

Dreaming of the Earth

Meredith Sabini

At this point in history when the earth's basic natural systems are at risk, dreams about this are occurring. Contemporary dream studies and cognitive neuroscience validate that REM dreaming serves an evolved survival function in all mammals; current dreams about the earth can be viewed in this light. I draw on Jung for two ideas: his contention that dreams can bring messages from the unitary soul of humanity, the trunk from which we grew; and his definition of archetypes as roots the psyche has sunk into the earth and into life. To illustrate this, I offer dreams selected from recent public programs, four from Jung's memoir, two of my own, and two striking historic examples—from Harriet Tubman and the 18th-century scientist-philosopher Georg Lichtenberg. In a few examples, earth imagery depicts a natural dynamic in the psyche of the dreamer; but in most, the dreaming mind turns toward the dynamic processes of the earth itself—their disturbance and their renewal. The closing dreams illustrate a new myth emerging: the *participation mystique* of the dreamer in the alchemical revivification of spirit and matter. My hope is that by having this material on our collective map, people will be able to recognize such dreams and welcome their guidance.

I am fully committed to the idea that human existence should be rooted in the earth.

—C. G. Jung (1950/1977, p. 203)

A dream comes from the same source as a tree or a wild pig—Nature itself.

—Marie-Louise von Franz (Boa, 1894/1988, p. 10)

Our task is to enter into the dream of Nature and interpret the symbols.

—E. L. Grant-Watson (1992)

Do we dream about the earth? We dream about our friends and family, our work and creative projects, so why would we not dream about this planet we call home? Because the scale is too big? We live in a certain town, a certain neighborhood, a certain village. As *Homo sapiens*, we are rather small creatures, more comfortable when contained in proportionately small geographies. When I was a child, I used to stand under the night sky and wonder why I didn't fall off the earth. It doesn't take much to awaken

that sense of fear and marvel, even now. Unless you happen to be a world traveler frequently crossing borders from one continent to another, the globe itself would not be your daily physical landscape.

But something is happening today that challenges our former identification with a locale and makes us aware that we are part of a larger whole. We now know, for instance, about the diminishing rain forests, the ozone hole, the polar ice caps melting. Whenever there is a common threat, our sense of identity tends to expand so that we come into relation to the shared problem. We might thus expect dreams about our home planet to be on the rise.

Our Western view of dreams probably has been too small, confined by the popular notion that we dream primarily about ourselves—a view not found in other cultures. We also refer to *having* dreams. I want to introduce a different possibility: that dreams *come to us*. We might speak about receiving dreams, witnessing dreams, being instructed by dreams. This shift in perspective will come into play when we look at dreams about the earth.

My first example is from some years ago when friends and I were looking for land in the country where we could settle. We'd had it with the high-pitched modern world and sorely needed to live in a more natural locale, at a more natural pace. In addition to homes for ourselves, we wanted to start a retreat center for those in the helping professions. We looked at both vacant land and at properties with dwellings we could convert. After almost a year of searching, we found a place that seemed right: several forty-acre parcels on a remote mountainside two hours from the central Bay Area. No services or structures were in yet. We drove out a dirt road and hiked around. It was lovely.

That night I had a dream, in words: "*This is how Western civilization spreads.*" I woke from it in shock. In the inimitable way of dreams, this stated the simple truth: by purchasing this land and building on it, we would be doing the very thing that we wanted to prevent—extending the reach of civilization further into a wilderness area of the planet, fostering the relentless process that has eaten up pasture land, open plains, and forested hillsides like the one we'd seen. I called my companions and told them the dream. It helped me reaffirm my preference to buy something with existing structures that we could remodel and thus preserve. They agreed.

Is this an "earth dream"? Surely it is. It is about the earth itself, about our stance in relation to it, and how we live on it. The dream did not make any value judgment; it merely held up a reflective mirror in which the actual situation was depicted. The judgment call was ours to make.

