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# Planet of the Apes and Philosophy

*Great Apes Think Alike*

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# Planet of the Degenerate Monkeys

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I can't get rid of the idea that somewhere in the Universe there must be a creature superior to man.

—GEORGE TAYLOR, *Planet of the Apes*

### Philosophic Prequel: Fable of the Degenerate Monkey

Once upon a time there was a degenerate monkey, degenerate in the sense of not maturing as quickly as the wild Others, in being newborn-like much longer, something the biologists call neoteny.

The Others were blessed with robust instincts, which seldom led them into blunders. What they knew instinctively the degenerate monkey could only get from guessing, with a good amount of blundering thrown in. But the degenerate monkey was blessed with good guessing, sensing with awareness, even if not yet knowing. The very "weakness" of its plastic and flexible brain, proved, under the right conditions, to be its greatest strength.

The degenerate monkey found that by closely observing the Others, it could guess the right things to do more often than not. The living instinctive truths embodied in the diverse creatures and living habitat surrounding it were its great teachers. It discovered that it was a true child of the Earth, literally, in its genetic, physiological constitution.

Its beliefs allowed for the fact that the newest portion of its brain, its prefrontal cortex, through which it learned to make

art and speak, was also the most immature part of its brain, precisely because it was the latest to evolve. It may not have even known this consciously, but it lived the fact through beliefs which allowed that the mind of nature, the spirit living in and through all things, was a great teacher, and of a higher order of intelligence. It found that in attuning to and marveling at the instinctive maturity of the Others, it could find its own maturity.

It learned that by hunting like a bear, it could catch the seal. It learned that by acting like a seal, it could attract the bear and hunt it. Immersed in the intelligence of the Others, it learned the sacred game of life, which included the taking of life, the game of predator and game. In revering the sacred game and its rules of sustainable sustenance, it became a har-binger of life. Its attunements to a wide range of habitats and life, not only through observation, but also through ritual, artistic, and practical communicative and cooperative activities among its own kind, allowed it to spread around the globe, creating a planet of degenerate monkeys, but not *for* degenerate monkeys. Its relation to the community of life was one of net-working with the Earth.

It learned so well that eventually it thought itself mature enough to change the rules of the game: instead of finding its maturity in attuning to and marveling in the instinctive intelligence of the Others, it reversed the process. It began living in settled ape-clusters, which were artificial neoteny environments. It began to turn the Others into degenerate forms like itself, that is, no longer wild, but selectively dematured, domesticated.

The ape reshaped The Others, turning them into mirrors of its newborn-like, dematured self, genetically as well as behaviorally. It domesticated itself with and through them, fixing partial aspects of their full instinctive intelligence. It turned them from wild wolves into domesticated dogs, from aurochs—oxen—into cows, from mouflon into sheep, from wild independent grasses into dematured grasses—wheat, barley, rice—codependent on human cultivation for survival. Even though domesticated, it remained a wild body itself, albeit a degenerate monkey, new-born like, neotenus.

All the while the neotenus or newborn-like ape neotenized its world, living from its domesticated food and walling itself

into its cities. It changed its relation to its habitat, physically and spiritually, also walling in its reverence for life, for the game of life it participated in, as predator and prey. It walled that reverence into self-mirroring gods and human-centered (or anthropocentric) consciousness.

It became a spectator at creation, networking with its progressively human-centered reflections of itself, its gods and goddesses of fertility, its domesticates, losing in the process the direct interplay with the wild Earth. It fell prey to the mirror of Narcissus. In moving away from direct participation, it narrowed circumambient creation to the human focus, elevating the dematured human to an object of worship, devaluing the wild other to a slave, devaluing the bulk of its own population into slaves and functionaries of its exalted ego, personified in the form of a divine king.

Degenerate monkey became proud of itself, losing its sense that, as a dematured, newborn-like primate, it required the relationship to the wild others in order to find its maturity. But with its self-mirroring environment as an illusory matrix, effectively walling it off from the instinctive intelligence of the wild others, the shut-up monkey went mad. It went mad within its self-created house of mirrors, its Gods, kings, saviors, prophets, science, machines, its agriculturally created population explosion, its transformation of the "fertile crescent" and other habitats originally teeming with life into desert, and the entire ant-farm it had made of itself. It went mad with itself and called its madness progress.

