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# Stuff: making it work for us

Tennessee Women in Green

May 3, 2019

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# My sustainability heroes: Elinor Ostrom



- Won the 2009 Nobel Prize in Economics for her work on the commons
- Political economist
- Focused on governance of common-pool resources
  - **Water**
  - **Grazing lands**
  - **Fisheries**

# My sustainability heroes: Wangari Maathai



- Systems thinker
  - Connected decreased soil fertility with erosion and feminization of poverty--worked reverse the system
- Environmental activist
  - Started the Green Belt Movement

*"When we plant trees,  
we plant the seeds of  
peace and hope."*

- WANGARI MAATHAI -

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# Annie Leonard

The Story of Stuff (movies, book)

Executive Director of  
Greenpeace USA

Annie Leonard and me  
2014

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# My heritage

Mamie C. Thorington (cooperative extension agent, pictured, left)

Inez Golson Cutts  
(great-grandmama)

Anola Cutts Stutzman  
(grandmama)

Emily Inez Stutzman  
(me)



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Emily Stutzman (left), July 2001, age 15  
Ocala National Forest,  
Florida FFA Forestry Camp

# Sustainability journey



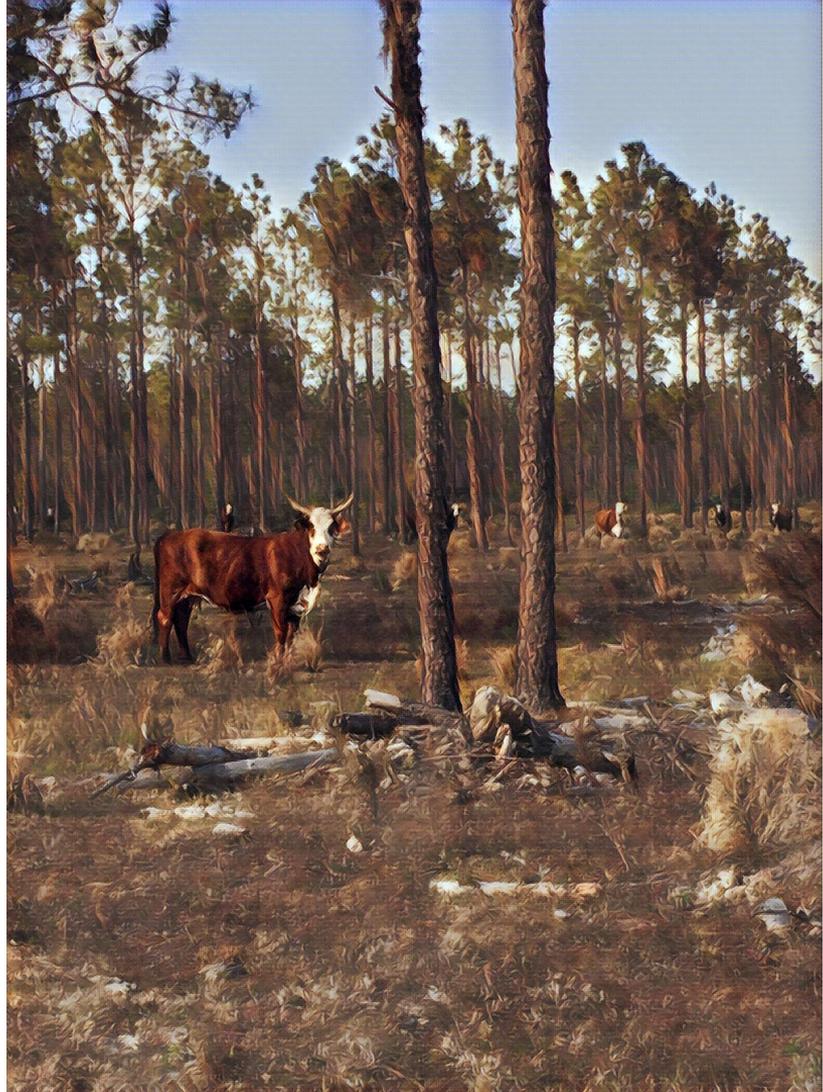
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# Silvopasture

Intentional management of timber, forage and livestock, on a single site

## Why?

- Multiple income streams
- Aesthetics
- Wildlife
- Intensification=efficiency
- Ecosystem restoration



# My work with the Institute for Sustainable Practice

- M.S. in sustainability
- Dual degrees: M.S. in sustainability/MBA
- Certificate of graduate studies
  
- BS in Environmental and Sustainability Sciences



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## Courses I teach:

*Graduate:*

**Society, Environment and  
Change**

Sustainable Food Systems

*Undergraduate:*

**Practices of Sustainable  
Living**

Principles of Sustainability



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**Speaking of Stuff...**

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**What do you expect me to  
tell you?**

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**What you should buy.**

**Changes you should make.**

(With probably some guilt mixed in, right?)

# It's about creating the world we want to live in.

Having more of what we want; what improves our  
lives individually and collectively

The solutions to our most pressing environmental problems **already exist** and they don't involve **buying more stuff** or **being more miserable.**

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

# DRAWDOWN

THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE  
PLAN EVER PROPOSED TO  
REVERSE GLOBAL WARMING  
EDITED BY PAUL HAWKEN



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# Quick history of home economics

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## Ecology:

From German *Ökologie*, from Ancient Greek *οἶκος* (oikos, "house") + *-λογία* (-logia, "study of")

# Etymology

## Oekology:

proposed name for what became home economics in the late 1800s by educators at the Lake Placid Conferences

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# Home economics in the US

1800s

1862 Morrill Act--HE closely associated with Land Grant Colleges and Universities

Home E courses mainly taught how to cook, sew, garden, and care for children using the best science of the day.

