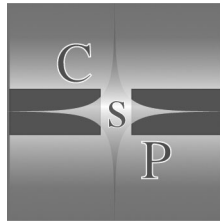


Reverence for Life Revisited

Reverence for Life Revisited
Albert Schweitzer's Relevance Today

Edited by

David Ives and David A. Valone



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Reverence for Life Revisited: Albert Schweitzer's Relevance Today, edited by David Ives and David A. Valone

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Once the structure of the conference had been put into place, the vast majority of the work preparing, organizing, and running the conference fell to Josephine Palmieri, the Research and Development Coordinator for the Albert Schweitzer Institute. Jo spent countless hours planning, making phone calls, responding to crises, and most importantly doing whatever was needed at the moment. Without her, the conference would not have been possible. Jo's organizational skills and energy have been equally indispensable in the production of this book. Every aspect of the book, from the gathering of articles through the final proof reading of the manuscript, has been coordinated by her.

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There are many others who contributed to this book in ways great and small; the editors are thankful to all of them for their contributions as well. The book is better for all of their efforts.

PREFACE

THOUGHTS ON ALBERT SCHWEITZER

As of this writing, I have been the Executive Director of the Albert Schweitzer Institute at Quinnipiac University for five years. During this time, I have been reading as much as I can on all aspects of the life, work and philosophy of Albert Schweitzer. I have been communicating with people who knew him, with other Nobel Peace Prize Laureates, and with Schweitzer scholars. I have been influenced by the example and ideas of Jane Goodall, who in turn was influenced by Schweitzer and his work. These activities have been useful in helping me implement the vision of the Albert Schweitzer Institute so far with great success and to continue our positive direction into the future. It is the vision of the Albert Schweitzer Institute to play a dynamic role in introducing and reawakening interest in Dr. Schweitzer's philosophy of Reverence for Life to a broad audience in order to bring about a more civil and ethical human society characterized by respect, responsibility, compassion and service.

Albert Schweitzer is one of the greatest persons of the twentieth century. He took an unusual path to fame, becoming world famous for his humanity—by caring for and about others. Dr. Schweitzer was the first European to go to Africa with the intent of alleviating suffering instead of exploiting its vast resources and its people. Although he went under the auspices of a French society of missionaries, he did not go to proselytize or convert Africans to a Christian perspective. He went to assuage the misery of people who had long been exploited by the European world. Indeed, he spoke out against the evil perpetrated by colonial powers on those they colonized.

Before he was thirty, he had earned one doctorate in philosophy and two degrees in theology. He was a rising star in the academic world and lecture circuit and often was asked to lecture about Goethe and other philosophers around Europe. Although he published many books on theology and philosophy, his book *Quest for the Historical Jesus* stands out. It helped to open that field of study, while his conclusion that Jesus was mistaken in his eschatological expectations and therefore fallible has been a source of continuing controversy. In addition, his books on Johann Sebastian Bach remain to this day among the most important interpretations of Bach's music.

Albert Schweitzer was a professor at the University of Strasburg and held a post as a pastor in a church in his home-town of Gunsbach. He had become an accomplished musician and was an excellent pianist and organist. He started as a substitute organist at the Gunsbach church at the age of nine. He grew in demand to give organ recitals in many of the great churches of Europe. He also delighted in repairing old organs with his own hands as he liked their sound much better than the electric ones starting to be built at the time.

A gifted and happy scholar, at twenty-one he determined his life's purpose. He would continue to indulge himself in his scholarly pursuits, but at 30 he would devote his life to the service of others. He would make "his life his argument." In 1904, just before his thirtieth birthday, he found a pamphlet that described the needs of a French missionary society in Africa and decided then and there that this would be the route his life would take. At age thirty, he entered medical school.

When he sent the letters announcing his intention to commence medical studies and resign from his posts at the university, he was widely viewed by his friends and family as having taken leave of his senses. They tried to dissuade him. An exception was H  l  ne Bresslau, who supported his aims and was to become his wife. He persevered and completed his medical studies in his late thirties. Endowed with immense energy and good health, he managed to become a medical doctor while maintaining a brutal schedule of organ concerts around Europe and working on several books.

Dr. Schweitzer arrived in Africa in 1913 with H  l  ne, his wife, and spent the next few years building basic medical facilities in Lambar  n   along the Ogowe River, not too many years after the slave trade had ceased. While he was attending to patients, he also found that he had to supervise and participate in the hands-on construction of his medical buildings and living quarters to make sure they were done properly, both structurally and environmentally. He learned how to live among as well as how to care for the Africans.

World War I halted his progress. He and H  l  ne became prisoners of war. Gunsbach, his home-town, was then part of Germany, subsequently ceded to France. He was a German national in a French colony working for a French mission society. He had to leave Africa during this time period for several years and did not return until 1924. From then on, his life was a pattern of spending years as a physician and building construction foreman during the day, scholar, writer and musician at night in Africa, and returning to Europe from time to time to raise money for his hospital through lectures and concerts. In all, he spent approximately thirty-eight years in Africa after the age of forty and the rest of his time promoting his work in Africa. He died in Africa aged ninety.