It went from being a child of the Earth, engaged in communicative attunement, to a civilized infant, wanting ever more. Yet it thought itself the be-all and end-all of evolution and the creation's purpose. And in its civilized infantilism, its unlimited expansionism, it raged against its true mother, the earth, Gaia, the living ecological intelligence on which it depended to find its maturity.

Its homicidal rage was a murderous suicidal call for help, one might say, the rage of a two-year old backpedaling in its mind to the womb. But it found itself murdering that which was its own source, and so it was in reality backpedaling to nothingness, backpedaling, until. . . .

Once upon a time there was a degenerate monkey.

### Beware the Beast Man

Near the end of 1968's *Planet of the Apes*, Cornelius, the ape archaeologist and historian, reads from the sacred scrolls: "Beware the beast Man, for he is the Devil's pawn. Alone among God's primates, he kills for sport or lust or greed. Yea, he will murder his brother to possess his brother's land. Let him not breed in great numbers, for he will make a desert of his home and yours. Shun him; drive him back into his jungle lair, for he is the harbinger of death."

Well, this does not present a very pretty picture of humanity. But it does speak truths civilized people either don't know or do not want to hear, not of uncivilized peoples so much as the costs of agriculturally based civilization itself, and its inventions such as mass-killing war, property and poverty, over-population, and devastated ecosystems.

Philosopher Charles Peirce, the founder of American pragmatism and a leading mathematician of his time, drew an unflattering portrait of man similar to that of the sacred scrolls, depicting him, with some humor, as "a degenerate monkey." As he put it in 1901, "man is but a degenerate monkey, with a paranoiac talent for self-satisfaction, no matter what scrapes he may get himself into, calling them 'civilization,' and who, in place of the unerring instincts of other races, has an unhappy faculty for occupying himself with words and abstractions, and for going wrong in a hundred ways before he is driven, willy-nilly, into the right one."

*Homo sapiens*, man the knower, is the way we humans like to distinguish ourselves from the rest of nature. But if we consider ourselves as degenerate monkeys, *Homo errans*, or *man the blunderer* would have been a better term, calling attention to our softened instinctive intelligence, our greater "plasticity," as the biologists call it, in contrast to the "unerring instincts of other races," as Peirce put it elsewhere.

Peirce's concept of *degenerate monkey* is not mere monkey business, but contains a serious philosophical outlook. It attempts to draw attention to our prolonged newborn-like nature, which biologists call neoteny. He means "degenerate" both in the mathematical sense of a genetic falling away from a pure form, in this case from more quickly matured genomes of other primates, and he also means it in the more everyday

sense in which the newer portion of the human brain, the pre-frontal cortex, which allows the capacities for symbolic and rational communication, for language, can also contribute to monkeying-around hubris. The degenerate monkey in this sense can get into some bad scrapes, falsely idealizing them as "civilized."

I take Peirce's term "degenerate monkey" as not limited to moderns, but applicable to *Homo sapiens sapiens*, the technical term for anatomically modern humans, generally. Considering humans as degenerate monkeys is a key to understanding human development, precisely because we need to attune ourselves to the intelligence of the wild environment, drawing its intelligence into our dematured, blundering selves through intuitive inference, or what Peirce termed abductive inference, our gift for guessing, as well as other ways of thinking, and therein finding our maturity.

### Alien Nation

Which is it: is man one of God's blunders, or is God one of man's blunders?

—FRIEDRICH WILHELM NIETZSCHE, *Twilight of the Idols* (1889)

The alien is typically a symptom of human alienation, projected out into fantastic form. Those visitors from outer space? They usually represent fears of how our science and technology are running away with us, ruinously. In *Planet of the Apes* humans become the visitors in space ships, but the aliens are both the intelligent apes they discover, and the humans who are "ape-like" savages. *Planet of the Apes* presents us with specters of ourselves, alienated not only from our humanity, but alienated *in* our humanity.

