

Re: An interesting view on how 'green' CFLs really are:

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Source: <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.electronics.design/2008-08/msg00127.html>

- *From:* Kris Krieger <me@xxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Fri, 01 Aug 2008 06:47:11 -0500
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"Michael A. Terrell" <mike.terrell@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote in news:E9OndpoQ8FseQ3VnZ2dnUVZ_sWdnZ2d@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx:

Kris Krieger wrote:

"Michael A. Terrell" <mike.terrell@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote in news:vq6dnfJPK7-8Xg3VnZ2dnUVZ_tHinZ2d@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx:

Kris Krieger wrote:

Also, from all I've read and heard, there is a US policy of not exporting birth control to the poor in various nations, a policy which is not based upon the would-be recipients own needs, desires, or choice, but rather, upon the personal beliefs regarding morality of people here.

Over the years I have seen a bunch of news stories about attempts to provide birth control pills in poor African nations. They provided the pills and classes on how to use them, then ome back to find they weren't taken properly, or the women made jewlery out of them. It's just like drilling wells and providing modern farming

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tools.

They teach them how to farm, then the next year they just eat the seed corn and let the tools rust away.

I haven't read that this happens after the proper useage of the thigns has been explained.

I saw the issue covered on TV network news in the '70s.

One forblem with condomns BTW is cultural – although, in some cultures, a woman's desire to have fewer children and/or space them out better is considered to be irrelevant, and/o the use of a condomn is seen as "unmanly".

No, it's considered unmanly by some to not have a horde of kids they fathered, whether they can take care of them, or not.

That's also true, but it doesn't negate what I said. The two are not mutually exclusive. There are probably many additional variations on the general theme, and combinations thereof, as well. I don't ever pretend that I'm writing some sort of comprehensive thesis – that simply can't be done in a venue such as this, even if one *is* an expert/scholar in the particular topic being discussed – I only try to offer one or a few examples of whatever I'm trying to illustrate, as though experiments and/or points to consider.

We see the same thing in other countries of so called men that get a woman pregnant, then look for another. They don't give a damn about the women or any of the kids, as long as they can brag about how much of a man they are.

Sure there are men like that. There are plenty who beleive they have a divine right to reproduce by rape, too. But certainly not ALL are like that. ((Same goes with women – self-centeredness, willful ignorance, and other negative traits which I'll just summarize as "overall suckiness" are by no means the exclusive purview of any particular chromosomal configuration, gender iddentity, or sexual preference.)) I just think that one needs to be receptive to individuality/individuals, and be wary of the very-human tendency to generalize – I say "very human", because generalization, after all, is a very useful tool for making sense fo the

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world – the human brain categorizes and organizes what it perceives; that's part of how one learns from experience – one encounter with an angry wasp (as an admittedly simple example) is enough for one to quickly generalize that experience and stay as far away as possible away from *all* wasps. As in all things, extremes tend to be at best not useful, and at worst destructive.

That's pretty much my main point: be wary of generalizing – it's human, it's part of learning, and we all do it, but taken to an extreme, it's often not a good thing.

It's how they were brought up,
and it's not some simple matter to get around cultural beliefs.

Isn't that what I said?

It might be what you intended, but what I perceived in your post *seemed to me* to be a sense of fatalism or determinism. That's not intended as any sort of a "put down" or any such nonsense, it's just *what I perceived*, and I can only address what I perceive.

That's why I try to talk to the points people make, and avoid the all-too-popular Ad-Hominem Attack. It's just a fact that this is a very imperfect form of communication, because all one sees is typing – no body language, no facial expressions. Also, differences in writing styles and vocabulary can in and of themselves lead to mis-communication. So it's very easy to miss a writer's intent. That's not at all a matter of someone being "stupid" – people who are stupid can't produce well-crafted sentences.

So, my main point is just that I don't accept determinism – if nothing else, the fact that I'm here disproves it, and I therefore have something of a compulsion to express my wariness of it, when I perceive it. That being said, however, I also know at least some of the huge obstacles that exist in terms of (1) realizing that choices exist; (2) understanding how to make choices; and (3) getting into a position, be it financially, socially, psychologically, and so on, to make a choice. The obstacles aren't insurmountable, and yet, there *is* such a thing as accountability, but circumstances have a large influence.

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Some people don't want a better life, if it means they have to do anything for themselves. that is why they live like they do. It's the same, all over the world. If those people were in the US, they would be trailer trash. If they wanted a better life, they would move to a town where they could find work, better food, and a better life. You just can't help some people.

I think that's both incredibly harsh, and at best inaccurate.

I said some, not all. You are trying to twist my meaning.

If I misread, then I'll admit the error; I certainly accept "some". Heck, some people also choose self-destructive lifestyles despite have a great many advantages, and even good parents. IOW, true, some are just whacked in the head.

I'm not trying to split hairs. I was going on my perception, and if I *misread* what you wrote, all I can say is that that's not the same as intentionally trying to twist your meaning.

Yes,
"some" people choose to live in ways that are self-destructive. But you're treading perilously close to implying that anyone who, for example, lives way out in the countryside of a poor nation, who has never had access to an education, and leads a hand-to-mouth existence, is only that way by choice.

Yawn. you are saying that. I AM TALKING ABOUT THOSE WHO WERE OFFERED HELP TO MOVE TO WHERE THEY COULD IMPROVE THEIR LIVES, BUT CHOSE TO REMAIN WHERE THEY CAN'T EVEN FEED ALL OF THEIR KIDS.

Arrrgh, don't shout.