Dr. Schweitzer continued examining new ideas and philosophies throughout his life. He became interested in many different religions and wrote about the Eastern religions in a comparative fashion. He nevertheless maintained throughout his life a strong affinity for Christianity and its philosophy of love. He also showed great concern for the environment, writing on the interconnection between all living things. He felt that his greatest contribution to the world however was not his work as a doctor, theologian, humanitarian, or musician; it was his philosophy of “*Erfuct fur das Leben*” often translated as “*Reverence for Life*.” He concluded that “the most immediate fact of man’s consciousness is the assertion ‘I am life that wills to live in the midst of life that wills to live.’” This included plant and animal life. He felt that all options should be carefully considered before any life of any kind was taken. If this philosophy were applied to the world today it would result in different decisions being made about how people and the environment are treated.

Like all people of consequence, Dr. Schweitzer is not without his critics. He is often criticized for being paternalistic and autocratic. His daughter, Rhena S. Miller confirms the veracity of this criticism, but adds that he was consistent, as even she was subject to the same treatment. Most people, however, thought that his love for humanity and his desire to treat all beings with dignity and respect outweighed by far his shortcomings.

In 1953, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of his life long humanitarian work. In his acceptance speech in 1954, he spoke eloquently on “*The Problems of Peace in the World Today*.” In the late 1950s, he delivered a radio address through the Nobel Prize Institute in Oslo in which he resoundingly condemned nuclear testing despite strong pressure from the United States to keep his opinions to himself. He displayed what was to many people extraordinary moral courage but which was to him the only possible course of action.

In the preface to his *Albert Schweitzer: A Biography*, author James Brabazon describes Schweitzer as follows:

Many of those who actually met him felt that the force of his personality came at least within measurable distance of living up to the myth. The impact of his physical presence was certainly tremendous. He existed in that confident, indisputable way that animals and children exist, his concentration at every moment focused completely on whomever or whatever occupied his mind. . . . The thing that made him unique was that in proving his point he was not prepared to rely on statements or pronouncements or arguments. He was a great scholar, but for him scholarship was not enough. He lived his belief. He claimed to ‘make his life his argument.’ (xi-xii)

It was his example, warts and all, that he wanted people to consider. It is the intention of the Schweitzer Institute at Quinnipiac University to create an atmosphere in which this consideration could occur. We hope that this book will help to rekindle an awareness and appreciation of Schweitzer for the twenty-first century. The tragedy and destruction of the first few years of the new millennium make recalling Schweitzer's life and work all the more urgent.

David Ives
Executive Director
Albert Schweitzer Institute

Hamden, Connecticut
January 2007

Part One

Remembrances of Albert Schweitzer

CHAPTER ONE

REASON FOR HOPE

JANE GOODALL, DBE

FOUNDER, THE JANE GOODALL INSTITUTE
UN MESSENGER OF PEACE

This is the transcript of an address given before the faculty, students and staff of Quinnipiac University at the opening of the conference “Albert Schweitzer Reconsidered” in October 2005. Also in the audience were individuals participating in the conference, including Albert Schweitzer’s daughter Rhena.

[Dr. Goodall opens with the sound of a chimpanzee greeting]

How fascinating to think that Doctor Albert Schweitzer heard those calls, and Rhena (Schweitzer) I’m sure as well, sounding out over the forest of Gabon. It’s a beautiful sound; it’s also a very significant call for the chimpanzees because every individual has his or her own voice. When you hear that call you know exactly who the caller is. Then you can make a decision: Do I reply or stay quiet? Do I go towards the caller? Do I stay where I am? Do I go in the opposite direction? A chimpanzee is continually having to make decisions about whether it travels in a large mixed group, whether it goes off peacefully with some other females and young ones, joins males on a patrol around the boundary of their territory, goes on a hunt, or just very peacefully stays feeding by itself.

I want to go back for a moment and think about how this all began. How did a little girl growing up in England just before World War II—in a family with very little money, we couldn’t afford a bicycle let alone a motor car—end up traveling 300 days a year around the world, and speaking to you here tonight? I think I owe just about everything that I’ve done right in my life—and nothing that I’ve done wrong—to the influence of my mother. She was a very extraordinary person; Albert Schweitzer would’ve loved her.

I grew up loving animals and when I was just one and a half years old my mother came up to my bedroom and found that I’d taken a whole handful of earthworms to bed with me. Instead of getting mad at me and saying “put those

dirty things out,” she said very quietly “Jane, they need the earth, they will die if you leave them here.” So, I picked them up and brought them back into the garden. Then, when I was about four years old, we had a holiday in the country, which was really exciting because in London there weren’t very many animals except some sparrows, cats and dogs and things, and in the country there were cows and pigs and horses living in the fields the way animals did in those days.