That's precisely why my friends and I had to see *Escape from the Planet of the Apes* when it came out in 1971. Some fans identify with movies by acquiring costumes similar to those in the movie. But we thought we'd be clever by escaping *into* the movie at the nearby drive-in theater, sneaking in by foot through a hole in the fence with a couple of six packs of beer, moving a bench from the snack bar area to a spot where an auto should be, and creating a stereo sound for ourselves with a speaker at either end of the bench.

From the opening scenes, where the three astronauts returning to contemporary Earth turn out to be the chimps Zira, Cornelius, and another colleague from the future, through Cornelius's account of a future dramatic rise of the apes when a certain Aldo would be the first to utter No! to his human masters (which actually dropped out of the plots of sequels and never occurred in them), to the tragic killing of Zira and Cornelius and surprise ending survival of their offspring Caesar, we were riveted.

We couldn't really articulate why we liked it so much, but the revolt against authority was in the air, even if our prank was simply apolitical fun. *Escape from the Planet of the Apes* was the counter-culture in pop form, complete with expressions of racism, militarism, and scientific hubris which called for resistance. But all of that serious stuff of resisting authority also spoke directly to our youthful exuberance in sneaking in, playing, "like an angry ape . . . such fantastic tricks before high heaven as makes the angels weep," as Shakespeare put it in *Measure for Measure*. Only in this case I hope the angels would laugh. Given the fantastic tricks that accompanied the establishment of agriculture and civilization, of history, they could use a break.

### Monkeying to Mayhem

Agriculture and civilization, which propelled man from "his jungle lair," expelled us from the living wild habitat through which we attuned ourselves to the mature communities of life in which we found ourselves, and which provided the means for our immature brains to reach relatively sustainable maturity. In citified ape-compounds civilized man learned to kill "for sport or lust or greed," as the sacred scrolls of the apes put it. Cain the agriculturalist learned to "murder his brother to possess his brother's land." Humans began to "breed in great numbers," turning "the fertile crescent" in Mesopotamia into "a desert of his home" (remember "Operation Desert Storm" of 1991?).

Humans continue to breed in great numbers, now at seven billion. Refinements in the mechanization of agriculture made it possible to feed more people, and that has led to those people breeding more people, which has led to more agriculture to feed more people: the endless cycle which began with agriculture

ten thousand years ago, now amped up radically through modern technology. This is the scenario of civilization since its origins, forcibly driving out surrounding foragers who are believed to "waste" the habitat because they do not cultivate the land in endless expansion of population and food needs, a scenario duplicated in *Beneath the Planet of the Apes*. There the gorilla military commander Ursus calls for an invasion of the Forbidden Zone:

We must replenish the land that was ravished by the Humans with new, productive feeding grounds. And these we can obtain in the once Forbidden Zone. So now it is our holy duty to enter it.

Agriculture and its offspring, civilization, have been called progress. The progress that they made can also be seen as one step forward and two, three, or more steps backward. The evidence, from nutritional, ecological, societal, archaeological, and anthropological studies is unmistakable. Agriculture, settlement, and civilization brought about a transformation of humankind, a transformation involving whole new forms of society, ways of living in huge power clusters called cities, a whole new centralization of power and power complexes, with far greater hierarchy and social inequality, time required for work, and a devastation of the human body from reduced nutrition and increased work demands, literally resulting in people becoming four to six inches shorter on average, wherever it developed.

The increase in height of people in industrial societies in the past hundred years or so is merely a return to average heights of people from before agriculture, as numerous anthropological and archaeological studies show. Human socialization practices changed, including the spacing of births from an average of every four years to every two, as well as the relation of humans to the Earth, and the human mind itself.

