GREEN COLLEGE AND IRES LECTURE SERIES AND WORKSHOP

HOPE IN THE ANTHROPOCENE: SUSTAINABILITY SOLUTIONS AND INSPIRATIONS

Photo: Mollie Holmberg, Juan Diego Martinez and Cheenar Shah greet attendees arriving at the Coach House on April 20 for the Hope Workshop.

As part of its interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral public programming for the academic year 2017-18, Green College partnered with UBC's Institute for Resources, Environment and Sustainability to put on a series of lectures and a workshop dedicated to problem-solving strategies for the planetary emergency of climate change and environmental degradation caused by human activity.

This report on **Hope in the Anthropocene** was prepared by the student organizing committee for the final workshop: Mollie Holmberg (Geography and Green College), Juan Diego Martinez (IRES), Kiely McFarlane (IRES, O'Riordan Fellow in Sustainable Development at Green College), and Cheenar Shah (Food and Resource Economics and Green College). The lecture and workshop session summaries were prepared from notes taken by Green College and IRES student rapporteurs: Mollie Holmberg, Susanna Klassen, Poushali Maji, Juan Diego Martinez, Kiely McFarlane, Saori Ogura, Victoria Ostenso, Joanne Pearce, Carolina Sanchez, Cheenar Shah, Kavelina Torres, and Silu Wang.

Series Abstract

With humanity's creation of a new geological epoch marked by dominant human influences on planetary processes, the Anthropocene seems to offer little hope. And yet, the same ingenuity that enables human domination over the Earth also allows a certain genius in addressing the many rising environmental and sustainability challenges. The *Hope in the Anthropocene* lecture and discussion series showcased such inspirations and solutions in tackling climate change, harnessing energy, feeding humanity, governing states, and meeting our collective water and sanitation needs all while respecting Indigenous peoples and protecting nature and its benefits for people.

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Introduction by the Principal of Green College

A doubly Green theme. Green College is named after its founder, Sir Cecil H. Green (1900-2003), who expected his college at UBC to take a lead in brainstorming strategies for sustainability, as well as on other pressing issues. That was why he funded it—to provide a space and resources for multidisciplinary conversation within the university community, and between the university and the wider, local community. An electrical engineer who began his career and made his first fortune providing geophysical exploration services to oil companies in the US, Cecil Green would have been among the first to see the need for thinking outside the Anthropocene box in which species on this planet now find themselves shut.

A natural partnership. Green College has often partnered in the past with the Institute for Resources, Environment and Sustainability at UBC. It was therefore only natural that a College-originated project to bring together researchers, activists and others interested in promoting **Hope in the Anthropocene** should rely heavily on the IRES. The title of the project and description of its goals (see Series Abstract above) were drafted by Dr. Kai Chan and most of the work of convening and hosting the lecture series was done by him and his IRES colleagues.

Photo: Tim and Jon O'Riordan, Mark Vessey with the 2014-18 O'Riordan Fellowship holder, Kiely McFarlane.

An inspiring gift. This was always going to be a project in which UBC graduate students, from a range of disciplines, would play a crucial role—as rapporteurs and co-hosts for lectures, and as organizers and facilitators of the culminating half-day workshop. In that we were encouraged by the strong support and guidance provided by eminent environmental scientists Tim O'Riordan of the University of East Anglia (UK), Distinguished Visiting Fellow at Green College, and his brother Jonathan O'Riordan, co-author of *The Hard Work of Hope: Climate Change in the Age of Trump* (2017). Since 2000, Green College has awarded the Tim and Ann O'Riordan Fellowship in Sustainable Development to a UBC doctoral student. One of the four lead students for the **Hope in the Anthropocene** workshop, Kiely McFarlane, from New Zealand, has been the holder of that award for 2014-18.