I had a job to help collect the hen’s eggs. I know that some of you know this story, but it’s worth telling because it’s actually the making of a little scientist. I went to the henhouse to collect eggs and there was an egg there—so big, but where was a hole that size on a hen? I couldn’t see one. Apparently, I was asking all the time, “But where does the egg come out of the hen?” Because nobody told me to my satisfaction, I decided I would have to find out for myself. I was four, and I remember this so clearly, so vividly. I saw a hen climbing into one of the little hen houses, I suppose about the height of this podium and a bit longer, and I thought “ah, she’s going to lay an egg.” So, I crawled after her. Well, that was obviously the wrong thing to do, with squawks of fear she flew out. I remember thinking: “this henhouse now is a dangerous place for the other hens, and I will have to go into an empty henhouse and wait.” So I did, and I waited and waited and waited; my family was frantic and they didn’t know where I was. They actually called the police because dusk was falling. I still remember watching a hen come in, and I can close my eyes and see how she raised herself up on her legs and this slightly soft white egg came out and plopped down on the straw.

My mother, desperately searching, sees this excited little creature all covered in straw rushing towards the house. How easily she could’ve gotten mad at me: “How dare you go off without telling us, don’t you know how worried we’d be? Don’t you ever dare do that again,” which would’ve killed the excitement. But seeing my shining eyes, she sat down to hear the wonderful story of how a hen lays an egg. And she helped me find books about animals, such as Doctor Doolittle; remember how he took circus animals back to Africa in that first story of Doctor Doolittle? I wanted to grow up and learn to speak with animals, in fact for about a year I pretended that I could and I would interpret the conversation of squirrels and dogs to all my friends—and they believed me!

When I was about eleven years old, I found Edgar Rice Burroughs’ books about Tarzan, and of course I fell in love with Tarzan, and of course I was jealous when he married that wimpy other Jane. It was about that time I decided that when I grew up I would go to Africa, I would live with animals and I would write books about them, and everyone laughed at me. Remember, we are now going back sixty years to a very different world, we’re going back to a world which at the time of my dream was part of war-torn Europe, during the Second World War. Africa was still thought of as the ‘Dark Continent.’ There were

pioneers like Albert Schweitzer, but we hadn't heard of him. We didn't have any money, and there were no 747's going back and forth—so no wonder people laughed and told me to dream about something I could actually achieve. Except my mother and, I think, the rest of the family. She would say, "Jane if you really want something and you work hard and take advantage of opportunities and you never ever give up, you will find a way."

For all of you students in this room today, and I know there are some younger children, remember that! Don't let anybody ever laugh you out of a dream. If you really want to do something and you work hard and you never give up, somehow you will find a way.

I didn't go to college when I left school. We couldn't afford it; we couldn't get a scholarship then, just after World War II. So, again it was my mother who suggested that I take a secretarial course. I know she had to scrape to get the money for me to go to this secretarial college, but her plan was that I could get a job in Africa. And eventually thus it happened: I got a letter from a school friend, I had a job with documentary films in London. You couldn't save money there—it was much too expensive there, and it still is. And so I went home, and I worked as a waitress. I saved up the wages, I saved up the tips and after about six months, I finally had enough for a return fair to Africa.

I went by boat, which was cheapest in those days. I was twenty-three years old when I set off by myself to go visit a school friend, I couldn't even remember her that well. But what an adventure! And it's an adventure which really has never stopped. Life can be an adventure if we approach each day never quite knowing what's going to happen and always thankful for the gift of that one day.

So I arrived in Kenya, stayed with my friend, got a job in Nairobi, and heard about the late Louis Leakey. Somebody said, "Jane if you care about animals you should go and meet Louis." So I went down to see him at the National History Museum, and I remember him asking me all kinds of questions. Because I had gone on reading books about Africa and animals, I could answer a lot of them. This led to him giving me a job as his secretary on an extraordinary three-month safari onto the Serengeti Plains to the Olduvai Gorge, a place that's very famous today because the Leakey's made some extraordinary discoveries of early stone-age humans there. But at that time, it was totally unknown because no human remains had been found. Everyday after the hard work digging in the hard ground under the hot sun looking for bones, Julian and I, the one other young English girl, were allowed out onto the plains. All the animals were there back then: the giraffe and the zebra, and one evening a rhino, which doesn't see very well. Luckily, the wind was blowing the smell of the rhino to us, and he trotted back and forth with his tail up. He knew there was something peculiar, and luckily he trotted away in the other direction.

One evening it was a young male lion: two years old, full size, little wisps of mane coming out between his shoulders, intensely curious—he'd never seen anything like me and Julian before. He followed us for at least the length of this room, which was a bit scary. But it was also very exciting, and I think that was probably the day when Louis decided that I was, he hoped, the person he'd been looking for to go and learn about chimpanzees. The moment he mentioned it to me of course I was all for it, but it took over a year before I could actually get there. First of all, there was no precedent for a young girl straight out from England with no university degree of any kind to do this kind of work, but eventually a wealthy American business man said, "Alright Louis, here's money for six months, just six months, we'll see how she does." Back then Tanzania—where the Gombe research has been carried out without stops since the 1960's—was still Tanganyika, a British protectorate under colonial rule.

