

The Millennial Life: Stabilizing our Climate

Natalia Lynn

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Conversation 2014

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GHC Conversations

Annually, Gary Hubbell Consulting convenes and hosts a small hand-picked group of social sector professionals for three days of intense dialogue and critical thinking. We strive to create a thought-provoking, mind-opening, and stimulating conversation about the social sector, philanthropy, and leadership. This deep exploration of the nature and challenges of the environment is intended to engage, inform, and inspire senior leaders to be catalysts for change in their own organizations and communities of influence. With each GHC Conversation, we seek to establish the seeds of a continuing and enriching network that nourishes us as individuals and helps each of us change how we converse, inspire, and seek new dimensions of impact.



Participant Bio

Natalia Lynn

Author

Natalia Lynn is a fiction novelist and writer of The History Of Ours book series. As a writer, Natalia spends most of her time creating and exploring other worlds. Through her work, she constantly strives to understand the future of technology and global connectivity to address social and environmental issues.

After ten years in the food service industry with a degree in patisserie and baking from Le Cordon Bleu Academy, Natalia is now an activist in Seattle, supporting home gardens, GMO labeling, and Medical Cannabis awareness. She enjoys baking organic edibles for Seattle medical co-ops, and is a member of Patients for Safe Access, a national organization keeping cannabis safe, affordable, and sustainable to local economies.

Always ahead of media trends, Natalia incorporates current world events into the stories she writes. Through her studies and outreach, she hopes to help find collaborative solutions for a better tomorrow.

This is Natalia's first GHC *Conversation*.

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A glimpse into Millennial life in 2030 attempts to establish traits of aging Millennials (special, sheltered, entitled, confident, pressured by social standings) then utilize these characteristics to sustain our economy while emphasizing the importance of philanthropy during climate change. The facts presented are referenced from actual studies and publications, as well as concepts from previous *GHC Conversations*.*

Seattle, WA - May 18th, 2030
Radiation Levels – Moderate (Yellow)
Heat Index – 86 degrees F

It's hot. It's always hot. I woke up in my small apartment, lucky to still have clean water flowing from the tap, enough to water my 7 cannabis plants, kale patch, and herb garden by the window. The U.S. is on a 100 gallon per family allotment every day. I am 47 and live alone with two cats in the city so my allotment is 28 gallons a day. I remember my 20's when I didn't know how lucky we were. The average household used 400 gallons of water a day back then, with never-ending hot showers, running water over dishes in the sink, flushing toilets, and store shelves rowed with plastic bottles. Now plastic is greatly limited and we waste no water, not even a drop. Africa has been living on 5 gallons per day for close to two decades. My heart hurts when I watch personal accounts of impoverished nations, so close I can feel their pain through my V-Window (the latest holographic console around my wrist). Although there was stagnation in the tech market while ozone stability became priority #1, America has worked hard to keep ahead of the latest digital trends, wrist devices currently popular.

"You only know love when you let something go." No one wanted to let go of our abundant lifestyle, but the balance of the Universe had other plans for us.

Seattle, WA - May 28th, 2030
Radiation Levels – Take Caution, Sunscreen, Stay Indoors (Orange)
Heat Index – 82 degrees F

I started this log because I feel change coming. Our air quality is awful and although our city integrated clean energy ten years ago – tankless water heaters, electric cars, solar and wind power, Torus coil generators... the climate is still out of balance. I look out my window to see Smart electric cars and bikes clogging the streets below. Electrical wires used to drape every mile, but not anymore. In 2015, the government mandated that the wealthiest 1% of Americans invest in clean energy and emergency services, with healthy incentives. The public sector still faces enormous costs to adapt waste, infrastructure, and emergency systems in response to more extreme rains, flood, and disasters, but the 1% investments allowed state governments to begin the ongoing process of restructuring our power grid. A clean energy boom in the 20's helped maintain the U.S.'s first-world status through the "depressed years," and made fossil fuel drilling practically obsolete. My apartment is on the ninth floor. Tall condo buildings obstruct my view of solar reflector fields and a wind turbine covered hillside. The effects of our environmental abuse linger and will continue throughout my elderly years. Memory of a world without constant dehydration, sweat, and allergies drives me to create better for my children.