The degenerate monkey evolved into being through a long evolutionary narrative of foraging, but departed from that narrative through the advent of agriculture, settlement, and civilization. This change is called history and progress, but from another perspective might be called regression. Degenerate monkey needs the mindset of foraging, or its moral equivalent, to find its maturity. It just might be that without it, without



that attunement to the Others, monkey goes mad, monkeying in its mirror of itself, fatally fixated, like Narcissus, and with similar results: planet of the civilized degenerate monkeys, monkeying to mayhem. That is precisely what happened both to the humans in their original nuclear war described in *Beneath the Planet of the Apes*, and to the apes driven to invade the Forbidden Zone in the same movie, a decision which resulted in the ultimate destruction of the living Earth.

The *Planet of the Apes* series pictured an atomic war and its aftermath, which remains a real possibility for our own foreseeable future, despite the end of the Cold War. But numerous other scenarios of the consequences of unsustainable living now compete with it: global warming and mass famine; viral pandemics such as swine or avian flu, induced by mutation-breeding manure lagoons of huge slaughtering operations—the “primordial soup of the Apocalypse,” such as emerged in La Gloria, Mexico in 2009; or genetic recombination gone wrong, whether resulting in resistant bacteria, dangerous “Frankenfoods,” or in a scenario similar to that pictured in the recent 2011 reboot, *Rise of the Planet of the Apes*, a global pandemic of the ALZ-113 virus: medical monkeying gone awry. Therein lies the tragedy of the degenerate monkey who is us. Yes, we “learn.” But learning unhinged from our special evolutionary requirements becomes a way of spelling suicide. And that is what we infantilized apes are spelling globally today.

Charlton Heston may not arrive back from the future in time to change things. It will take more than a Hollywood sequel to change the likely ending: Once upon a time there was a degenerate monkey.

### Doomsday Machine

In the end, the monkey mirror held up by these movies tends to downplay another real ingredient in the dehumanization of humanity. It too is a portion of ourselves, just as the ape in us is a portion of ourselves. But it is a far more deadly portion when falsely elevated into a ruling principle, truly the “harbinger of death” written about in the sacred scripture of the apes. It is the idealization of the machine, the schizoid machine, the overweening projection of degenerate monkey’s highly elaborated prefrontal cortex severed from the community of pas-

sions which had grounded it in its evolution into being. This is the alien of the *Terminator* and *Matrix* movies, but it also haunts the *Planet of the Apes* series as well, though playing second fiddle to the ape as other.

The human mutants who worship the doomsday Alpha Omega bomb in *Beneath the Planet of the Apes* have developed extraordinary powers of communication through telepathy and telepathic hypnosis, unlike their mute above ground fellow humans. A note in the script for the movie states of the mutant named Verger that: “he shares facial characteristics common to all the city’s denizens: great beauty; an unwrinkled skin; deep-set eyes in shadowed sockets; and that slightly accentuated definition of the lip-line which, in men and women of our own day, is often accounted sexy. We are about to learn one other remarkable attribute which he shares with his fellows.” We learn that attribute during the height of their sacred ceremonies, when the mutants face the golden bomb rocket, and lift their hoods to reveal that they have lost their skin and wear rubber face masks.

They use actual speech in facing the bomb, saying, “I reveal my Inmost Self unto my God!” That self, sadly, is one incapable of true face-to-face interaction, despite its abilities to communicate at distances. It can get into other minds through telepathy, but it has utterly lost the living Earth, literally entombed in the subterranean post-nuclear New York. All it can really honestly “face” is the bomb machine, that symbol of the destruction which ravaged their DNA, yet which gives them ultimate hope of invulnerability. But a strange invulnerability it is, for in using it to defend themselves, they would also destroy themselves and all life.

They worship the cold-war strategy of “mutually assured destruction,” but also something more. They worship *deus ex machina*, literally, the god out of the machine, the technical device which promises to save and redeem us. These mutants, possibly the weirdest group of characters to appear in the entire series, might actually represent the most accurate prophecy of the entire *Planet of the Apes* series, not as found in the Sacred Scrolls, but as found in our own time today.

