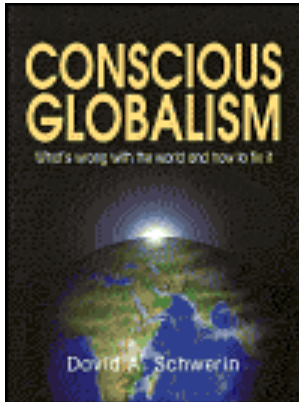


Interview With David A. Schwerin: Author of *Conscious Globalism: What's wrong with the world and how to fix it*

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The following interview was conducted by: **NORM GOLDMAN: Editor of Bookpleasures.com**

Today, Norm Goldman, Editor of bookpleasures.com is honored to have as our guest, David A. Schwerin, author of *Conscious Capitalism: Principles for Prosperity* and most recently, *Conscious Globalism: What's wrong with the world and how to fix it*.

Norm:

David, please tell our readers a little bit about your personal and professional background.

David:

I started my investment career in 1968 shortly after earning my MBA in Finance. After 8 years working in the trust department of a large bank I started an investment-counseling firm that specialized in various forms of hedging. Throughout my professional career I spent much of my spare time studying ancient philosophy and modern psychology. About 10 years ago I decided to sell my investment firm and combine my vocational experiences with my avocational interests by writing and speaking about how values driven idealism can be linked with results driven pragmatism for the benefit of all.

Norm:

How did your book, *Conscious Globalism: What's wrong with the world and how to fix it*, come about? How did you get the inspiration for this book?

David:

My inspiration for *Conscious Globalism* comes from seeing all the conflict and strife occurring around the world. In a world without borders we need to concentrate on what unites humanity – our common needs, desires and longings – rather than what separates us. We need to live and work in a more cooperative manner rather than engaging in coercive, fiercely competitive pursuits. When we view self-interest in very narrow, short-range terms our behavior leads to destructive consequences. Corporate fraud, political scandals, environmental degradation and even terrorism are some of the results of our self centered, shortsighted thinking. It is time to understand that what we do for others we do for ourselves and what we fail to do for others we fail to do for ourselves. In other words, we have to begin to live the golden rule – some version of which has been expressed in every culture.

Norm:

As a follow up to the last question, how do you come up with ideas for what you write? What methods do you use to flesh out your ideas?

David:

I use everyday events and experiences from my business career and worldwide travel to illustrate and document the ideas I write about. Being in close contact with people from Europe, Asia, Africa, South America and Australia I get helpful feedback on what is important to people and what makes their life better. The wisdom I incorporate in my writing has been around forever. My contribution is to show how universal principles are relevant today so that they can be practically and profitably applied. Unless ideas have practical applications people will reject them for not being in their self-interest. I agree with Gandhi who said, “I do believe the most spiritual act is the most practical in the true sense of the term.”

Norm:

Can you explain some of your research techniques, and how you found sources for your book?

David:

Because I want to show the practical benefits of ageless wisdom I focus on current affairs and the news behind the headlines. To keep up to date I read a number of newspapers and magazines – everything from the Wall St Journal to the Economist and N.Y. Times. I want to hear all sides of an issue as I don't believe anyone has it all right or all wrong. I watch numerous news programs on T.V. and log on to the Internet more than my eyes sometimes appreciate. I also get feedback from acquaintances far and wide – from people I keep in touch with in China to associates in Europe and Australia.

My son, who works in Washington and was a former senior advisor for international trade in the Commerce Department and White House is also a great source of ideas and a wonderful sounding board. Last but not least, my wife, who is the editor of all my works, is an avid reader and straight shooter. If she thinks I am wrong she lets me know.

Norm:

Canadian author John Ralston Saul, who is the husband of the Governor General of Canada, Adrienne Clarkson, argues that globalization is dead and that globalization is not the answer to economic success for all nations. Do you agree or disagree and why?