A historic connection. In the fall of 1995, an earlier Green College series on **Critical Issues in Global Development** hosted a talk entitled “Ecofeminism: A Feminist Journey to Clayquot Sound” by Tzeporah Berman, who was then described as Blockade Coordinator and Spokesperson for the Friends of Clayoquot Sound, Forests Campaigner and Native Liaison Spokesperson. On the day after the **Hope in the Anthropocene** workshop the Toronto *Globe and Mail* rain an op-ed by Tzeporah Berman under the heading “From Clayoquot Sound to Trans Mountain, the power of protest endures,” which began: “Twenty-five years ago, First Nations and environmentalists united in civil disobedience against clear-cut logging in Vancouver Island forests. Now, a planned oil pipeline is rekindling idealism for an even more important cause—not just protecting our land, but healing our society…”

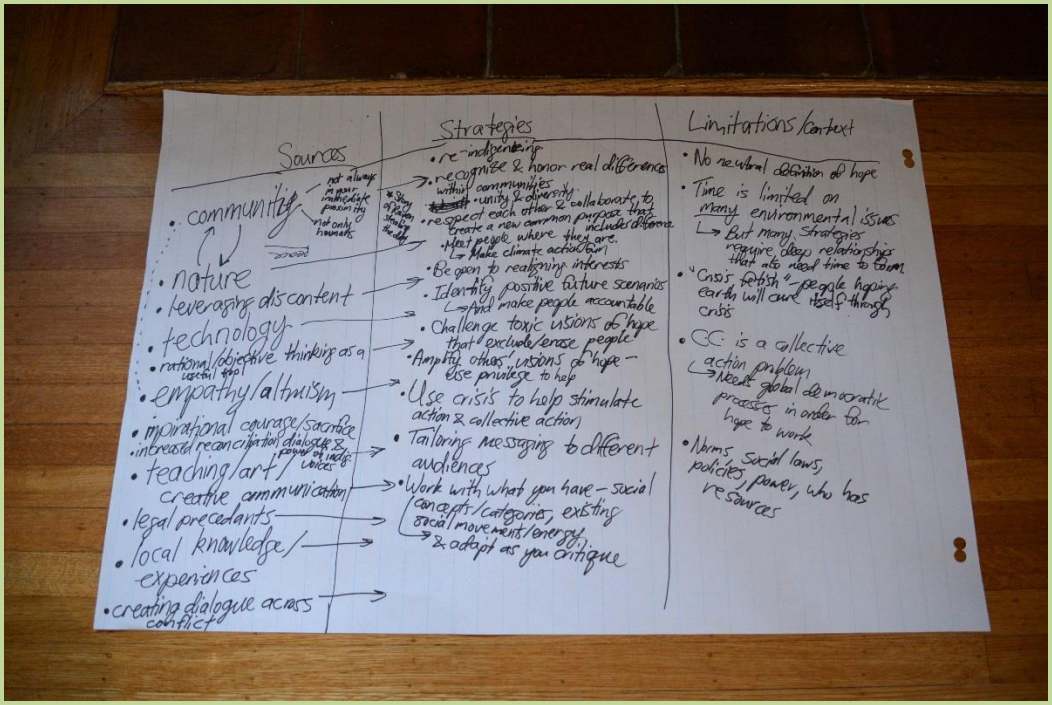
Just hours before that piece appeared, workshop participants had a chance to hear directly from Tzeporah Berman, Doctor of Laws *hon. c.* (UBC) and author of *This Crazy Time: Living Our Environmental Challenge*, in conversation with Dr. Tom Sisk, Professor of Environmental Science and Science at Northern Arizona University and Distinguished Visiting Fellow at Green College.

Photo: Tom Sisk and Tzeporah Berman, moments before their discussion in the Great Hall.

No issue is more pressing at this time than the need to find ways to address and meet the social and political challenges posed to us by the Anthropocene. The following summaries of talks and lectures provide a range of insights and practical suggestions. This is an agenda to which the College will keep returning.

Warmest thanks to the Resident Members, students, faculty, and guest participants who created **Hope in the Anthropocene**—and welcome to those of you joining or rejoining the discussion here. We hope you will find this report useful and stimulating.

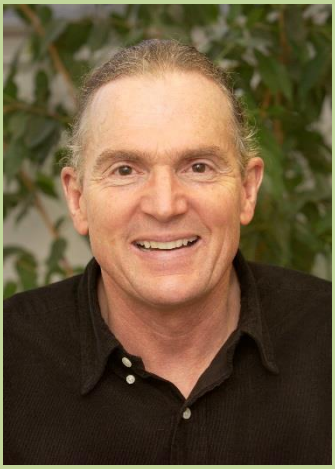
Photo: Workshop participants presenting the results of brainstorming sessions.



