

PART I. BUSINESS AS USUAL

The world all bent towards the invention, and we recreated our landscape around it.^[1]

The way we've built our buildings and designed our cities is affecting the climate. Around a 3rd of global CO₂ emissions come from our built environment.^[2]

Everything that we're seeing, the ecological crises, the climate catastrophe that we're facing, is a creation of the system as it exists right now.^[3]

Are we drowning in information, while we're starving for wisdom?^[4]

We did not make substantial investments to prepare our entire country for what we knew was coming.^[5]

All over the world, communities are devastated by the rising tides, storms, fires, horrors, and miseries provoked by climate change. 'This is DemocracyNow, I'm Amy Goodman, we continue to look at the devastating Hurricane Dorian. Her op-ed in The New York Times headlined Hurricane Dorian Makes Bahamians the Latest Climate-Crisis Victims.' We've been the ones affected, our communities, the low-income Black brown communities, have been the ones affected since slavery, since colonization, since the genocide of Indigenous people.^[6]

My community is located in a region called Black Mesa, and unfortunately within the last 40-50 years, we've had a coal company that has come in and started extracting coal and using our pristine water to slurry coal. So we understand the impacts of these toxins being dumped on our community.^[8]

They dumped a lot of chemicals into the ground and every time it rains, the chemicals get spread, it takes a lot of contamination to the communities surrounded, especially low-income communities, Brown, Black communities.^[6]

Everything was intentional, everything was designed.^[7]

This desolation that we call civilization, this greed that we call happiness, this horrifying injustice that we call 'business as usual.'^[8]

It's a logic that says 'we can extract enough off of human life, and our environmental resources, to the point of destroying our own humanity.'^[9]

Human survival is really dependent upon the survival of our natural systems and the health of our natural systems.^[10]

Why have we followed industry into a paradigm of development so disassociated from nature?^[4]

What is it that we need to do? What needs to get through our skins to understand that if we keep going in the direction in which we're going, we're not going to have a direction to go in.^[8]

The built environment disciplines has, in fact, been complicit in the colonial story. And so we know that the imposition, the dislocation of the indigenous people from their traditional lands has actually been orchestrated through putting on buildings, putting up fences, preventing access to country.^[11]

The land and Indigenous peoples' actual sovereignty has been used as a natural resource. When you look at where nuclear waste is stored in America, it's stored on Indigenous peoples' lands. When you look at where pipelines are being built throughout the nation, they are being built through Indigenous peoples' land. There's an entire relationship with how corporate America and the policies that support it have actively been going after Indigenous people and Indigenous peoples' lands.^[12]

PART 2. INDIGENOUS

Indigenous people represent about 4% of the population of the world but we are the people who protect about 80% of the world's biodiversity.^[12]

Though wildfires are a natural disaster, as a consequence of climate change, they're also manmade. And what's amazing about this is we have the ancient technology that we know can help prevent them, and we've used it for thousands of years.^[13]

Island communities all across the Pacific, they're already resisting the one-size-fits-all technology approaches that are imported from richer countries, and they're questioning the actual efficacy of promoting these resilient technologies.^[4]

Ultimately, the built environment is very much about amplying experience with people. It's a connector. It's a vehicle in which to enhance well-being. We know that there are strong connections to the cultural determinants of health through the built environment.^[11]

On the edges of Calcutta, flanked by a smoking escarpment of the city's trash, and ribboned by its highways, an Indigenous technology of 300 fish ponds cleans its water while producing its food. As cities across the world in Asia and in Europe begin to replicate this exact system, Calcutta is now struggling to save it from being displaced by development.^[13]

We have a story to tell.^[14]

Indigenous people today in this part of the world, are living in most extreme poverty. We have the lowest social determinants of health, and health outcomes. We have some of the lowest education outcomes for our systems, and these things are systemic. This is generational poverty.^[12]

To understand building resilient communities, we have to understand the history. I come from the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. It's a place of struggle. It's one of the poorest places in America, but it didn't happen by accident. In order for us to figure out how to get out of poverty as a people, and how we're gonna build sustainable communities, we look to our past and realize that we lived in sustainable communities, built around sustainable economies, not that long ago. It was a hard lifestyle, it was a really hard way to live. But we had leadership.^[15]