David:

I agree and disagree. Globalization is not dead and never will be. It started when people first moved out of caves and began to form tribes then communities. states. nations and most

recently regional blocks. Ultimately there will be one global government, as it will be recognized that we are all connected and decisions made anywhere affect people everywhere. Globalization may go into hibernation for a while, as it has in the past, if the process is not made more equitable and sustainable. I can't say globalization is the answer for every country because some countries may have needs and priorities that diverge from the current emphasis on economic growth. There is no path that is right for everyone; it all depends on your objectives. What is reasonably clear is that those countries that have prospered economically have embraced globalization and those that have stagnated economically have tended to be economic isolationists.

Norm:

What do you hope readers will take away from reading *Conscious Globalism*?

David:

Our beliefs determine our behavior. Too often we take a narrow, short-term view of self interest based on the misunderstanding that we are all separate and autonomous; this leads to fragmentation and fear. Our shrinking global economy needs policies that emphasize cooperation and collaboration not coercion and unilateralism. Until we recognize our connections in deed as well as thought, conflict and strife will be rampant. It is time that each of us takes personal responsibility for our beliefs and behavior.

As more people move in this direction, and there are some hopeful signs just beneath the surface, the necessary critical mass will develop that will shift everything toward a more peaceful and prosperous world that all people desire. My web site, www.consciousthinking.com has a questionnaire that will help people become aware of the motivations behind their choices. *Conscious Globalism* has an additional questionnaire and considerable related material that readers will find quite helpful.

Norm:

I noticed you will be traveling to China on a lecture tour. How well have you been received in China and what kind of feedback do you expect from this tour?

David:

This will be my third lecture tour to China in five years. My first book, *Conscious Capitalism* is now in its second printing. The book advocates for socially responsible business practices and was extremely well received by academics, businesspeople and government officials alike. My new book, *Conscious Globalism*, will be published in China in October and I am hopeful it will be at least as successful. The Chinese are going through a major transition and are rethinking all facets of their work and daily life. I encourage them to learn from our successes and mistakes so they can help us all build a more hospitable and harmonious world. Based on the individuals I have met, and I have gotten to know many quite well, I am very optimistic.

Norm:

In your book *Conscious Globalism* you talk about the ME, THEM, and US pertaining to our daily behavior. Could you briefly tell our readers what you mean by these terms and why do they play an important role in globalization?

David:

The terms "**ME** (self-centered), **THEM** (other-directed) and **US** (common-good-oriented)" describe parts of our personality that vie for influence whenever we have a choice to make. Each of these parts gains dominance from time to time and motivates our behavior. Every decision we make has a wide-ranging effect on people and places around the globe. For

example, the self-serving decisions of a few individuals at Enron and WorldCom show how poor choices can harm so many. **ME** is the immature, fault prone part of us that is fearful, selfish, willful, suspicious and arrogant. This voice abhors change and is conditioned to the idea that all things are separate and autonomous. **THEM** is a romanticized image of ourselves that we portray to the world in an attempt to gain acceptance and/or avoid responsibility for shortcomings. This persona blames others for its failures, is quick to judge and conceitedly thinks of itself as special. The qualities embodied by **US** include the will to love, to be truthful and to serve life to the best of our ability. It is the nonjudgmental witness that acts as our moral conscience and empowers us to discern goodness and truth without negating what others do or say. The **ME** and **THEM** part of our personality, with which we usually identify, is just a small fragment of the infinitely larger **US** component that is eternally aware of its connection to the whole.

As the evolutionary process proceeds – I see globalization as being an integral part of that process – the illusion that the world is composed of separate, discrete parts begins to fade. It is at this point that we understand the all-encompassing nature of self-interest and the globalization process will naturally become more equitable and sustainable.

Norm:

Is there anything else you wish to add that we have not covered?

David:

To paraphrase contemporary writer John Adams, if we believe as we have always believed we will act as we have always acted. If we act as we have always acted we will get what we have always gotten. In other words, we are the world and with our intention we create whatever we want. If we prolong making the internal and external changes that are necessary, the consequences will be harsh. More people are becoming aware of our precarious situation and gradually changing their beliefs and behavior. This is an important and very hopeful shift. When a critical mass, perhaps no more than 5% of the population, makes this shift the world will be dramatically and constructively altered.

Thanks for conducting this interview; I hope readers find it of value.