Lecture Summaries

How to Quench South Africans' Thirst (September 20, 2017)
Mary Galvin, Associate Professor of Anthropology and Development Studies, University of Johannesburg

Mary Galvin's research explores the intersection between water access and community activism in the context of South Africa's constitutional protection of the human right to water. Specifically, her work examines the contradictions between South Africa's celebrated progress toward the millennium development goal for access to water, and the increasing rate of protests over lack of clean, secure, and affordable drinking-water in some (predominantly poor, black) communities. She argues that these contradictions reveal 1) that inequalities continue to pervade service provision in post-apartheid South Africa; 2) inadequacies in how water access is measured by both the human right to water and millennium development goals; and 3) that protests over water services are also a broader expression of frustration with municipal mismanagement and corruption. While technical solutions to socioenvironmental issues such as water insecurity already exist, implementing these solutions in ways that promote social justice and equity will require significant political work. Through her research on water protests in South Africa, Mary argues that community activism should be seen as evidence that things can change, since they reveal a local will and capacity to organize for different futures. Hope therefore continues to exist at the local level, where community leaders and organizations can work to counter current hydropolitical hegemonies. Mary proposes a 'pathway to hope' based on the belief that grassroots political organizing offers the greatest potential for change: 1) Find (local) bravery to challenge the status quo; 2) Be leaders, and live by example; 3) Understand the issues and teach others; 4) Practice citizen science and engage those in power; 5) Get on the agenda, or create your own agenda; and 6) Create bottom-up and interlinked alternatives. Finally, by discussing hope in the context of historic and contemporary inequalities, Mary reminds us to apply a social justice lens and reflect on 'whose hope' is centered in various strategies for hope in the Anthropocene.



Sustainable Farming Systems in the 21st Century (October 18, 2017)
John Reganold, Professor of Soil Science and Agroecology, Washington State University

John Reganold's research has been focused on evaluating different approaches to sustainable farming as alternatives to conventional agriculture in multiple cropping and biophysical contexts. Over his career he has evaluated several aspects of sustainability by comparing these alternative systems (including organic, no-till, integrated, perennial and bio-dynamic systems) with conventional systems, focusing on soil health (his discipline and training). For

each of the studies he discussed, he found that the alternative systems (in many cases, organic) performed better than the conventional systems across several criteria (soil health, energy efficiency, taste, etc). Despite these results, John highlights that the key takeaway message of his work is there is no 'one size fits all' approach to farming sustainably. John's long career examining organic and sustainable farming methods provides a historical perspective on how public perception has evolved toward greater acceptance of these alternative methods. Organic, no-till and other methods are now not only significantly more accepted by the public, but are actively encouraged by a growing market (e.g. large scale retailers supporting farmers to convert to organics to meet market demands). These shifts in agriculture represent significant changes in a short time towards "alternative" production systems. John presented this history as evidence of progress, and a reason to hope for more widespread transitioning toward sustainable farming systems into the future. However, at the end of his talk he acknowledged several remaining barriers to further change, including economic constraints faced by farmers, the concentrated power of corporations, the difficulty of shifting dietary and purchasing choices of consumers, and the pressure created by a growing population. Market economics are therefore presented as both a (hopeful) opportunity for more sustainable forms of living in the Anthropocene, and a barrier to system-wide change.

Re-Indigenizing the Planet in the Anthropocene (November 15, 2017)
Jeanette Armstrong, Assistant Professor & Canada Research Chair in Okanagan Indigenous Knowledge and Philosophy, UBC Okanagan

Jeanette Armstrong is a member of Syilx Okanagan, a fluent speaker and teacher of the Nsyilxcn Okanagan language, and a traditional knowledge keeper of the Okanagan Nation. Jeanette explained that the place she is from, the Okanagan, is much more than just the place she inhabits; rather it is intricately interwoven with her identity or, as she put it most simply, "the place is really me." She introduced the concept of indigeneity as "a way of inter-relating with place towards constant renewal" that is "a learned experience and a living right" for all people. She explained that if individuals had the level of interconnectivity to place that she has with the Okanagan, they would treat the environment and each other in a regenerative way out of necessity for survival as one whole being. She challenged us to imagine a society in which everyone had this feeling, this interrelationship with place. Jeanette is hopeful that in the coming together of all peoples on mutual ground, we can create communities of hope that foster societal transformation. She shared examples of projects that involve alliances, collaboration, and coalitions between indigenous and non-indigenous groups towards re-indigenizing the planet. One of these projects is the Okanagan River Restoration Initiative, where the Syilx Okanagan community hosted a salmon feast and invited non-indigenous outsiders (including government leaders) so that they could begin to understand the importance of salmon to the community. Jeanette explained that while it wasn't easy to invite the enemy in and treat them as

"dear ones" – to feed them, to gift them, to love them – doing so created a shared sense of belonging and, ultimately, a shared sense of responsibility for restoring the salmon spawning grounds. The key takeaway messages from Jeanette's presentation were: restoring a sense of place is restoring hope; a sense of place is a sense of belonging; and we can begin to foster this sense of belonging by inviting everyone in and supporting dialogue across difference.