The dream is also what C. G. Jung termed a "collective" one in that it refers to a societal issue. In a 1931 interview for the *New York Sun*, he explained how collective concerns come through dreams such as the one I had:

We are awakening a little to the feeling that something is wrong in the world. . . . We are suffering, in our cities, from a need of simple things. . . . These things are being expressed in thousands of dreams. Women's dreams, men's dreams; the dreams of human beings, all having much the same collective primal unconscious mind—the same in the central African Negro I lived among and the New York stockbroker—and it is in our dreams that the body makes itself aware to our mind. The dream is in large part a warning of something to come. (Jung, 1977, p. 49)

Jung recognized that dreams are not limited to our individual lives but may also arise out of the cumulative experience of our species, which has been millions of years in the making. Based on good empirical evidence from dream studies and cognitive neuroscience, it is now established that rapid eye movement (REM) dreaming is a 140-million-year-old function in all mammals and has an evolutionary survival function. (See Revonsuo, 2000; Snyder, 1966; Stevens, 1993; Valli & Revonsuo 2009; Winson, 2002.) Jung made this point very clearly when he said:

Dreams ... are pure nature; they show us the unvarnished natural truth, and ... give us back an attitude that accords with basic human nature when our consciousness has strayed too far from its foundation and run into an impasse. ... To concern ourselves with dreams is not our ego-consciousness reflecting on itself; rather, it turns its attention to the objective actuality of the dream as a communication or message from the unconscious, unitary soul of humanity ... the trunk from which the ego grew. (Jung, 1970, par. 317–318)

We can expect that the ancient dreaming mind will point out when we are out of balance with ourselves or at risk of jeopardizing the balance of other living systems. It was as if the dreaming mind said to me, “You have a contagious condition and are about to introduce it into a new environment.” My dream told the unvarnished natural truth, as if an elder were speaking. It placed my group and the earth in an active and interconnected relationship.

I once met a woman who founded an environmental center where people could learn about permaculture, survival medicine, tracking skills, rainwater collection, urban food forests, and the like. My book of Jung’s nature writings, *The Earth Has a Soul* (Sabini, 2002), had just come out and she invited me to give a talk there. When we met so she could show me around, she paused a moment while she finished a cigarette. Sitting face-to-face with her over lunch, I noticed the pallid, dry texture of her skin, evidence of the contraction of blood vessels that accompanies nicotine addiction. When she alluded, embarrassedly, to her habit, I remarked, “*This* too is earth,” pointing to my chest. She looked surprised, even puzzled, so I said more. “Everyone thinks nature is *out there*. But we’re composed of the same balance of elements as the earth. Our bodies are our own small portion of earth.” She confessed that she’d never thought of it this way. Two years later, I learned through a mutual friend that she’d died of lung cancer.

I tell this story because it illustrates the paradox of where the “earth” ends and human beings begin. Stated like this, we can see the problem with this common kind of dissociative thinking. This point comes up in Jung’s 1927 essay, “Mind and Earth,” where he gives a wonderful definition of archetypes: “the hidden foundations of the conscious mind, or, to use another comparison, the roots which the psyche has sunk not only in the earth in the narrow sense but in the world in general” (Jung, 1964, par. 53).

Do we dream about the earth in the narrow sense of the rocks and trees and soil? Perhaps. We certainly dream about the earth in the broader sense of archetypal roots sunk into the world and life in general. Jung emphasized the problem of dissociation in his final essay for *Man and His Symbols*, saying that if we have *only* an image, “it is merely a word-picture, like a corpuscle with no electrical charge.” But when the image—or dream—is charged with numinosity or meaning, “it is a piece of life,” because the archetype is “living matter” (Jung, 1976, par. 589). The dream I received was highly charged.

One of my favorite earth-dreams features mushrooms. They don't come very often but have the same theme: I come upon a blooming of mushrooms—sometimes a crop as large as a field of poppies, at other times, in a planting bed or around a tree trunk. In the dream, I am always surprised and delighted to encounter them and astonished they could grow so prolifically. The dreams have the combination Jung alluded to: a universal image plus a vibrant, meaningful emotion.

I've been an amateur mycologist for over thirty-five years and know that mushrooms are like termites—both occupy the unique and vital ecological niche as recyclers, doing their job at the interstices of what is living and what is dying. By consuming the latter, they make possible the former. Mushrooms you see on a rotting log on the forest floor, for example, are transforming that decaying wood into humus. Most mushrooms are the fruit of an underground root system known as mycelium. The largest known organism on this planet is a fungus, many miles in diameter.

In light of these facts, what might dreams about mushrooms symbolize? I believe they represent the capacity of life to renew itself from unseen sources, from the ground up. My dreams about mushrooms seem to coincide with a new phase of life, as if signifying emergence. Looked at with a limited lens, mushrooms are simply part of the earth in the narrow sense; looked at more broadly, they take on the archetypal significance of a fundamental, dynamic process of renewal of the world and of life in general.