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Not everyone has access to the things that would even make them aware they might have a choice, never mind to the things that would allow them to actually implement a choice to change their situation.

It's also inflammatory, and not relevant, to claim that someone would be "trailer trash" if they lived in the US, because:

Someone who refuses to work will do so where ever they live, anywhere in the world. You stated above that cultural change is slow. Are you saying you were wrong?

It's not "right" versus "wrong" per se; I'm saying that what might appear to someone in one culture as being one thing might in mean something very different in another culture, and that people in general, and I'd hazard to guess especially uneducated people, tend to have rather huge blind spots where things like tradition and culture/cultural history are concerned. That's as true in First World societies as it is in Third World societies. All I'm saying is that one has to separate tradition/culture, from things like laziness and willful ignorance – culture and tradition *are* slow to change, however, education can influence certain aspects of it in a helpful way; OTOH, a deliberate and conscious decision to be lazy and remain ignorant (and/or pursue self-destructive actions) is almost impossible to change.

So, of course I'm not going to say I'm "wrong" in pointing out that all poverty (and/or other bad personal situations) around the world can't be chalked up to personal choice; I'm also not saying there is no such thing as choice. I'm saying that *education* (which was the original point I was addressing) can't work if one works on the assumption that people are only poor because they choose to be, because it just isn't that simple.

- (1) unless you know specific cases, it's an unprovable accusation; and
- (2) it ignores the cultural, environmental, political, and material realities that exist in other parts of the world – not everyone can simply move to a town, and a great many towns/cities are worse than the villages because of extremely high unemployment, poverty that can't even be relieved by planting something, due to there being no land, and an overall dismal quality of life.

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People improve their lives only when they WANT to.

Assuming they perceive that they can.

If you want to question whether any nation has an obligation to support people in another nation, then address *that* question, but don't justify an unwillingness to help/educate/etc.

I am the last person to deny help, but for how many generations?

That's a whole different question. Also, there is the problem that all too often, "help" means "send food and money" – when that does not include educating people re: how to help themselves, all that results is dependency, which in turn mostly seems to turn into resentment.

I am now 100% disabled, forced to live at a below poverty level on a VA pension that says I am not allowed to work, at all, yet I continue to help others. I learned long ago to limit the help for people who keep coming back, because they are too damn lazy to help themselves. If I had all the time and money I've given away in the last 45 years, I would have my home paid for, a newer vehicle, money in the bank, and not have to worry till I died. I don't, because I helped, and continue to help others.

That's certainly valid and admirable.

Again, though, my own intent wasn't to attack, and it was a miscommunication on my part if what I wrote came across as such. At this point, I better understand what you were saying, and I think we're actually in agreement, and what occurred was a combination of "communication clash" (different styles and so on) and misperception.

by merely implying that people choose to live in countries such as Burma, where the military dictatorship takes pretty much everything away from them, or in countries where roving armed bands randomly commit acts of robbery and genocide, and so on, and so forth.

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Where did I even imply a dictatorship? You're trying to put your words into my mouth, again.

OK, that was a really bad example on my part, I'll take ownership of that.

At the same time, it's well-known that brain development suffers when a child doesn't receive (or can't be given) adequate nutrition. When this is combined with lack of education, and/or a damaging upbringing, it can make "choice" *extremely* difficult.

So, that is an excuse to leave them in that condition for more generations, with a large percentage of the children dying before puberty?

No, all I meant was that, when someone grows up with such deficiencies, they tend to have inadequate decision-making skills.

Now, I am a big believer in choice, because of my own life, but I also know that there are a lot of circumstances that make choice difficult.

You aren't the only one. I was born with health problems. I could have applied for, and been declared disabled at 18, but I chose to start working at 13, and worked until a few years ago when I couldn't pass an employment physical.

And in the case of, say, the people victimized by situations such as that in Darfur, the only "choice" is to stay, or walk across the desert – they cannot "choose" to not be poor.

If enough wanted to leave, provisions can be made. Look at the people who make rafts to leave Cuba, and the South Americans who make their way to Mexico, or the United States. It takes planning, and persistence. People will help, if you approach them the right way.

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Provisions could be made, yes, but many die without any assistance – in any way, their decision is "am I more likely to die here, or die while trying to get there". Those are the sort of people I feel badly for. They were living their own lives in their villages, basically on their own, maybe a little trade with some distant town, and were disrupted because of this or that group of genocidal maniacs. But as above, not saying you said this or that, but just pointing out as a continuation of my own thought, "help" isn't just doing the usual and throwing food and money at them – that's at best a stopgap measure; real help is giving them a hand to get back to living their own independent lives.

As for education, anyone involved in education must take into account the previous experience, education level, nutritional situation, culture, and other aspects of the lives of the people being educated. One can't just go in to some traditional village, give a short talk, and claim to have "educated" the people – even under the best circumstances, education is a *process* that requires understanding, openmindedness, and creative thinking on the part of the educator. Any fool can stand in front of a group of well-nourished, well-reared children with above-average intelligence, and have them parrot back pretty much whatever is presented, regardless of how it's presented. When one goes into a group of disadvantaged children/adults, however, it's an entirely different, and very challenging, situation.

You stated above that they can't learn because of nutrition problems.

That makes it very difficult. I didn't say impossible. It's a factor that has to be taken into account when one is an educator.

These will not be solved in the desert. It will take several generations of them living where food, and education are available to get even some of them to even care. No one needed an education before, so what do they care? They see no reason for it, and never will, as long as they are isolated, by their own choice.

All one can do is try. I just believe in the "try" part. Sometimes it takes effort, is all. It's just a personal matter of hope.

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