We are the guardians that stand as mountains. We are the standing rocks. We are the lava under our feet. We are the water protectors, and we rise like a mighty wave. I'm against anything that will destroy sacred land, peoples cultures, think that they can build, because, in the name of science, education, corporations or businesses, they have the right to do that. There are species that live up there, that only live up there. Not in that type of region around the world, but only on Mauna Kea. It's where our sacred waters are, it's the dwelling place of many of our female lapua, and these are also our crown lands that were never ceded to the United States of America. But they were seized, they were taken away. For so long we have been stripped, stripped, stripped of Mauna over and over again with how they banned our language, our dance, stole the lands that we come from. And this is just a continuation of this colonial story here, with what the governor is doing, with the illegal occupying state of Hawaii is doing right now. The Mauna is training us in how to stand in a manner that will take us from this mountain, into our own communities, and stand in a way that we never thought we could.^[16]

PART 3. WITHIN

All successful life is adaptable, opportunistic, tenacious, interconnected, and cucunt. Understand this.^[17]

What we're basically saying is the top-down approach that created the problems that exist in our community, that those solutions, they were never solutions. Those strategies, created and perpetuated the problem.^[15]

How much more effective could we be, if we were to take a moment and say, the solutions lay with the people?^[18]

Doing work in economic development, based on regeneration, based on resilience, is as much about healing the human spirit, as it is about creating green buildings, because a lot of our people, and Indigenous peoples in America have been broken. In fact, I would actually argue that a lot of America has been broken for a long long time.^[15]

We learn to compete with each other in a scarcity based economy that denies and destroys the abundant world that we live in. We learn to deny our longings and our skills, and do work that occupies our hours without inspiring our greatness. We learn that the natural world is something to be manicured, controlled, or pillaged to support our consumerist lives. Even the natural lives of our bodies get medicated, pathologized, shaved or improved upon with cosmetic adjustments. We've got to commit to a self transformation. In order for things to change, we have to change.^[17]

Can non-Indigenous people incorporate Indigenous design thinking into their work? The key to that is moving beyond a transactional to a relational model. It's a people centered practice. Our acuity, our skills, our dexterity, our innovation, our sophistication of engaging with design culture is in fact embodied, and it starts with facilitating agency and voice. It's celebrating our shared humanity. It's understanding that there's great wisdom in 67,000 plus years of history and unbroken connection.^[11]

It's about people. It's about people coming together. Institutions, organizations, even governments aren't going to solve the problem.^[15]

We're talking about shifting the decision making power that was taken from our communities back into the hands of our people and our community.^[12]

What we're fighting is an entire economy that's exploiting our people and that's excluding our people from participating.^[3]

We all come from different places, we all come from Guam, Puerto Rico—I think that's really important, and not just in the United States, you know, people need to come together as a whole.^[6]

We say that we're all related. We have a collective moral responsibility to solving poverty, in the poorest places in America, and honoring the innovation that's there. And our goal has always been that we are better together.^[15]

PART 4. FRONTLINE

The people are gonna rise like the water. We're gonna fix this crisis now. I hear the voice of my great granddaughter saying 'keep it in the ground.' The people are gonna rise like the water. We're gonna fix this crisis now. I hear the voice of my great granddaughter saying 'keep it in the ground.' The people are gonna rise like the water. We're gonna fix this crisis now. I hear the voice of my great granddaughter saying 'keep it in the ground.'

The frontlines have been leading on the solutions for a long time. And we are building for a Just Transition, and climate change conversations can't happen without that framework.^[6]

This development is about housing, community, healing, education, about designing the kinds of community that we want to live, and our ideas about tomorrow being actually implemented today.^[15]

It has to be intergenerational, it has to be youth aligned, it has to be frontline community aligned. We have to be able to learn from those who came before us. As long as we're fighting, you know, we're already winning.^[6]

We came together to say, 'Actually, there is a different way and we're gonna change not just the story, but we're gonna change what's happening in our communities towards people really taking back control of our own work, of our energy systems, of our food systems, in ways that restore the planet, restore our communities, and bring us together.'^[3]

I took back what they stole from me. I took back my dignity. I took back my humanity, and now it's under my feet. What? Under my feet. What? Under my feet. What? Under my feet. Ain't no system gonna walk all over me.