The official authorities had the same reaction: a girl on her own in the forest with potentially dangerous wild animals. They knew chimpanzees were many times stronger than us. So they said no! They weren't going to take that responsibility, but in the end, because Louis never gave up, they said, "Alright, but she must have a companion." Who volunteered to come? That same amazing mother, and she came for four of those six months. She was a wonderful moral support. I'm now living in my dream world, out in the forest, everyday up at dawn finding out things about the animals and the birds, but chimpanzees are very conservative. They'd never seen a white ape before. Every time they saw me they would disappear quietly into the undergrowth.

When I got back in the evening after dark had fallen, there she would be welcoming me. She had a fear of spiders and snakes, and it must have been sometimes very lonely for her alone all day with one African cook, and they couldn't speak much to each other. Yet, she would always say to me "But think what you have found out, think—you're learning about how they make sleeping platforms and nests, you're learning the kinds of foods they are eating and you're learning about the sort of groups in which they travel." She also did something else which was immensely beneficial for the long-term research. She set up a little clinic: just four poles and a batch, and she wasn't a doctor, she wasn't even a nurse. Her brother was a doctor, and he had given us a whole pile of very simple medicines, bandages and aspirins and things like that. And in our little clinic—so different from Doctor Schweitzer's clinic in Gabon, but nevertheless effective because she cared about people—my Mom made some amazing cures: using an old fashioned saline drip for tropical ulcers where you could see the bone; I bet Doctor Schweitzer knew about that. And so she became known as a white witch doctor because she practiced white medicine. She established a wonderful relationship with all the local people.

So, how sad that she left just before the breakthrough, just before I saw that one exciting thing which was necessary for Louis to get more money for me to continue the research, and I could never forget that day. I was walking through the tall grass and it had been raining and I was wet and rather cold, and suddenly I saw this dark shape crouched over the golden mound of the termite heap. Peering through my binoculars through the vegetation, I saw a male chimpanzee and I recognized him as one of the very few who had begun to lose his fear of this peculiar white ape; I had named him David Greybeard for the beautiful grey beard he had. I saw him picking pieces of grass and using them as tools to fish termites from their mounds; and I saw him pick a leafy twig and strip off the leaves so that he was actually making a tool. So why was this important? Because at that time it was thought that humans, and only humans, used and made tools. We were described as man the toolmaker when I was growing up. When I sent Louis Leakey a telegram to tell him about this amazing sight, he cabled back to me: "Now we must redefine man, redefine tool or accept chimpanzees as humans."

The National Geographic Society gave me money to continue the research. I was able to relax a bit and enjoy the forest more, enjoy learning about all the wonderful life forms, and the chimpanzees gradually got more and more used to me with David Greybeard's help. Because he became calmer, the others began to realize that I wasn't so frightening after all. And I began to recognize more and more of them. I named them; I began to learn something about their personalities. There was old Flo—so assertive, clearly a very dominant female with her family. And very different from Flo was the timid Ollie; she had a goiter, and she was always very nervous when she was around others, so she spent hours alone just with the company of her little daughter; the daughter was really deprived of play. Whenever they did come with another group, little Gilka would show off and pirouette around and do everything she could to enjoy this wonderful company of other chimpanzees. David Greybeard, with his calm gentle disposition; his friend Goliath, a tempestuous top ranking male. Then I got to learn about Mike, a much older male than Goliath. Mike was quite small, not at all aggressive but he clearly had a tremendous desire to improve his social status. Male chimpanzees will actually risk fighting and being wounded in order to improve their rank but, for the most part, they do this by developing a very dramatic charging display: racing across the ground, hair bristling, lips bunched in a ferrous scowl, flapping with their hands, stamping with their feet, reaching up and swaying like vegetation, trying to make themselves look as big and dangerous as they possibly can.

We now know that the young males that have the most dramatic imaginary displays are the ones likely to get to the top with the least fighting. Mike began to incorporate empty four gallon kerosene cans from my camp into his displays.

By this time, the chimps were coming for bananas. They all were passing back and forth through the camp, and Mike learned to keep three of these cans ahead of him when he charged across the ground towards eleven individuals who were dominant to him at that time. This was the biggest male group I have ever known at Gombe, but he would charge straight towards any number of them and obviously they got out of the way, it was scary. Then he would sit puffing and they would gradually come up and groom him. Within four months he got to the top. As far as we know there was no serious fight. And people say: well that's just because of you and your cans. Well maybe it was. But the point here is that every male had the same opportunity as Mike to use those cans. Every male used at least one can at least once. Only Mike took advantage of that opportunity. And he used it for his own good.

I was getting to know all these different individuals. People are always asking me, "Who's your favorite chimpanzee?" and I say "Well my favorite of all time is David Greybeard." First of all, he showed me termite fishing, then he demonstrated for me that chimpanzees sometimes hunt medium-sized mammals for food. I saw him eating the body of a young piglet while the adults charged about below. Or when a female begged with a gesture so like ours, David would break off a piece and put it in her hand. And David, as I've said, introduced me to the others in his forest world.