Those mutants prefigure the loss of face-to-face communication that is occurring today in the name of the Holy Facebook. They engage in faceless “telecommunication,” like

the Facebookies of today, who excessively outsource face time to faceless virtual interaction, frequently "masked" in pseudonyms, through telecommunication. Consider: a recent Kaiser Foundation study in 2010 found that American children 8–18 years of age reported spending a whopping 7 hours and 38 minutes of media screen time per day, actually 10 hours and 45 minutes including multitasking squeezed into those 7 hours, 38 minutes, which also does not count schoolwork. For 'tweens between 11 and 14 years old it is actually 8 hours and 40 minutes per day. If someone sleeps for 8 hours and is involved with school for 8 hours, then virtually all remaining available time is totally enscreened time.

This represents a significant loss of face-to-face contact and tactile connection to a virtual world that is supposed to be there as a convenience, a means to self-direction, toward what I call self-originated experience, where you are engaged in the moment, emotionally available to the moment, and capable of self-determination. Social media can be all of that, yet for many kids and even adults, it seems instead to be a refuge where, "I reveal my Inmost Self unto my God!"

Yet our faces are subtle sources of gestural and empathic communication. Mind reading, it turns out, is a neurological reality, not only through mirror neurons, but also through micro-muscular mimicry below the level of awareness, through which one attunes to another in a face-to-face interaction, feeling inferentially another's emotions and potentially also intentions. Recent studies have shown that not only do "unwrinkled" Botox recipients, like the rubber-masked mutants, lose the ability to express their emotional states facially because of their facial muscle paralysis, but that they also suffer impaired ability to "read" the emotional states of their partners through subtle, subconscious micro-mimicry. This shows how one's own micro-muscular mimicry of others is a communicative practice which can atrophy from disuse, resulting in impaired empathy.

The mutants, despite their advanced telecommunicative prowess, were also notably deficient in empathy, for example, hypnotically inducing their human visitors to try to kill each other. But the possible empathy-deficient mutants we might be brewing today don't need to worship the bomb and practice torture. That is so old-school, so Orwell. We have transitioned to the conditioning of slavish unempathic conformism through

pleasure techniques, as first envisioned by Aldous Huxley in his 1932 novel, *Brave New World*, with its soma, promiscuity without relationships, and systematic methods of desensitization to emotions.

In his 1949 letter to his former student George Orwell, congratulating him on his new book *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Huxley predicted that within the next generation pleasure conditioning would replace pain conditioning as a more efficient means of control:

Within the next generation I believe that the world's leaders will discover that infant conditioning and narco-hypnosis are more efficient, as instruments of government, than clubs and prisons, and that the lust for power can be just as completely satisfied by suggesting people into loving their servitude as by flogging them and kicking them into obedience.

That next generation of the nuclear age saw the introduction of the screen, in the form of television, into virtually all American households, conditioning infants and adults to gaze in narco-hypnotic distraction. The cold war ended, yet the screen may prove in the end more powerful than the bomb.

Our god out of the machine is the device we always have at hand or nearby, which makes us feel good to use, and which, as we depend on it more and more, pressing its buttons thousands of times every day, pushes our buttons unwittingly "unto our god."

The cult of the machine, inclusive of the human elements that are part of it, first hatched in the bureaucratic organizations of ancient civilization, which included explicit religious worship of the apparatus of the state, especially through divine kingship, and then came to dominance in the modern, secular era, though as an implicit, religious-like belief, symbolized through the clock. This watershed development has proved to be not simply an extension of our tool-using capabilities, but more a Frankenstein that has taken on a life of its own.

Humans, being so adaptively flexible, have been able to climb way out on the limb we have been sawing off, but once we started believing in the metaphor that the universe is a giant clock, we began ticking toward nullity. Neuroscientists need to realize that the machine-model of the brain is hyperbole, exaggerating the automatic aspects of our being and radically

undervaluing and even negating the spontaneous and creative aspects, as well as the deep tempered capacities of the passions. These are not merely "subjective," but are real capacities produced by millions of years of engagement with wildness.