The youth are at the forefront of the climate justice movement, while ushering clean and just solutions to their communities. All the while, fighting against the culprits of climate destruction in their communities—and winning. 'Well it has been a problem since it opened 33 years ago, but now the Detroit incinerator has closed for good.'^[6]

The folks here in Richmond have successfully gone up against Chevron, and that's something that's really powerful and we want to be able to share, build, and create something, and really be able to work across cultures, across state lines, across these different issues to really be able to build a movement that could go up against these different systems that aren't healthy for our communities.^[3]

Work there with us, work side by side with us to dismantle imperialism, colonialism, and a system of white supremacy and racial injustice.^[12]

To me, what's really important about being part of the Our Power campaign, is that it does connect all those communities together. While we're not working in all the communities, we can stand and support each other and really learn from each other. We're not alone, none of us can do this alone, and not of us want to.^[3]

Kū ha'aheo e ku'u Hawai'i. Mamaka kaua o ku'u 'āina. 'O ke ehu kakahiaka o nā 'ōiwi o Hawai'i nei. No ku'u lahui e hā'awi pau a i ola mau. Kū ha'aheo e ku'u Hawai'i. Mamaka kaua o ku'u 'āina. 'O ke ehu kakahiaka o nā 'ōiwi o Hawai'i nei. No ku'u lahui e hā'awi pau a i ola mau. No ku'u lahui e hā'awi pau a i ola mau. No ku'u lahui e hā'awi pau a i ola mau.^[19]

REFERENCES

1. TED. (Jul 2018). How we can design timeless cities for our collective future | Vishaan Chakrabarti. Youtube. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hItQZfVU6-g>
2. TEDx Talks. (May 2017). Architecture's ripple effect: Designing for big impact | Thomas Bryans | TEDxGuildford. Youtube. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZVpABMspmD8>
3. Our Power in Full Force. (Sept 2014). Climate Justice Alliance. Youtube. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t5PPM0He0i0&feature=emb_title
4. The World Around. (Apr 2020). Julia Watson presents Lo-Tek | The World Around. Youtube. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BAblFYrONFO>
5. The Real News Network. (Mar 2019). AOC: Climate Change “Not An Elitist Issue”. Youtube. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QFY0z_Ei8KQ
6. Climate Justice Alliance. (Jan 2020). Frontline Youth: Fighting for Climate Justice. Youtube. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NmRgQcMPIQo>
7. TEDx Talks. (Feb 2013). Shaping Behavior Through Intentional Design: Jeff Sharpe at TEDxAustin. Youtube. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kUuUhKBzgIM>
8. Literary Hub. (Jan 2020). Arundhati Roy: "We Need a Reckoning". Youtube. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bhD0_nl-h2U
9. C-SPAN. (May 2019). Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez complete remarks on Green New Deal. Youtube. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=adxMJoskpEo>
10. Showcase. (Jan 2020). Lo-TEK: Nature-Based Technology. Youtube. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WdTTc61UocU>
11. State Library Victoria. (Nov 2020). The future of Indigenous design thinking. Youtube. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PeYLlmTn4m4>
12. AJ+. (Oct 2020). Why It's Time To Give Native Americans Their Land Back. Youtube. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8fX3jh8tRxA>
13. TED. (Aug 2020). How to build a resilient future using ancient wisdom | Julia Watson. Youtube. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DOOJx7AZfM>
14. CANADA Explore. (Jun 2019). Indigenous Canada - A Story to Tell. Youtube. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OzpKdPEBLfQ>
15. Tilsen, Nick. (Jul 2015). Building Resilient Communities: A Moral Responsibility | Nick Tilsen | TEDxRapidCity. Youtube. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e2Re-KrQNa4>
16. Momoa, Jason. (Aug 2019). WE ARE MAUNA KEA. Youtube. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A2w8TWpSfgQ>
17. United Church of Christ. (Jun 2019). Emergent Strategies for Environmental Justice with adrienne maree brown. Youtube. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PUQWo33geYk>
18. TEDx Talks. (Mar 2017). The solution to indigenous disadvantage | Kia Dowell | TEDxPerth. Youtube. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FjEST12wRNI>
19. OiwiTV. (Sept 2019). Kū Ha‘aheo Music Video. Youtube. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WbMX_LoT_YA