There are other common dream motifs that depict various natural processes: flowing rivers symbolizing the way life carries us along; rains that wash away our mental fog and clear the air; earthquakes that denote profound upheaval. Tornadoes, floods, lightning, droughts, and other manifestations of nature appear in dreams as metaphors for the ebb and flow of our emotional, mental, and spirited aspects. A dream told at an annual dream retreat I led contains just such a theme: "I am at an artesian spring. I forgot to bring my camera, so I just try to sketch a picture of it." To understand the dream, we had to find out what distinguished this kind of spring from others: an artesian well is made by drilling through a dense layer of rock; the water below then rises to the surface like a geyser. The dream contains the classic storyline about how, at times, we have to dig down deep and penetrate our own dense layers in order to release the waters of life trapped below.

A recent earth-dream of mine concerned the melting of the ice caps. It was a plain, unelaborated scene of a polar bear standing on a tiny floe of ice, looking at me with helpless appeal. Is this an objective dream whose purpose is to activate empathy and concern in me, or is it a subjective picture of some aspect of my own nature that has previously been frozen out of life and now wants to join in? This question has to be asked about any earth-related dreams we have; we cannot assume they refer only to outer situations with which we are already familiar.

Jung first distinguished between dreams that were subjective, or mainly personal, and those that were objective in 1917 (Jung, 1966, par. 130). The dreams cited so far—about mushrooms, artesian springs, and ice floes—need to be considered from both the inward-facing and outward-facing vantage points.

A historically important objective dream that is relevant today was received by Georg Lichtenberg, an eminent scientist and philosopher who was Professor of Mathematics and Astronomy at the University of Göttingen; his work combined a religious sensibility with a passion for empirical investigation (Mautner & Hatfield, 1959). Though no longer well known, Lichtenberg was admired and quoted by Kant, Goethe, Kierkegaard, Wittgenstein, and Freud. His dream, from around 1780, foreshadowed the way Western science has come to treat the physical world. It is lengthy, so I've paraphrased sections but

quote the central dialogue between Lichtenberg and the transpersonal figure who speaks to him. (See Mautner & Hatfield, 1959, pp. 118–121.)

The dream opens with Lichtenberg soaring over the earth, where he encounters the figure of an old man whose glorious appearance fills him with awe. The figure hands him a mineral and says, “You love to investigate nature. Here you shall see something which can be useful to you. . . . Test it and tell me what you’ve found.” It is a bluish-green sphere an inch in diameter, and nearby are all the instruments Lichtenberg will need. Being a good scientist, Lichtenberg proceeds:

I shook it and put it to my ear. I raised it to my tongue. I wiped away some dust . . . rubbed it on my sleeve to test for electricity. I checked it against steel, glass, and a magnet, and determined its specific gravity. . . . All the tests showed me that the mineral wasn’t particularly valuable, not very different from marbles I’d bought at the Frankfurt Faire for a farthing.

Lichtenberg determines that the sphere is composed of clay, iron, silica, salt, and some unknown elements. As he finishes, the old man appears again and asks, “Do you know, mortal, what it is you tested?”

“No, Immortal, I do not know,” Lichtenberg said.

“Then know: it was, on a miniature scale, nothing less than—the whole earth.”

“The earth? Great, eternal God! And the ocean and all that dwell within it—where are they?”

“They hang there on your cloth, you wiped them away.”

“And the sea of air and all the glory of the dry land?”

“The sea of air? That is probably left over in that cup of distilled water. And as to your glory of the dry land, how can you ask such a question? That was the imperceptible dust; some is clinging here to your coat sleeve.”

“But I didn’t find a trace of silver and gold, which rule the globe!”

“Know then: with your blade you cut away all of Switzerland and the finest part of Sicily, and you completely ruined a whole stretch of Africa. . . .”

Lichtenberg was silent. He felt he would give nine-tenths of the life remaining him to restore his “chemically destroyed earth,” and begged for another chance.

“Oh great immortal being, whoever thou art . . . enlarge a mustard seed to the thickness of the earth and allow me to examine the mountains and strata till the germ develops.”

The figure answers that already on earth such a granule has been magnified; he informs Lichtenberg that “before your transformation, you will not reach that other side of the curtain which you seek.”