Mind, as Peirce and fellow pragmatist George Herbert Mead said, is a relational, communicative process of conduct between the individual and the habitat, not something enclosed in a brain. When that relation becomes contracted from the attunement to the wild intelligible habitat of the surrounding community of life to other dematured humans and their likenesses, and then even further contracted to projections and idealizations of the automatic portions of the human psyche, as though the living world is but a schizoid machine, then perhaps we can understand why Emerson said: "The end of the human race will be that it will eventually die of civilization."

### Planet of the Regenerate Monkeys

We have been undergoing revolutionary new findings in the past few years that reveal that the planet of anatomically modern humans of the past 100,000 years or so was one shared with a variety of other humans. As anthropologist Chris Stringer put it recently, "there might have been as many as six different kinds of humans on the Earth," including both Neanderthals and Denisovans, whose DNA are found in contemporary human DNA. They all disappeared, despite some interbreeding, for reasons that are not yet clear.

There are threats that the other great ape species living today could become extinct too, as many other animal species have, not because of natural conditions, but because human expansion has literally been a harbinger of death. It's time to consider how to remake human civilization into a harbinger of life, a question that animates a number of the movies in the series, but is especially highlighted in the conclusion of the last of the original series, *Battle for the Planet of the Apes*. There the Lawgiver, speaking to the integrated class of young human and ape children, says, "But as I look at Apes and Humans living together in friendship, harmony and at peace, at least we wait with hope for the future." Yet the camera turns to the statue of Caesar, "Our Founder," which sheds a tear as the movie closes, perhaps suggesting what we know will be a degeneration into

race hatred and hostility between apes and humans, the "same old, same old" of civilizational hubris, culminating in the destruction of the Earth from the Alpha Omega bomb.

Despite the ubiquitous cruelty between apes and humans in the series, there are numerous moments when the primate touch empathically bridges the interspecies gulf: Zira putting her hand on Taylor's in her office after she discovers he can write, or Taylor's kissing her on the lips near the end of *Planet of the Apes*, and her return kiss to fellow scientist, the human Dr. Lewis Dixon, in *Escape from the Planet of the Apes*. But perhaps the best example is found in circus owner Armando's warm sympathy for Cornelius and Zira and his subsequent raising, as we discover in *Conquest of the Planet of the Apes*, of their son Milo, later named Caesar, who will later lead the rebellion of the apes. Armando was devoted to Saint Francis, "who loved all animals," and practices that devotion by risking his life, and ultimately losing it, on behalf of his adopted Caesar and the promise of life he holds.

The empathic bonding between ape and man found in the relations of these characters in *Planet of the Apes* may seem overly "sentimental" to some. In many ways it is, though I think "idealized" is a better term. But it also does strangely break through the human-centered portrayal of apes in the series to show unexpected possibilities to overcome dehumanization. Certain deep sentiments, such as the capacities for empathy, for mothering, for dreaming and playing, that we share with other primates and even with non-primate mammals, may turn out to be the mightiest weapon against the destructive tendencies of the unrestrained mechanization of life today, whose imagined catastrophic consequences are pictured in the *Planet of the Apes* movies. They are among our oldest primate and mammal capacities, yet crucial for our most newly acquired, characteristically human capacities, such as the self, speech, and rational reasoning, to function optimally and not pathologically.

Though we may think ourselves modern, we retain Pleistocene bodies, as ecological philosopher Paul Shepard put it, and Pleistocene needs, bodied into being over our longer two million year evolution. What Shepard termed "the sacred game," the dramatic interplay of predator and prey, reminds us of that older evolutionary story, wherein degenerate monkey



emerges into being wide-eyed in wonder at circumambient life, a child of the earth foraging for edible, sensible, thinkable, and sustainable wisdom.

Consider what happened to that ape that became human in the past two million years, thanks to the community of mature, instinctive life to which it attuned itself. What is two million years in the long term view of evolution? What if we could redirect our science, technology, and civilization today away from its idealization and worship of the machine and inflated projections of the human, and toward an idea that the further creation and pursuit of truth, goodness, and beauty involves a re-attunement to all-surrounding life, not isolation from it?