Accessible only to middle and upper class White women (like, ahem, almost all education)

1900s

- The Smith-Lever Act of 1914 and the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 created federal funds for "vocational education agriculture, trades and industry, and homemaking" and created the Office of Home Economics.

- Post-WWII---**pivotal shift: focused on consumption not production**

- 1970s--women's and Civil Rights movements enhanced access for all

- Family and Consumer Sciences rebrand

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# 2000s: large changes to education

- school consolidation
- focus away from vocational-technical education to college prep/standardized testing
- “Tracking” based largely on SES
- Cutting of elective options (art, music, vo-tech, PE) to focus on test prep/college prep

*In 2012 there were only 3.5 million students enrolled in FCS secondary programs, a decrease of 38 percent from 2002.*

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Resulting in:

- Young adults with degrees but lacking “basic life skills” enrolling in “adulting” classes on topics from in cooking, sewing, home repair, auto maintenance, personal finance, ALL SKILLS PREVIOUSLY BUILT AT HOME AND/OR IN HOME ECONOMICS COURSES

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**Who benefits from the U.S.  
as nation of consumers, not  
producers?**

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A dirt road winding through a forest with tall grasses on the sides.

**Recycling is what we do when we're out of options to avoid, repair, or reuse the product first. Firstly: Reduce. Don't buy what we don't need. Repair: Fix stuff that still has life in it. Reuse: Share. Then, only when you've exhausted those options, recycle.**

Annie Leonard

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# The hierarchy of Rs

Refuse

**Reduce**

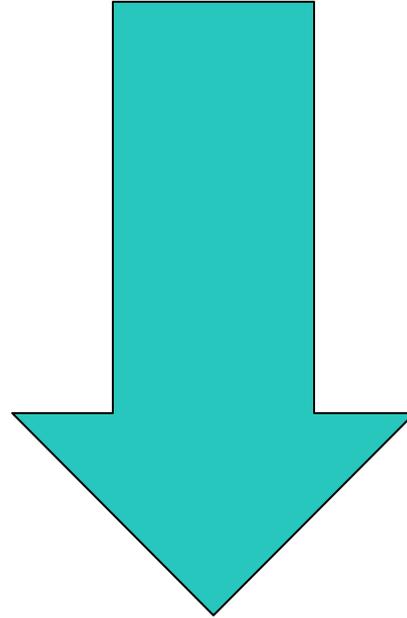
Refill

**Reuse**

Repair

Repurpose

**Recycle**



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**Think about  
something you made  
yourself  
or that someone  
made for you**

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# What students will do -->

In the fall in the new freshman  
level course:  
Practices of Sustainable Living

- Repair clothing
- Make a bowl from clay
- Tour the “back of the house” of a thrift store
- Tour a tiny home/vanlife community
- Make laundry detergent
- Make a low-carbon footprint meal from scratch
- Learn to compost
- Forage for dyes and dye wool
- Tour a sustainable farm
- Calculate environmental  
——impacts of options

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# Questions to ask/principles for stuff

Does this enhance human and environmental wellbeing?

Does it bring me joy? (a la Marie Kondo)

Is it functional/purposeful and/or beautiful?

Bump the responsibility for packaging back up the materials economy to those who can make a change

The role of imagination

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# CLIMATE SUMMIT

WHAT IF IT'S  
A BIG HOAX AND  
WE CREATE A BETTER  
WORLD FOR NOTHING?

- ENERGY INDEPENDENCE
- PRESERVE RAINFORESTS
- SUSTAINABILITY
- GREEN JOBS
- LIVABLE CITIES
- RENEWABLES
- CLEAN WATER, AIR
- HEALTHY CHILDREN
- ETC. ETC.







# Individual

- **Have smaller families**  
Human population growth is still a concern
- **Eat a plant-based diet**  
The lower the position on the food chain, the lower the resources used
- **Live car-free**  
There are places it's possible...
- **Avoid air travel**  
Airplanes are big CO<sub>2</sub> emitters.



# Collective

- **Slow human population growth**
  - Educate girls
  - Make family planning accessible
- **Eat a plant-based diet**
  - Stop subsidizing cheap meat/start subsidizing fruits and vegetables
- **Capture the true cost of high-pollution activities**
  - Tax pollution
  - Incentivize lower emitting options
    - Hytch Rewards



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## ELECTRICITY GENERATION



### **ROOFTOP SOLAR**

Rooftop solar is spreading as its cost falls, driven by incentives to accelerate growth, economies of scale in manufacturing, and advances in photovoltaic technology.

RANKING BY 2050

#10

## WOMEN AND GIRLS



### **EDUCATING GIRLS**

Education lays a foundation for vibrant lives for girls and women, their families, and their communities. It also avoids emissions by curbing population growth.

RANKING BY 2050

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## LAND USE



### **AFFORESTATION**

Afforestation—creating forests where there were none before—creates a carbon sink, drawing in and holding on to carbon and distributing it into the soil.

RANKING BY 2050

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