When I look back and think about all the many amazing moments that have had an impact on me, I think one of the most important moments happened after I'd have been at Gombe for about one and half years. David was actually allowing me to follow him when I went through the forest and he suddenly dived through a great thorny tangle of vegetation. Chimpanzees move through so easily with their nice sleek hair; I had my hair in my band and my clothes and my shoes and everything got caught up in vines and I thought I had lost him, but no. When I came through, there he was sitting just as though he was waiting for me. Well maybe he was, who knows? I sat down near him and lying on the ground was a bright red palm nut; chimpanzees love them. So I picked it up and held it towards him on my hand and he turned his face away and I moved my hand closer and he turned and he looked directly into my eyes and he reached out, he took the nut, and he dropped it, but then very gently he squeezed my fingers. That is chimpanzee reassurance and in that one moment it seemed to me that we were communicating in some prehistoric language that predated words, perhaps directly stemming from that half human, half ape common ancestor, if we believe in a common ancestor, some six million years ago. It was a very, very magical moment and it helped to bridge the two worlds, the world of the humans and the world of the chimpanzees.

It was soon after that that I went to Cambridge University. Louis Leakey said I had to get a degree in order to stand on my own two feet; he wouldn't

always be around to get money for me, but we didn't have time to mess with the B.A. He said I had to go straight for a Ph.D. So there I was sitting in Gombe and I got this letter and it said I would be getting a Ph.D. in ethology. I didn't even know what that meant, and there was no way of finding out, I had no dictionary. I got to Cambridge and I was a bit nervous and really excited. I really wanted to learn about how you use the discipline of science; I wanted to organize all these notes that I was taking and, above all, I did not want to fail Louis Leakey. I wanted to be able to stand up in the proper circles and talk about what I'd seen.

So, you can imagine my shock, my horror when I was told that I had done everything wrong. I shouldn't have named the chimpanzees; they should've had numbers—that was more scientific. So I wouldn't have been telling you stories about David Greybeard; it would've been number one, and Mike would've been ten and Flo would've been six. And then we'd go on and on and I'd be talking to you about thirty-eight and ninety-one. Would you remember that? Would that make any sense? It certainly wouldn't to me. The second thing I had done wrong was that I talked about their personalities, their minds, and the fact that they had feelings. Obviously, emotions similar to those we call excitement and fear and despair—but at that time, it was said by science only humans were capable of having personalities, minds and feelings. But I remembered back to my childhood to this wonderful teacher I had. I had an amazing teacher, who taught me absolutely clearly that animals have personalities, minds and feelings. Many of you know a teacher like this; mine was my dog Rusty. Yes, any of you who have a dog or cat or have shared your life in any meaningful way with an animal, you know they have a personality, mind and feelings; so did most of the scientists who were telling me I'd done everything wrong. It was just that science didn't admit it—it was best swept under the carpet.

But fortunately I had a fabulous thesis advisor, Robert Hines; he at first was shocked but realized these chimpanzees were very different from the kinds of birds and rodents that most people were studying at Cambridge. He taught me how to express myself in ways that wouldn't leave me wide open to attacks from other scientists. I remember one day I had written on my report for him, a chapter in my thesis that Flo had a baby and Fifi was always sitting close to that baby. When any other youngster came up, Fifi, who was by then about six years old, would get absolutely furious and stick her hair out and stamp her feet and chase the other youngster away. I had said that "she was jealous," well Robert said "you can't say that; you can't prove it." So I said "well I know she was jealous, so what shall I say?" He said, "I suggest you say, Fifi behaved in such a way that had she been human we would say she was jealous." Now that is very clever, and that was a lesson that I really took to heart.

As the years went on, we learned more and more about how like us chimpanzees are. We know today how similar they are biologically; we didn't

really know very much about that then. Many of you will have read that the chimpanzee genome is being unraveled and that's led us to believe that they are even more like us than before. The anatomy of the chimpanzee brain is more like ours than that of any living creature. You could get a blood transfusion from a chimp if you match the blood group. Nonverbal communication: kissing, embracing, holding hands, patting on the back, swaggering, they do these things in the same kind of context that we do. I could talk for a very long time about the similarities between them and us, but fortunately that's all written about in books and many documentaries. I don't need to spend time doing that tonight.

I will say that it was a shock when I discovered that these chimpanzees, whom I thought were very much like us, but rather nicer than us, were actually capable of violence and brutality; even, it turned out, a kind of primitive warfare. For four years, the males of one community systematically hunted down and fatally injured individuals from a small breakaway community to the south. When I first began talking about this, we witnessed five brutal attacks from which the individuals died. There were scientists in Britain who said that I should play this down because it was dangerous because there would be people surely who would say if we believe, as Louis Leakey believed, that behavior common to humans today and chimpanzees today was possibly present within this apelike, humanlike ancestor six million years ago, then these behaviors would've been inherited from that ancient primate ancestor and we brought them up with us from all those millions of years ago. So, war and violence are inevitable right, because we inherit them? Wrong! We have tendencies to become very aggressive in pretty well defined circumstances. We can only look around the world to see there is some kind of innate aggressive tendencies in the human species. But I think more than any other creature, we have the ability to control these aggressive impulses, to control our genetically determined behaviors and most of us do most of the time.