A creature aware that its destiny is tied to its origins, and that it must, perhaps for the first time, come to terms with itself as a degenerate monkey requiring self-controlling, sustainable limits to its civilization at all levels of institutions and beliefs, toward the purpose of a sustainable, proliferating planet of life? A new civilization capable of relating to the earth not as something put here for humans, but as something marvelous out of which humans were bodied forth to serve?

We might just find a creature in two million years quite different from the futures envisioned in *Planet of the Apes*, which remain trapped in the constrictive frame of "history." We might find a planet where biodiversity is itself regarded as a great teacher, a planet teeming with immense varieties of life, revered and enhanced by a somewhat recognizable, but transformed life form. We might find the planet of the regenerate monkeys.

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**LESLIE DALE FELDMAN** is Professor of Political Science at Hofstra University and author of *Spaceships and Politics: The Political Theory of Rod Serling* (2010). Her parents are great science fiction fans, and her former babysitter always said, when *Planet of the Apes* was on TV, "Les, the Apes are on!"

**LORI GRUEN** teaches at Wesleyan University and writes about animals and ethics. She has documented the history of the first one hundred chimpanzees in the US <<http://first100chimps.wesleyan.edu>> and is currently working on a book that draws lessons from the lives of the chimpanzees she has come to know, respect, and love.

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**JOHN HUSS** is a songwriter and philosopher who teaches at The University of Akron. His other works include *Lipchitz* (co-authored with the John Huss Moderate Combo), *Johnny Cash and Philosophy: The Burning Ring of Truth* (co-edited with David Werther), and *Use Your Head* (co-authored with Loch Phillipps and Lee Skaife). He still can feel the shock of seeing the Statue of Liberty waist deep in sand on the TV in Ricky Lesser's basement. See? The revolution did happen on television.

**GREG LITTMANN** has written on evolutionary epistemology, philosophy of logic, *The Big Bang Theory*, *Breaking Bad*, *Doctor Who*, *Dune*, *Ender's Game*, *A Game of Thrones*, Ridley Scott, *Terminator*, and *The Walking Dead*. He's a member of the community of tall, shaved chimpanzees with big noses, also known as *Homo sapiens*, and teaches philosophy at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville.

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**SHAUN MAY** lives in London where he's currently finishing a PhD applying Heidegger's philosophy to humor. He's also a theater director and producer who specializes in doing odd shows in weird spaces—his most critically acclaimed show being an opera in an Ikea store. Like Caesar, he's much better at solving the Lucas Tower than you would expect from looking at him.

**TOM MCBRIDE** has taught at Beloit College for nearly forty percent of a century. He is Professor of English and Keefer Professor of Humanities. Along with Ron Nief he's the co-creator of *The Annual Beloit College Mindset List* and co-author of *The Mindset Lists of American History* (2011). He's written on Shakespeare, Conan Doyle, Raymond Carver, and Saul Bellow. When asked, he denies that Dr. Zaius reminds him of college deans he has known.

**WILLIAM L. MCGINNEY** teaches Music History at the University of North Texas. He has written on the film music of Aaron Copland, the music of Emerson, Lake, and Palmer, and science-fiction movie scores. Although he has never met a talking ape, as a child he dreamed of growing up to be a scholar and scientist like Dr. Cornelius.

**DAVID L. MORGAN** received his PhD in theoretical particle physics from William and Mary, and his research has appeared in *Physical Review* and the *Astrophysical Journal*. He is the recipient of a Sloane/EST commission for the play "The Osiander Preface." When not devoting time to thinking about space he devotes space to thinking about time.

**MASSIMO PIGLIUCCI** is an evolutionary biologist and a philosopher of science at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. His latest cogitations can be found in *Answers for Aristotle: How Science and Philosophy Can Lead Us to A More Meaningful Life* (2012). As a biologist he has worked on plants, not apes, but as a member of the Order Primates, he feels qualified to pontificate about them anyway.

**BERNARD E. ROLLIN** is the author of eighteen books including *The Frankenstein Syndrome* (1995) and *Animal Rights and Human*