I have two children. My son's name is Miles, my daughter, Presley, both adopted from different countries at age 3. The Northwest is a lavish melting pot of cultures. My children are 8 and 9 yrs old now. They live in Canada with my mom, step-dad, father, stepmother, three aunts, and four uncles; all live on the same land farming cannabis, hempseeds, and herbs. They raise fish and grow most of their own produce, supplying the community with extra. If Greed was the motto of the late 21st century, Generosity is the theme of this time. I am hopeful for the future, but I miss my family in Canada. I take the 0 (carbon) Train to see them once a month. I hope I can leave the city soon, take the cats and join them.

I work with my sister and brother downtown. We stay to make money, own a restaurant together called Saint Augustine where we strive to create meals with cancer fighting fruits

and vegetables. Food variety is a challenge with such little water. Ocean freighter and cross-country truck transport has greatly decreased in the last five years. Oddly enough, people don't seem to mind life without an exorbitant amount of options at florescent-lit, processed-food grocers. Supermarkets of the past stocked on average, 47,000 products, most of which were produced by only a handful of food companies. We used to recycle piles of plastic, not knowing it took 17 million barrels of oil each year just to create water bottles. Now all packaging is biodegradable by law.

At Saint Augustine, we cook vegan and rely on local farms, co-ops, and bulk stores that sell mostly organics. Spices and chocolate are rare and celebrated. We waste as little as possible and employ a whole team of gardeners. The traditional restaurant experience is outdated. Eating has become a community activity instead of an elitist pursuit. By eliminating wait-staff, employees focus on feeding the sick and emotionally tattered city dwellers. By government mandate, restaurants are not allowed to serve meat; instead beef, ham, and poultry are controlled by the USDA, bred sustainable in small batches, and dispersed in one serving per week allotments. The average American used to eat over 200 lbs. of meat a year, now we eat 10lbs. Ocean fish are no longer consumed because of radiation poisoning.

The Pacific Northwest hoards its freshwater for good reason. After the Southwest/California drought ravaged the West, there was a massive migration North. Portland and Seattle tripled in size in 2017. We now live in tiny, stacked apartments and bike or walk everywhere. Many paved roads were leveled just for bike traffic. I remember a different city of single-family homes lining the streets, car congested thoroughfares, and endless parking spaces. Big developers rebuilt the landscape to accommodate growing tech business and "climate refugees" of drought. I had to give up clinging to what the city used to be, because it is not anymore.

Seattle, WA - Jun 19th, 2030

Radiation Levels – Take Caution, Sunscreen, Stay Indoors (Orange)

Heat Index – 96 degrees F

I spent the last week up in Canada on the farm next to a lake. I left the cats up there with the kids and took some time to adopt the pace of nature. It was relaxing, but sometimes I feared wolf and bear attacks when we played by the woods. The animal kingdom has been acting irrationally since the planet began overheating. My children and parents are happy. They have a thriving 3-acre cannabis garden with plants as tall as trees. The air is so oxygen rich, you can taste it heavy in your lungs. Hemp eats the CO₂, so my children are healthier than ever which is the most important thing. Outside the city seems to be sheltered from smog and radiation. I hope they are.

I must finally admit that I am in a relationship with a man. He is a high power, political leader. He is married. I met him online. We began emotionally dating last year when he moved his family from Wisconsin to Tacoma. We're taking it slow, remaining friends, but we can't stay away from each other. I am in love. And perhaps it is my naïve hope that we will share a future together that has kept me here in the city.

I met him (let's call him Kevin) for late lunch today, on a rooftop patio downtown. Fans were blowing everywhere as he sat across from me, his white collar soaked under his grey hemp suit. He drank mint leaf soda from a glass. Because Kevin has no social media accounts and I do, it felt strange that he knew up-to-date information about me, but I know nothing about his life outside of our affair. He took his jacket off and we ate Indian spiced vegetables while talking about the current state of politics. At the end of the meal, he told

me he was moving back to Wisconsin to live near fresh water and focus on emergency services, a job most men take shifts doing out of obligation to their communities. I was devastated that he was leaving, but tried not to show it. I am still devastated. He will be gone in six months, enough time for me to sell the restaurant and move north.

Our president, Michelle Obama, says, "People are not defined by institutions, but crafted by knowledge to persevere in the face of change." In 2024 after Hillary's 8 yr presidency, the American people voted Michelle into office, ironically mimicking family monarchs of the European Union. Millennials have established a new set of rules for leadership, valuing tradition and transparency, our tools for gaining power. The more confident and inherently wise a person, the more likely that Millennials will follow. We are a skeptical generation driven by the entitlement to survive. As a world unit, our every intention has become to halt the perpetuation of an unhealthy lifestyle that causes excess CO2 emissions, ultimately triggering climate change and death.

