the mechanism of going, sending people out to the different communities and having a dialogue and saying, 'Okay, these are your problems.' And then, they come back and here's your —

VS: Not - not a dialogue, a mission. Go and do this to the people. He already knows what to do.

GR: Hm. So, what is the approach you're taking in terms of calling for Earth democracy? How can we not only fight the —

VS: Very simple.

GR: — fight the philanthrocapitalists —

VS: Well, you know. Yeah.

GR: — but also, rebuild the heritage of past Indigenous agriculturalists.

VS: Yeah. So, you know, I wrote Earth Democracy after we managed to stop the WTO in Seattle. And they were talking about a New World Order. They were talking about a global constitution which would be about making money or pursue profits first. And for me, a democracy means, first, the recognition that we are part of the Earth, we are not separate. Second, we are not superior to other species and no culture is superior to other cultures. And no race is superior to other races. The democracy of the Earth is a democracy of diversity, but not inequality, no hierarchies.

How do we fight philanthrocapitalism with this? By realizing that money isn't the currency of life. And having accumulated billions doesn't mean that a billionaire has unequal rights. At the end of the day, we, the tree, the salmon in the river, we all have rights to be here on this planet. To be sustained by the planet and to sustain it. A democracy means we have to get rid of all the hierarchies, including the hierarchy between the billionaires, the oneness, and the rest of us. And we get that power to fight these divisions by turning to the Earth to know how life works. And that's where the Indigenous cultures and nature Herself becomes our teacher for the next step of liberation. Humanity's liberation comes from the non-human scale and from those who were declared primitive by the curse of civilizing missions.

GR: Earth Day is an annual day in which citizens around the world mobilize to protect the planet for future generations, although some complain about major green-washing

of major corporations. So, when people want to embrace the Earth this coming Earth Day, what do you suggest they – where do you suggest they put their efforts?

VS: The first thing they should say, wherever they are, that Mother Earth is not for sale. Because the philanthrocapitalists want to own the Earth. The second thing is, the basic currency of life is food and they want our food. So, go plant something: in your windowsill, in your back garden, find a farmer whom you can relate to. Create a food community. Third, this Earth Day, just remember we are part of the Earth, we are not her masters. And those who pretend to be masters are not her masters, either.

GR: Vandana Shiva, it's been great talking to you again and hearing your wisdom and knowledge. Thank you so much for being a part of this very special –

VS: Thank you.

GR: — conversation. We've been speaking with —

VS: Happy Earth Day to everyone.

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Notes:

1. <https://www.earthday.org/our-work/>
2. <https://www.earthday.org/campaign/climate-environmental-literacy/#>
3. <https://thetechnocratictyranny.com/corruption/rockefeller-and-the-club-of-rome/>
4. <https://www.edie.net/from-burger-king-to-whitbread-business-giants-mark-earth-day-with-new-climate-targets/>
5. <https://www.zmescience.com/science/nestle-company-pollution-children/>

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