We don't go around acting the way we sometimes feel, we control it. And let's also take heart from the fact that if we have brought up these aggressive tendencies from the ancient past—so too have we brought tendencies of love, compassion, and altruism. The chimpanzees show these too in many different ways. Perhaps within each one of us there is this dark side and there is this side of love and compassion. And it is up to each one of us to develop the one and suppress the other. As I say, most of us do a pretty good job of that. What seems to have happened is that these chimpanzee studies—which have now been extended to many groups right across Africa, and studies that have been carried out on other large-brained creatures—have served to show that we are not separated as used to be thought by a very sharp line from the rest of the animal kingdom: humans on one side; everyone else on the other. This line has become

increasingly blurry, giving us a new respect, not only for the chimpanzees, but the other amazing animals with whom we share this planet.

It gives us a respect, helps us towards this Reverence for Life on earth. It raises so many ethical concerns, once we realize—once we admit, and I think we have to—that we're not the only beings with personalities, minds, feelings and emotions. Once we admit this, thinking about the ways we use and abuse animals in our lives can keep me awake at night. We can make long lists of the ways, ranging from the conditions in which they are kept in medical research—chimpanzees in five foot by five foot cages that are seven foot tall and bleak and sterile—to the way we treat the animals that we raise in intensive farms, the cruel training of animals for the circus, the often very cruel trapping and hunting of animals, and we could go on and on and on. But of course we're cruel to people, too. Think of the tortures that have been revealed or perpetrated on prisoners of war. You've only got to read any kind of literature about war, about violence, about inner city conflict and you see again, again and again that we are capable of extreme cruelty.

But what is it that makes us most different from the rest of the animals? I believe it's what we're experiencing right now: the sophisticated spoken language. Animals indeed have wonderful ways to communicate with postures and rich varieties of sounds. But as far as we can tell, we're the only creatures on this planet who can teach about things that are not present or events that are not present. We can learn from a distant past, we can plan for the distant future, and we can discuss ideas so that gradually a simple idea expands, enlarges and becomes rich with the collective knowledge of the people in the group discussing it. With this amazing ability first to speak, then to write, now to communicate electronically, I believe that this has helped us to develop this extraordinary intellect of ours. And think what we've done with our intellect: we've sent people to the moon, all the wonders of modern medical technology, we've created cathedrals, books, music—it is extraordinary what we have managed to do.

But isn't it tragic that as well as all these wonderful ways in which we've used our intellect in positive ways, we have also used it to create weapons of mass destruction, atomic weapons, biological warfare weapons, chemical warfare. We use it to destroy. We should be taking up a really responsible role in this dark and dangerous world of ours. It needs more than ever before responsible stewards. And what are we doing? We're destroying the very planet which gives us life, which has nurtured our evolution, which is our only home.

I have heard it said that if every human being on this planet had a lifestyle equal to just a middle class American, we would need four additional planets because of the number of us on this planet. We haven't got four additional planets, and our numbers are still growing. What's gone wrong, why have so

many decisions been made that seem to lead to more and more destruction, why are we having wars, why is there so much poverty, why is there so much distribution of wealth that is so desperately unfair, why do we have hunger in the world and poverty and sickness that can't be cured? Why are so many children dying? What's happened?

I think there has been a disconnect between this extraordinary brain and the heart of compassion. Albert Schweitzer had some things to say about that which I wrote down. He says, "Man is a clever animal, who behaves like an imbecile." We are behaving like an imbecile—only imbeciles destroy their nests. If we think about the disconnect between the brain and the heart where human compassion lies, he also said that "compassion, in which all ethics must take route, can only obtain its full breath and depth if it embraces all living creatures and does not limit itself to man alone." I suspect everybody here in this room understands about compassion; I suspect that all of us are more compassionate than not. But we know that out there in the big wide world there are places, there are people, where this is not true—and we know about the wars and the horrors that can be perpetrated.

Fascinating that the more it seems that we must accept that we are part of the animal kingdom—the blurrier the line gets between the animals and us—the more people are desperately searching for something to make us unique. I talked about language. Some people talk about religion—do chimpanzees show any signs of religious behavior? Usually people laugh when I'm asked that question, but deep in the heart of the forest of Gombe, there are these magical waterfalls. One in particular drops eighty feet; it's a narrow waterfall and over the hundreds and thousands of years its worn a groove into the hard rock so that when the water drops it displaces the air and there is always a breeze; it is always cool no matter how hot the day, and it makes the vines and ferns sway in the breeze. Sometimes when the chimpanzees approach this waterfall and they hear the thundering you can see them, they look excited; their hair stands on ends a little. When they get up to this place, they start these amazing displays. They are very rhythmic, and they will even stamp in water, which normally they avoid. They will pick up big rocks and throw them ahead. Sometimes they will climb the thin little vines growing down the side of this waterfall and push out into the spray. Then at the end they may sit, and if you see their eyes, they are watching as the water comes: it's always coming, it's always going, it is always here. What is it? Do you think that if they had language and could talk about their feelings, which I believe are akin to wonder and awe, and perhaps reverence, wouldn't that lead to some kind of primitive religion when people used to worship the mysteries of nature? I think it might.