The Immortal then hands Lichtenberg a pouch and tells him to test what is inside. Lichtenberg pledges to be more careful. He is surprised to find only a book with a simple binding. Its language is unknown, but the title page has the same command: "Test this, my son, chemically, and tell me what you have found." Lichtenberg wonders what use it would be to test a book chemically, already knowing that it is merely rag and ink; the essence of the book is in its written contents. He says: "Suddenly, things became clear in my mind and an irrepressible blush of shame came over me. Oh! I called, more and more loudly, I understand, I understand! Immortal being, forgive me; I comprehend your kindly reproof, I thank the Eternal that I can comprehend it."

Lichtenberg said that he was indescribably moved and awoke in awe. The dream report ends here with no further comment.

What was it Lichtenberg understood? That breaking down the visible world into its physical properties does not yield its essence? That dissecting can destroy what it studies? From high above the earth, Lichtenberg was shown a larger perspective. Considering himself a "man of feeling," he was distressed over his destructive actions and offered to redeem them by tending a seed to germination. The spirit guide or wisdom figure explains that until he himself is transformed, he will not be able to see the spirit inside matter. Lichtenberg is given a second chance, and, in examining the book, realizes that the essence of an object lies in its *meaning*, not its physical composition.

This dream occurred over two hundred years ago, at a time when the separation between heart and mind was not as severe as it is today. Like the visionary dreams Black Elk had as a youth (Neihardt, 1961), Lichtenberg's dream seems to describe developments that would unfold in the coming centuries. Historically, we are perhaps now at the close of the first scene of his dream, discovering just how destructive our handling of the world's natural resources has been. Will we have a chance to mend our ways?

I wonder what sort of dreams Audubon had as he killed hundreds of birds to make his fine drawings; or researchers today who infect chimps with AIDS to study the disease. Were there dreams that troubled the scientists who cloned Dolly or who developed the cell phones that have resulted in soaring rates of brain tumors in children? The Immortal who invited Lichtenberg to chemically test two objects and provided the tools for doing so was simultaneously testing the man himself. Lichtenberg failed the initial test, but succeeded in solving the second riddle put before him. In initiation rites, failing some part of a task is what activates humility in the seeker, thereby reducing hubris and serving to transform him or her into maturity. The hubris of our youthful Western ways is finally being called into question; perhaps a more humble attitude toward nature will emerge.

Jung had a waking vision of the earth and a spirit within it, which I include here because of its relevance: "I once experienced a violent earthquake, and my first, immediate feeling was that I no longer stood on the solid and familiar earth, but on the skin of a gigantic animal that was heaving under my feet. It was this image that impressed itself upon me, not the physical fact" (Jung, 1969, par. 331). Though standing on the physical earth as it shook, he was more taken by the image of a nature spirit within. In "Marginalia on Contemporary Events," written in 1945, Jung lamented the loss of nature spirits and suggested that the banishment of incubi, succubi, wood-nymphs, melusines, and "the rest that terrify and tease mankind" has resulted in "an unspeakable change" in our emotional life (Jung, 1976, par. 1361–1369).

I believe Jung offers a fresh perspective on matter and spirit that can bring them back into relation, as they have not been since the Enlightenment, for he claims that

"There is nothing without spirit, for spirit seems to be the inside of things. ...
Whether that is our own psyche or the psyche of the universe we don't know,

but if one touches the earth, one cannot avoid the spirit. And if one touches it in a friendly way ... the spirit of nature will be helpful" (Douglas, 1997, p. 459). In the 1957 Houston films, Jung added that this is not his own idea but can be found in the writings of Democritus, who spoke of a *spiritus insertus atomis*, the spirit inserted in atoms. Jung specified that psyche, or spirit, is "a quality of matter ... it is simply the world seen from within." (McGuire & Hull, 1977, p. 303)

After gathering together material for this article, I found myself thinking about several dreams Jung recounts in his memoirs and the profound earthiness of their imagery. Readers will probably be familiar with them, but may enjoy viewing them in this fresh light.

As a young man trying to decide between enrolling for the science or humanities curriculum at the university, Jung had two dreams that settled the issue; in each, he is walking in the woods. In the first, he comes upon a burial mound and digs up bones of prehistoric animals; he woke thinking, "I *must* get to know nature." In the second, he comes upon a pool where the "most wonderful creature ... shimmering in opalescent hues" lies half-submerged—a giant radiolarian. The dream aroused in him "an intense desire for knowledge." Together, the two dreams decided him "overwhelmingly in favor of science" (Jung, 1961, p. 85).

In his 1909 dream of the multistory house, where he descends several levels and comes to a cave cut into rock, Jung finds human skulls, scattered bones, and pottery—which he recognizes as the remains of a primitive culture. This dream singularly convinced him that modern consciousness rests on a bedrock of age-old phylogenetic experience, and it gave him a model of the geology of the psyche, which he frequently used for teaching (Jung, 1961, pp. 158–162).