Participatory Science, Public Discourse, and Hope for Solving Wicked Environmental Problems (January 17, 2018)

Thomas D. Sisk, Professor of Environmental Science and Policy, Northern Arizona University

Wendy J. Palen, Associate Professor of Ecology of Aquatic Communities, Simon Fraser University

Tom Sisk and Wendy Palen began by defining the Anthropocene as the current geological epoch in which human activity is the predominant influence on climate and the environment. Quoting Wendell Berry, they defined hope as a choice and a virtue. However they noted that there is little scientific evidence for hope in the Anthropocene: in a publication marking the 25th anniversary of World Scientists' Warning to Humanity (2017), 8 out of 9 negative environmental trends had not turned around. Wendy and Tom argue that in this era, scientists can be important voices and role models for change. However, to be effective, scientists need to move away from a linear model of change (driven by the right science and effective communication) to a public discourse model (whereby science is used to expand public discourse and connect different views and values). Their key takeaway message for more influential science was that we need to establish a deeply rooted public discourse to promote conservation efforts through overlaps among science, policy, and value systems. They call this overlap the 'zone of agreement' or 'solution space' where common interests can be pursued, resulting in small changes that can be amplified over time. They argue that efforts originating in the 'solution space' tend to take off and create profound impacts for solving environmental problems. In support of this argument, Wendy and Tom presented four case studies from their research with participatory science initiatives. They argue that these successful initiatives shared several unifying characteristics: (1) the projects brought public and scientific participation together with more traditional scientific goals; (2) scientific tasks created a shared space and language through which participants could learn together, and new opportunities could emerge; (3) the

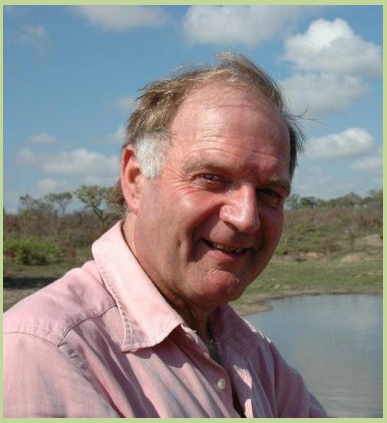
value of discourse in enabling stakeholder involvement and co-creation with different groups to be realized in a fairly organic way; 4) values remained diverse, but responsibilities were clarified; and (5) project outcomes were slow to manifest and often different than initial expectations. Furthermore, all of these examples involved system-wide thinking that began by identifying perceived conflicts among different value systems, and then creating questions/hypothesis out of those conflicts. Wendy and Tom argue that such collaboration can be deeply rooted, and establish important momentum for future policy changes.

The Grand Challenge of Clean Energy Access in the Developing World (February 28, 2018) **Johannes Urpelainen, Professor of Energy, Resources and Environment at Johns Hopkins SAIS, and Founding Director of the Initiative for Sustainable Energy Policy (ISEP)**

Johannes Urpelainen's key message is that the grand challenge of achieving universal clean energy is important, but that human development and climate change shouldn't be traded off against each other. It is an encouraging sign that clean energy is becoming more frequently discussed as part of a global agenda, primarily because it is also becoming increasingly competitive. Having said that, Johannes stresses that clean energy is currently not a universal solution to both development and climate, and that a mixed approach should be used. Johannes' work is focused in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, where he has gained deep insights into energy needs for electrification and cooking. In both contexts communities often suffer from the lack of a reliable, affordable, and safe energy supply for their daily cooking, lighting, and heating needs, and consequently continue to rely on cheap fuels that contribute to greenhouse gases and local air pollution. Developing a reliable energy supply can involve various approaches, from on-grid expansion, to off-grid small and medium systems, with different energy sources as supplies. Optimal solutions are context specific and require a diverse set of policies to accompany the investment. Johannes argues that at this point the priority for energy provision should be affordability and reliability, since incremental emissions in these communities are only marginal to the total global GHG emissions. Therefore, as the world moves forward with clean energy development, we need to remember to not focus on clean energy for the very poor. The largest clean energy outcomes that we seek will be achieved by de-carbonizing middle- and high-income households.