Then people ask about the soul; chimpanzees don't have souls they say. Well, a lot of people would say that humans don't have souls as well. It all

depends on what we believe. But you know, from spending all these months and months alone in the forest just with the animals, I got this tremendous sense which I've had as a child in the old cathedrals, this great sense of a great spiritual power which I felt all around, which I still feel all around, from which I believe I can get strength. I think there's a spark of this great spiritual power, which we call God or Allah or Tao in each living creature. Because we ask questions, because we have this language, because we tend to be philosophers, why am I here? What's the meaning of life on earth? We have given ourselves something we call a soul. If I have a soul, David Greybeard had a soul, and I am sure Rusty had a soul. It doesn't really matter does it? It's all part of this Reverence for Life—this respect for all living things. Who are we to say that there isn't a spark of that light that equals a soul in these amazing old growth forests, where chainsaws today can just zip through a tree in a few seconds, even though it took maybe a thousand years to grow? Chimpanzees, taught us a lot: I think they taught us some humility. I think they taught us not only about their own amazing life but a lot about ourselves and where we came from.

How sad then that these ambassadors from the animal kingdom are disappearing as we speak. Even the Gombe chimpanzees are threatened. Within their little national park they are safe, nestled along the eastern shore of Lake Tanganyika, a little jewel of forest, that's only thirty square miles. Outside that little jewel, hugging up to the boundaries of the national park, the trees have all gone. What was unbroken forest when I arrived in 1960—way along the shores of this lake 300 miles long, chimp habitat for miles—is now denuded. It was fifteen years ago that I flew over the area in a small plane, and I was horrified at the extent of the deforestation. What's more, you could see the effect that this was having on the farms, people trying to cultivate on these really steep slopes, terrible soil erosion, and it was very clear that the people were having a struggle to survive. What happened? Well, more people living there than the land could support—just normal population growth that's happened everywhere since 1960 with huge influxes of refugees from Burundi and from Congo; not all of them go off to the big UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) camps, instead some settle in the villages around Gombe.

So, the question arose “how could we even try to save these amazing chimpanzees if the people are struggling to live?” That led to a program called TACARE (or “Take Care”). It's a program which began in twelve villages; it's now in thirty-three. It was developed to improve the lives of the villages in environmentally sustainable ways—ways in which they choose. The program concentrates on tree nurseries, on reclaiming sterile over-farmed land so it can be reused, it's preventing and controlling soil erosions, it's working particularly with groups of women and is lending small-business loans through nine micro-credit banks. These programs are aimed at empowering. We are trying to

increase woman's education through scholarships for gifted girls; we provide family planning and HIV/AIDS education; and we do this because all around the world it's being shown as women's education improves, family size begins to drop. So now, the villagers who knew us thought we were okay, but there were many villagers who didn't really understand what we were doing, why did we care about studying chimpanzees when they were hungry? But today they understand. They are beginning to allow what looked like dead tree stumps to grow again, and in five years some of these fast growing species can reach thirty feet again. That's the one hope for the beleaguered Gombe chimpanzees, only less than 100 of them remain today. Hopefully, through the leafy corridors linking the remnant forests they can once again move out of the park and interact and mate with other small remnant populations and increase the gene pool, which is desperately needed.

This program is working; it's been said to be one of the best of its kind in Africa. We are now replicating it with the help of USAID (United States Agency for International Development), and we're replicating it in other areas around natural wilderness to help the people, to help them conserve, to help them improve their lives and to lead something of the natural wonder and the Reverence for Life. The situation facing the chimpanzees in Central Africa, including Gabon, is much worse. That's what we call the bushmeat trade: the commercial hunting of wild animals for food. Not the subsistence hunting that's happened for hundreds and hundreds of years, but hunting for commercial use. Instead of just killing what you need, you go out to the end of the trails, the roads made by the foreign logging companies since the 1980s, and the hunters will shoot everything: elephants, gorillas, chimpanzees, birds, bats, monkeys, anything that can be cut up, smoked, trucked into the urban centers where the elite will pay more for it than they will for chicken or goat. And worse of all, hundreds of tons of it is shipped overseas to African communities living around the world and sometimes to other people, too.