In the spring of 1914, Jung had a thrice-repeating dream of an Arctic cold wave that froze parts of Western Europe and killed "all green living things." The dream occurred in April, May, and June, and when World War I broke out in August, Jung recognized it as outward-facing (Jung, 1961, p. 176).

In 1927, Jung had the lengthy "Liverpool" dream in which he discovered, in the midst of the gray and unpleasant city, buildings arranged around a square; in the center of this square was a round pool with a small island in the middle and on it a single magnolia tree with reddish blossoms. Only in this spot was there sunlight; his companions did not see any of it. Jung remarked that the dream "satisfied me completely," depicting as it did "the whole process of the development of consciousness." Just as the 1909 dream revealed the evolutionary foundation of modern consciousness, this one showed Jung the inherent orienting function of the self (Jung, 1961, pp. 197–198).

Jung's early dreams entail encountering human and animal life that is beneath the visible surface of the earth; the later dreams pertain to life visible on the surface. All of the dreams are based on earth imagery and pertain to actual life on earth—its history, its dynamics, and the threats to its continuance. Except for one floor in the 1909 house, which referred to Jung's personal life, the content of these dreams is objective and pertains to a much broader sweep.

At the Dream Institute, we have developed a way of hearing individual dreams, told during group meditation, for their larger implications. Initially called "Culture Dreaming" and recently renamed "Deep Dreaming," this process is a modification of the Social Dreaming Matrix developed in the 1980s by Gordon Lawrence, a business consultant whose work was influenced by Jung's writings (Lawrence, 2003). In our programs, dreams frequently refer to current environmental and sociopolitical situations. We have

even created performance pieces for Earth Day events, using selected dreams about the earth. The following are examples from our participants; the first shows the world as seen from within:

I see a face deep in the earth. It seems male and becomes female. I put my head down and hear a sound like an ancient chant, faint at first. It becomes louder as I listen: "I am the ancient mother, voice of wisdom buried in the earth. No one has heard me for so many years. My sorrow is deep. The time is now to return to the surface, to give voice to the wisdom. Can you hear me?"

To the question posed of whether we, as the collective dreamer, hear this voice of ancient wisdom, the implied answer is no, truthfully, we hear it only faintly. Perhaps when it comes to the surface, more of us will be able to hear.

In the next example, a young man dreamed of being immersed in the percolation of particles of matter we call soil:

I'm in the soil and *am* the soil, which is percolating. Tiny crumbs of dirt and air are in constant motion, mingling with each other. They are not building towards anything, but just moving around at a constant contained speed. I think, "This is what it means *to be*. This perpetuates growth."

The dreamer experiences molecules in constant, steady motion. Does this depict matter per se or also hint at the movement of the spirit, symbolized as air? The thought he has in the dream suggests the latter. In our modern *Zeitgeist*, *being* is often misperceived as laziness or inertia, in comparison with *doing*, which is the culturally preferred mode. The dreamer experiences, via identification, the mystery that *being* is the basis of growth.

Can we say that these dreams are mainly subjective or mainly objective? This distinction is overly dualistic. Of course they carry significance for the dreamers; but we have seen that they also have a profound effect when shared with others, in that they touch on universal life processes that we need to experience and understand more fully.

The next dream example involves a group of people participating in a mystery rite in which they too experience the earth as alive:

Friends gather at my house for a sacred purpose. One woman prepares red oxide soil, tenderly raking and patting it. I show others how to use the soil, which is alive, to imbue a stupa with aliveness. The stupa is built out of stones and sticks, triangular, like a teepee. The woman says, "The soil is about ready." I kneel down and touch my face to the soil, like it is a dear, precious loved one. I prepare myself by gathering my energy. We take the soil and create the living shape. We shove the soil into the stupa from bottom to top. The soil begins humming, then the stupa, and then all of us are humming.

The dream shows the group activity to be a sacred ritual, which takes them not upward into transcendence over the earth but downward into direct contact with rich red soil. This engagement activates a resonance and soon both the soil and the people are humming. a harmony between the human and natural world occurs.

A stupa is a traditional Buddhist monument, perhaps originally a burial mound, with a center pole that represents the tree of life or *axis mundi*. It is often surrounded by a processional path. The stupa in this dream was made with ordinary sticks, as if to suggest

that in its “ur-form,” this sacred structure could be constructed by anyone, anywhere. The tending of the soil is the main focus, and through it the earth comes to life; spirit in matter is revived. In both these examples, the dreamers are in a state of *participation mystique* with the earth.

