

Writing and environment

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Writing and Environment: The of our planet's environment is a matter of much debate and concern over the last few years. With global warming and global dimming being established scientific facts, the future prospects of many species (including ours) are under threat. It is these concerns that are articulated by writers such as Rick Bass, Alice Walker and Jared Diamond. Bass' article titled ' Why I Hunt' is lyrical piece of prose writing that praises the ' natural' life of the woods. The author suggests that activities such as hunting, trekking and other adventures afforded by expansive natural settings help rejuvenate and nurture our imagination – something that city dwelling people tend to lack. Jared Diamond's article titled The Last Americans: Environmental Collapse and the End of Civilization issues a warning to those living in advanced economies (including the United States) that great civilizations of the past inevitably decline and perish after hitting their peak. He suggests that being complacent currently can lead to irreparable ecological catastrophes in the near future. The article Am I Blue by Alice Walker touches upon an allied concern, namely the issue of animal rights. She suggests that human have for too long exploited animals for their own selfish ends and that this is a symbol of human conflict too. So in order for humans to flourish, they have to start treating animals ethically. All three authors discussed above raise several valid points and their observations validate each other's arguments. Rachel Carson's article titled The Obligation to Endure is gives an in-depth analysis of the state of chemical pollution in our environment. Carson asserts that the rate at which new synthetic pollutants are let out into our environment is too fast for life-forms to adopt to and evolve accordingly. As a result our planet is now at a

clasp of a fatal disaster. Given the gravity of the issue, Carson does not employ humor or sarcasm. Instead, her prose is of a serious tone, infused with dark irony and earnest imploration. Her appeal to the reader is quite powerful, for it comes at the back of a detailed and factual analytical presentation.

One chemical problem that Rachel Carson focuses on is that of the insecticide. This seemingly beneficial device to keep insect pests has caused unforeseen consequences of vast proportions. Insecticides such as DDT, while providing immediate improvement in agricultural productivity, have caused severe collateral damage. For this reason, Carson asserts that such chemicals should be called ‘biocides’ instead. Alluding to the carcinogenic effects of many of these pollutants, Carson says “the central problem of the age has therefore become the contamination of man’s total environment with such substances of incredible potential harm – substances that accumulate in the tissues of plants and animals and even penetrate the germ cells to shatter or alter the very material of heredity upon which the shape of the future depends”. (Carson, 2011) New transportation facilities of the globalized world have also created havoc in erstwhile virgin ecosystems. In such cases, introduction of non-native predators have wiped out helpless native herbivores. Thus Rachel Carson presents various convincing examples to back up her case.

Hence, in conclusion, all the authors discussed above raise valid points and concerns about the fragile state of our environment and our equation with other inhabitants. Along with Rachel Carson, authors Rick Bass, Jared Diamond and Alice Walker also implicitly articulate the view that man’s

selfishness and self-centered thinking is the root cause of the present crisis. The articles in discussion not only reinforced my concerns about our environment but also made me realize the urgent need for introspection into our attitudes and ethical values.

Works Cited:

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