This is the kind of exploitation of wildlife that's going on in many other parts of the world. The Jane Goodall Institute has been trying to struggle with this problem and we have formed a partnership called the Congo-Basin Forest Partnership. It's a partnership between NGOs on the ground, with government agencies, with the big donor organizations like World Bank, with the private sector and the timber companies themselves. Our part in this is to form partnerships with the villages, with the local people to seek other ways for the hunters to earn their living, to seek ways in which animal protein can be delivered in a less wasteful form to the people. One of the bright lights here is Gabon because President Bongo, having seen some film and some slides taken in the forests of Gabon, got tears in his eyes, and he set aside thirteen national parks that are in the constitution of the country. If he gets the right help for the

infrastructure, many, many chimpanzees, gorillas, and other creatures will be saved. Rhena (Schweitzer) was telling me earlier that even in the old days when she knew him there, he refused to let the animals of Gabon be sent out of the country, and that's quite rare for a president. There is hope in all these different areas, and it's so important that there are these rays of hope. The picture is grim in Africa with the ethnic violence, and the famine, and the hunger and the terrible, terrible cycle of poverty and overpopulation. It's the same in many other parts of the developing world. If we look at what we have done to the world, we are poisoning the air, the water, and the land. There are many places in the world now where children are born into an environment where the air they breathe, the water they drink, and the food they eat is actually making them sick. With the reckless burning of fossil fuels, we're contributing to the green house gases. Global warming is something that is actually happening; governments around the world have finally admitted that global warming is real, and that probably human activity at the very least is speeding up the natural cycle.

With all of these ways in which we're polluting the planet—the harm that's left over from nuclear power, and with the threat today of a new nuclear war breaking out, it is a grim world. I travel the world 300 days a year trying to raise awareness about these issues, trying to encourage people to do what they can do to make this a better world. As I traveled, I kept meeting young thoughtful people, sort of the age of you students here, but some high school students as well. I found that very often they were depressed, very often they were angry and bitter. Sometimes they were just apathetic, and I began talking to them. They basically all said the same thing: we feel this way because we feel that you have compromised our future. We have! I have little grandchildren and so does my sister, and every time I look at them I think how we've harmed this beautiful planet since I was their age. I feel this pain, this shame. This led to the program Roots & Shoots, which began in Tanzania in 1991. Interestingly, its debut was actually for the United Nations, when young people, many young people, were invited. I brought Roots & Shoots students from Tanzania, Angola, Congo, and also from the UK and America to the United Nations to talk about the environment and the role that they could play.

The name "Roots & Shoots" is symbolic: roots make firm foundations; shoots seem tiny, but to reach the sun, they can break through a brick wall. If you imagine the brick wall as all these problems that face the planet today then it's a message of hope, that hundreds of thousands of young people around the world can break through these brick walls and make this a better world. The main message is that every individual makes a difference everyday. Everyday you impact the world around you, and we have a choice as to what sort of impact we want to make. It's a roll-up-your-sleeve and take action kind of a

program, and every group chooses between three different kinds of projects to make the world around them a better place for the human community, for animals, including domestic animals, and for the environment. Woven through all of it is thinking about living in greater harmony with the natural world, with each other and with the animal kingdom—peace and harmony! Again a quote from Albert Schweitzer, “until he extends his circle of compassion to include all living things, man will not himself find peace.” We all yearn for peace. The Roots & Shoots program today is in more than ninety countries and there are more than 7,500 active groups; there are programs from preschool through university. University Roots & Shoots is very strong; we have some wonderful people here today representing Roots & Shoots.

I was made a UN Messenger of Peace because of Roots & Shoots, because we want to change attitudes around the world; not with guns and not with bombs, not with war planes, and not with death and killing—but by changing attitudes through hard work and persistence and love and compassion leading to respect for all life. It’s about breaking down the barriers that we erect between people of different countries and cultures and religions. So, I told Kofi Annan, Secretary General of the United Nations, that wherever I go, wherever I’m growing Roots & Shoots, I was planting seeds of global peace because we share this philosophy. To celebrate that occasion, one of our Roots & Shoots groups made a giant peace dove puppet. They fly in the wind with their tails out. When I was thinking of a way of bringing attention to the fact that there is a United Nations International Peace Day, which not many people have heard about, I thought “let’s fly these doves around the world.” A wonderful friend of mine, Dana Lyons, wrote a song to capture the vision. Imagine these great white wings spreading out all around the globe, all the thoughts and commitments to peace that were put into the doves by the young people who made them.

So, is there hope for the future of the world in these darkened, troubled times? Of course there’s hope, but I don’t think the hope really lies in the hands of the politicians and the captains of industry. The hope lies with us. My reasons for hope are: the energy, commitment, dedication, and courage of young people all around the world; the extraordinary human brain which is already coming to grips with ways of doing what we do but in a less damaging way to the environment; the amazing resilience of nature—the fact that a place can be destroyed and give it time and perhaps with some help it can be restored. Rivers can be cleaned, wetlands can be restored, forests will grow back again as they do in Gombe; animals on the brink of extinction can be given a second chance. My final reason for hope is what I call the indomitable human spirit; people who tackle impossible tasks and won’t give up. Nelson Mandela, who labored for twenty-three years using a pick in the limestone off the prison on Robin Island, emerged from captivity with the amazing ability to forgive so that he could lead