All the dreams we’ve heard here comment on the crisis of our times: whether or not we can live in balance with this planet, this earth, this globe. We are a very young species that has won over from the gods not only fire but knowledge of nuclear, genetic, electronic, and psi processes—and we use this knowledge too often without adequate training, moral scruple, or guidance from a wisdom source. In the fossil record, it is very unusual that one single species would predominate during any given era. We *assume* we are the predominant species. Empirical data spanning a hundred years about creatures variously known as Sasquatch, Big Foot, and Yeti—most likely other primates—is chronically ridiculed and marginalized (see Bindernagel, 1998; Shackley, 1983). What if we took the advice from Lichtenberg’s teacher and treated the earth as a book to be read and contemplated rather than dissected? What if we ourselves are the seeds that need proper tending in order to grow into our full and balanced humanness?

It’s risky to turn to dreams as omens about the future. But it’s understandable that we would be looking for omens today, because things aren’t going too well here. I have chosen especially inspiring dreams to illustrate my point that what we call “the earth” is not unidimensional, as often assumed, but multidimensional. I have left out dreams containing more predictable themes of disaster and destruction, but, at our monthly programs we do hear them: dreams of standing amidst post-apocalyptic rubble, of wading through city streets submerged in melted ice, of running from black goop falling from the sky. With both the inspiring dreams presented here and the dark ones not presented, we always have to ask, what does a dream tell us that we don’t already know? For what purpose has it come?

Having taken you high above the earth with Lichtenberg and beneath the ground to ancient mysteries of soil and water, I want to close with an exceptionally ordinary dream. We will go back in time not to the 1700s but the 1800s. The setting is the South during the era of slavery, and the dreamer is Harriet Tubman, the brave woman who pioneered the Underground Railroad, a link of human hands, black and white, that helped those escaping the cruel and inhumane practice of indentured servitude. It was via dreams and visions that Tubman knew which routes to use to successfully escort her charges. Following a head injury inflicted by a slave-owner, she developed second sight; she often would fall into a trance for a few moments. Once, Tubman was leading four men down a country road and lay down in a brief sleep, during which she was shown a river to cross and a cabin in which to hide. Soon, they did come to a river, but it looked too deep to ford. Tubman walked right in, and found a shoal; the men followed. On the other side was a cabin where a black family was living; they took in the runaways, saving them from the men and dogs close on their trail (Moss, 2009, p. 186).

Tubman’s was not an ordinary nocturnal dream but a clear vision of the earth, seen from within, showing a route that actually existed. I call this an “exceptionally ordinary” dream, an intentional oxymoron. In exceptional circumstances, such as when survival is at stake, prescient dreams and visions may occur that show a way out; the phenomenon may seem exceptional at the time, but there is ample evidence that it does often occur at such moments and therefore is “ordinary” and even predictable.

In 1997, I had a dream, in words, that the manic speed at which we are living today is putting our species in jeopardy and that we too are at risk of extinction. We have become “slaves” to a manic way of life that is unsustainable. Many of us are dreaming about this

and about new paths we could follow. Tubman's experience may be emblematic for our situation today.

Perhaps we have been unable to solve pressing environmental, social, and health care problems because we've been drawing only on the limited range of our conscious, waking selves. The dreaming mind, millions of years older, has a much broader bandwidth and thus provides access to a larger range of our human capacities, and to suprapersonal ones as well. Western civilization is entering into a phase of decay. Let us not be too afraid of the dying process, but trust in our ability to compost former ways of living so that they are transformed into the fresh ground out of which new ways of living can mushroom. The dreaming mind seems to be attuned to the decay processes on the earth and is also allowing us to witness and participate in the revivification of spirit and matter.

We should regard dreams as an endangered species, a casualty of technological advance. ... Dreams are an oasis of spiritual vitality ... they represent our primordial habitat, our last wilderness ... and we must protect them with as much fervor as the rain forests, the ozone layer, the elephant, and the whale.

—Anthony Stevens (1993, pp. 122–123)

Meredith Sabini, Ph.D., compiled the popular anthology The Earth Has a Soul: Jung on Nature, Technology, and Modern Life. From 1982 to 1990, she was an active member of the editorial board of this journal. She is founding director of the Dream Institute of Northern California.

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