Planet Vision: Why We First Need To Build a Shared, Positive Vision of the Future to Address Our Environmental Challenges (March 21, 2018)
Jonathan Foley, Executive Director of the California Academy of Sciences

Jonathan Foley approached the idea of hope by defining it as a call to action, and reminding the audience that it is still in our hands to shape the future we want. He stressed that hope is a proactive stance, in contrast to passive optimism. More specifically, hope in the Anthropocene requires that we recognize the fact that the conditions of unbounded growth of the previous geological epoch (the Holocene) do not apply to this epoch, which is strongly influenced by our growing population and impacts on the planet. We have operated under the grave misconception that change could be postponed, and have thus triggered significant disruptions to natural systems. But we still have an opportunity to learn and change these detrimental assumptions and outcomes. To do this we need to communicate with and empower the disengaged 'middle' of the political spectrum, as they actually represent the majority of the population (e.g. ~70% in the USA). That audience is alienated by the often extremist messaging in crucial debates that must engage a wider spread of the population in order to change the course of the Anthropocene. Jon's work is now focused on science communication at the California Academy of Sciences, a natural history museum at the forefront of novel approaches to science learning and inspiring change among a wide diversity of visitors in the San Francisco Bay Area. One key takeaway message is that culture change is needed in order to action the relevant policies, science and technologies that have been proposed as plausible solutions to the challenges of the Anthropocene. Museums are trusted cultural institutions, a place where people are willing to learn and absorb messaging if it is provided in the right setting. At the Cal. Academy of Sciences visitors can visually and experientially learn about the issues on water, food, and energy in the context of their daily lives, deeply connecting to shared emotional responses as a result. Jon argues that if this learning is accompanied by information that signals that as a species we have improved over time, and that sustainability is the next challenge in our chapter of natural history, knowledge can be transformed into action. Hope is the stance that we choose as a strategy.



Generating Community Hope in the Anthropocene: Transformational Movements for Sustainable Living (April 19, 2018)
Tim O'Riordan, Emeritus Professor of Environmental Sciences, University of East Anglia, and returning Cecil H. and Ida Green Visiting Professor at UBC

Tim O'Riordan drew on his extensive experience in sustainability and environmental governance to reflect on the role of sustainability science in advancing a more resilient, equitable,

hopeful Anthropocene. Tim began by emphasizing that the future wellbeing of the planet and its inhabitants is still within our hands, and that a lot can be done through activism and community-oriented action. However, a supportive socio-economic, political, and institutional framework is required to realize these changes. He argued that many sustainability initiatives are still greenwashing, and that we need to focus on transforming the existing structures and conditions of power that are making life in the Anthropocene unsustainable. In light of these opportunities and challenges, Tim suggested three key pathways forward. First, he argued that sustainability is a more powerful notion than is often portrayed, with its emphasis on self-reliant living, and that as such we should not abandon the notion. Sustainability should instead serve as a guiding post to a better society and more resilient communities. Second, Tim advocated for sustainability science as a way of knowing and engaging that brings scientists, policy-makers, and stakeholders into one common moral framing. He highlighted that many sustainability improvements (e.g. a zero plastics economy) will require a lot of coordinated effort across multiple industries and fields (from technology, to retail, to policy). Sustainability science can contribute to these advances by offering a framework for engagement and innovation across these disparate fields. Drawing on examples of organizations that have made significant changes to their products and practices, he illustrated how sustainability science can be used to transform current systems and integrate sustainability into everyday life. Third, Tim highlighted the importance of equality and justice in improving human wellbeing. He noted that justice (and especially perceptions of injustice) is an important instigator for change, and that there is increasing interest in enhancing equality in society. Opening up the notion of wellbeing to consider its ethical, moral, and spiritual elements suggests new ways forward for the joint pursuit of equality and sustainability, including fostering a participatory culture, sharing society, and civil society leadership.

