

Reflections

By Eleanor Flack, Okehampton Quaker Meeting

Having just seen Al Gore's film 'An Inconvenient Truth' I have pondered even more about the damage that scientists assure us we are doing to the environment of which we are part and on which we depend.

I am amazed to learn that 235 years ago the Quaker John Woolman said, 'The produce of the earth is a gift from our gracious creator to the inhabitants, and to impoverish the earth now appears to be an injury to the succeeding age.'

Also, that as long as 28 years ago, an article in 'Quaker Life' listed principles for the expression of simplicity in the 20th century: *Buy things for your need rather than your greed – reject anything that is producing an addiction in you. Develop a habit of giving things away. De-accumulate. Learn to enjoy things without owning them. Develop a deeper appreciation for the creation. Look with a healthy skepticism at all 'Buy now, pay later' schemes. Obey Jesus' injunction about plain, honest speech.*

Will we ever learn? Are we really powerless to change our way of life – so that we may live sustainably in our world – so that we may halt the spiral of destruction from one generation to the next?

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