

# THE LEOPOLD WRITING PROGRAM

2017 ALDO LEOPOLD WRITING CONTEST AWARD WINNER



## ABYGAIL MACCURDY

GRADES 10-12 DIVISION

All the worlds inhumanities cannot be solved by looking at a picturesque landscape of what nature has to offer. Aldo Leopold may have believed so, and for a time, I would have agreed full-heartedly with him. Leopold idealized that the way people treated each other directly related to how people treated the land. I believe it is an overall lack of respect between those who can afford it, and those who can't. The indigenous tribes across the southwest believed that they should conserve the land in such a way that enabled seven generations to enjoy it as they did. However, land owners believe that if they develop that land into neighborhoods and malls they may be able to make a profit. Like Aldo Leopold, indigenous tribes respected the land because they knew they were a part of it, so they treated each patch of dirt with the upmost respect. Land owners can afford to abuse it because they are able to buy more, therefore they discount those who question its health. This is because the land is thought to be a birthright to us, handed down to us from the generations before us. If mutual respect for living things was the societal norm I believe everyone would treat each other better. As an avid outdoorswoman, I watch year after year as our global climate gradually increases in temperature. Deniers of Global Climate Change (GCC) have many opinions on this topic, mostly regarding how GCC is a myth, because politicians care more about their next paycheck as opposed to the health of the planet they will take their first and last breath on. They disregard the rights of civilians who work for them just as much as they neglect the unity of the land. Instead of seeking a healthy balance between production and conservation, deniers of GCC seek a higher standard of living regardless of what is harmed in the process. It is then when one has to wonder if Leopold's ideology rings true. If these people had more influence from their natural world, would they then not achieve, but strive for that harmony? As I stated previously, there are atrocious things in this world that cannot be solved simply by reconnecting with nature. The constantly growing population is, for the first time, able to directly contact each other from every corner of the globe due to the growth of social media. The advantages of this are endless, people can share ideas and solutions to problems previously deemed unsolvable. Leopold believed that nature is the one true way to connect with each other, but we are connected in some sense right now. All we have to do is learn to be productive with our connections. Whether it be educating each other on why conservation is so vital or spreading love with hashtags until those who oppress us cannot be heard. Aldo Leopold remains one of the world's most iconic conservationists and his influence will continue to inspire future generations to come.



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