Workshop: Hope in the Anthropocene

Friday April 20, 2018
Green College, UBC

Organized by a team of graduate students from IRES, Food and Resource Economics, and Geography, the capstone workshop for Hope in the Anthropocene aimed to bring academics and professionals working across diverse areas of sustainability together to synthesize, critique, and supplement the findings and insights from the lecture series. The workshop built upon the diversity of perspectives and insights from the six-part lecture series to explore sustainability solutions requiring a range of social, psychological, communications, and technical expertise. During the first part of the half-day workshop, participants explored different conceptions and critiques of hope in the context of overwhelming environmental change. They then engaged in guided storytelling to identify sources and strategies for fostering and actioning hope in the second part of the workshop. The day finished with a discussion about building alliances across difference in environmental activism, led by Tzeporah Berman.

Workshop participants included undergraduates, graduate students, faculty, entrepreneurs, engineers, activists, and professionals from the nonprofit sector. Collectively they represented a

range of fields from across the humanities and social and natural sciences, and brought with them diverse understandings of environmental politics. Most participants came to the workshop with experiences from more than one of these fields and professional contexts, reflecting the inherently interdisciplinary nature of sustainability science. Although many participants commuted from addresses in the Vancouver region, their knowledge of sustainability challenges and solutions came from working across wide-ranging local and international contexts.

Photo: Workshop participants are all smiles and ready for a well-deserved lunch after a hard working morning.

Workshop Session 1: Understanding Hope

"To be truly radical is to make hope possible, rather than despair convincing."
-Raymond Williams

The first session focused on developing a working definition of "hope" in the present context and emergency. What do we mean by "hope" in the Anthropocene? Who is it for? Why does it matter? Participants began by brainstorming ideas about what hope means for them and discussing themes and disagreements that emerged. Many highlighted the diverse ways in which hope is created and put into action, describing it as both a response to changing circumstances and a propulsive force that galvanizes change. Other participants pointed out ways that hope can foster complacency or inaction, leading to discussions of whether hope was a choice, belief, or part of human nature. Several discussants emphasized the hard work that sustaining hope requires, and the need to recognize incremental or less than perfect gains in order to remain hopeful. The need to develop concrete visions of hopeful futures that can direct action emerged as a key idea in these discussions.

In exploring who hope is for and why it matters, local communities engaged in collective action frequently emerged as a focal point of discussion. Such discussions framed hope as rooted in a common purpose, and emphasized community relationships and the way common hopes can motivate people to work together. Participants also noted the different consequences (both positive and negative) that hoping can have for different groups of people. Equity emerged as a key consideration in these discussions of who benefits from 'hoped for futures'. Specifically, participants recognized the difficulties hope can present for communities or individuals struggling to meet basic needs, and the need to include space for diverse or contradictory visions of hope. In many cases, hope can seem like a luxury. Others helpfully pointed out the close relationship between hope and despair, as despair about overwhelming social and environmental threats can spur people into action that makes hope possible for themselves and others. These reflections on 'who hopes' and 'who hope is for' continued to recur in the second session's exploration of where different people find hope, and how they seek to mobilize it.

Workshop Session 2: Sources and Strategies for Hope

"*Hope is persistent, positive progression*."

-Table B

In the second session, participants worked on identifying sources and strategies for fostering and actioning hope, and discussed the limitations of different approaches to hope. The session began with guided storytelling where participants shared experiences from their own lives about times they have found or struggled with hope. There were many discussions of where people found hope in their daily lives and work, but often this was also connected to despair, as despair seemed to provide the motivation for people to make positive changes. Motivated individuals and small-scale grassroots movements were frequently recognized as sources of hope; their sacrifice and work to make sustainable living possible for the larger population were seen as particularly inspiring. Even when participants expressed little hope in wider organizations or institutions (e.g. governments), they were still able to find hope in the individuals that work within institutions to achieve change. Community action was seen as both a source and strategy for hope. However, participants recognized the difficulty of scaling up this sense of community, especially when considering equity implications for marginalized groups, or the different meanings and manifestations of community globally. Differences in participants' perceptions highlighted that sources of hope to one person can also be 'sinks' to another. For example, the media was identified as a source of hope because it provides inspirational stories, and encourages free communication. However, for others the media is mainly a source of bad news stories, whose democratic role has been corrupted by economic and political power.

Participants' stories of sources of hope served as an entry point to deliberating the strengths and limitations of different strategies for fostering and actioning hope in the Anthropocene. Strategies ranged from encouraging and/or enabling more active participation in sustainability, to forms of community engagement, to addressing power asymmetries. Communicative strategies were highlighted for their importance in shaping people's perceptions and motivations to act. For example, celebrating sustainability successes, legal precedents, and champions were discussed as ways to recognize the challenges that communities have overcome, and the changes achieved in recent decades. Participants also identified encouraging diversity of dialogue and engaging across difference as strategies for fostering hope. Given that there is no politically neutral concept of hope, participants argued that people must remain open to negotiation and not avoid conflict if real, widespread changes are to be achieved. Finally, participants reflected upon limitations for change in the Anthropocene. Participants noted that many of the strategies discussed require time to build deep relationships, empathy, and altruism, but that there is not infinite time to change behaviours in the context of current environmental crises. Others highlighted constraints on actioning hope as a result of social norms, laws, policies, power, and resources (and the fact that these are not evenly distributed). In the context of these limitations and constraints, backcasting was suggested as an accountable, planning-oriented way of actioning hope, which involves identifying positive concrete visions for the future and the steps necessary to get there.

Discussion with Tzeporah Berman (moderated by Thomas Sisk)

Tzeporah Berman is an environmental activist, author of This Crazy Time: Living Our Environmental Challenge (2011)

Tzeporah's journey towards becoming a leader in the global environmental movement began over two decades ago when she coordinated the largest civil disobedience protest in Canadian history, resulting in the preservation of the old-growth forest of Clayoquot Sound. As cofounder and strategic director of the international environmental organization Forest Ethics, she is recognized for successfully fostering respectful dialogue with and among representatives from private, government, environmental, and First Nations communities. By illuminating some successes from these experiences and treating them as harbingers of the future, Tzeporah delivered an inspiring message of Hope in the Anthropocene. However, she noted that the environmental movement is currently hampered by its inability to articulate a clear and unified message of a desirable future. While environmental activists and scientists are skilled at identifying problems with current systems and potential solutions, they often fail to present a grounded vision of alternative systems and pathway to get there. Tzeporah consequently advocated for greater use of backcasting as a tool to both scale-up existing sustainable developments, and engage people around a clear set of priorities and sense of common purpose. Notwithstanding her successes in engaging with the private sector to catalyze positive environmental change, she pointed to the shortcomings of the consumer-led model of change, and the need for political will and leadership in meeting the urgency and scale with which change must be enacted. Tzeporah also highlighted the role of organized protest in creating the political space for governments to legislate for change. She highlighted that social change is not easy and there will always be those who are invested in maintaining the status quo. In spite of this, she has remained strongly rooted in advocating for environmental policy that preserves natural habitat and biodiversity while recognizing the imperatives of economic stability.

Series Conclusion

This series began with the purpose of finding hope in a geological epoch defined by the disruptive and degrading influence of human activities on Earth's natural systems. This required revisiting common understandings of the meaning of hope, and sometimes even redefining it. Over the course of the seminar series, speakers presented a range of approaches to sustainability that gave them hope in the context of current socio-environmental issues. In the concluding workshop, we explored whether evoking hope itself might be a path towards sustainability in the Anthropocene.

The series highlighted a gap between common, colloquial understandings of hope and what a redefined (as proposed by some series speakers), progressive hope for the Anthropocene might look like. For example, Jonathan Foley spoke about hope being a proactive stance, in contrast to passive optimism. Tom Sisk, quoting Wendell Berry, defined hope as a choice and a virtue. However many audience members and workshop participants began with an understanding of the concept that was closer to its common use, where hope is elicited by external factors (e.g. good news, solutions to problems) or entities, as in "giving" people hope or "making" them hopeful for a better future. In these understandings of hope, agency lies outside of individuals. Moving forward, participants were eager to discuss situations and solutions to the challenges of the Anthropocene that inspire hope and action for themselves and others. Through storytelling, the workshop facilitated perhaps one of the most insightful realizations of the series: that once

hope and its counterpart despair are recognized as different sides of the same coin, committing exclusively to either hope or despair will not serve the purpose of fostering broad engagement in sustainability. Rather, moving away from either extreme -- from complete hopelessness to irrational hopefulness -- can liberate individuals from a passive stance to a more active one. Participants felt that both hope and despair can at different times play a productive role in motivating individuals to take action and work with their communities to improve socio-environmental outcomes, thus contributing to the widespread, ongoing shifts a sustainable future will require. In light of the workshop's emphasis on the importance of working together and collective action in fostering and sustaining hope in the Anthropocene, we welcome suggestions for further collaboration on this important topic.

Photo: Juan Diego Martinez sharing some of the lessons learned at the conclusion of the Workshop.