Seattle, WA - Aug 1st, 2030

Radiation Levels – Take Caution, Sunscreen, Stay Indoors (Orange)

Heat Index – 110 degrees F

The last few months have been a challenge. My stepmother is very sick with influenza so Miles and Presley are with me in the city. They are jolly and resilient, members of the Silent Generation that craves togetherness, worships the circle of life, and speaks with nature. I love having them around. They surf their V-Window lessons in the air-conditioned apartment or restaurant dining room through the day to avoid heat stroke. Kevin came by the restaurant tonight and had dinner at the bar with the kids. They all seemed to enjoy each other's company. The children were laughing. Kevin told me insider information about military personnel merging efforts with the Red Cross, but he seemed energized at the thought. "Americans of today are well suited for community service, we like face-paced work with variety." He is eager to invest in the solar factories that replaced the GM and Chrysler buildings in Michigan.

As a last ditch effort to save coastal areas, crews up and down the U.S. are painting surfaces white to mimic ice and reflect heat. Kevin is worried about flooding. In 2026, The US bucked tradition, ignored the status quo of no progress and quickly leveraged the last of our power to transition the world economy into a very low CO2 emissions society. By implementing a Right Being, Wise Action mentality to our routines and communities, we successfully slowed the polar ice cap melt. Businesses and families are rewarded on the amount of CO2 they remove from the atmosphere. As consumers we finally reject marketing techniques, and responsibly recycle our country's wealth into goods and services that honor the environment. The global temperature is still elevated. Glaciers have steadily been disappearing. A huge chunk of arctic is predicted to fall into the sea in the next 6 months, disrupting currents and raising sea levels even more. I remain optimistic about national security. Emergency services are prepared. With changing awareness, philanthropy has become the fastest growing, most powerful sector in America. I dare to be idealistic. Rather than denying a challenge, Millennials understand hurdles and rise to overcome. We've learned to love inconvenience and realize most obstacles we create are our own. Buddha says, "It is a man's own mind that lures him to evil. We are shaped by our thoughts; we become what we think." I think about our future a lot, almost every second.

My siblings and I sold the restaurant last week to a young couple from Guadalajara, Mexico with a passion for homeopathic cooking. I feel our enterprise will be in good hands. It is alarming that almost 60% of our customers couldn't afford to pay their tabs at least once

last year. Constant attempts to overhaul the banking system are underway, but progress is slow. The government quickly learned that electronic currency does not work in a changing climate of heat waves and wind storms that often wipe out satellite towers. As soon as my stepmother's state appointed Doctor lays the foundation for a healthy recovery, I will take the children back to Canada where we can build our home and safely live out the rest of our days together off the grid.

I feel ready to leave the city. In the elevator yesterday, my neighbor's son, Shayan, a keen-minded High School senior laughed when his grandfather asked him about public service. It was only then I realized that our future lies in his hands. "Let me tell you what's going to happen to government and politics when we get ahold of them. We'll destroy them." Shayan paused to let his grandpa stew a bit before shrugging as if to tell the Boomer: It's not the end of the world, old man -- just the end of your world. "The thing about social institutions is when you destroy them, they get rebuilt eventually, in a different form for a different time." Millennials will continue to change public opinion with comprehensive outlooks on communication, currency, and energy exchange.

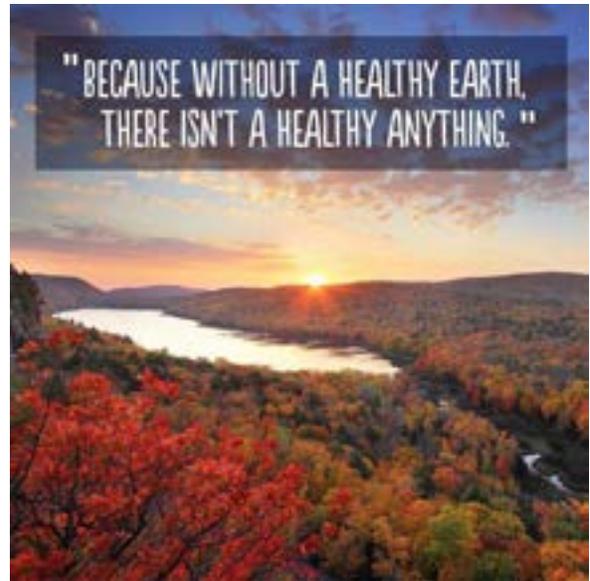
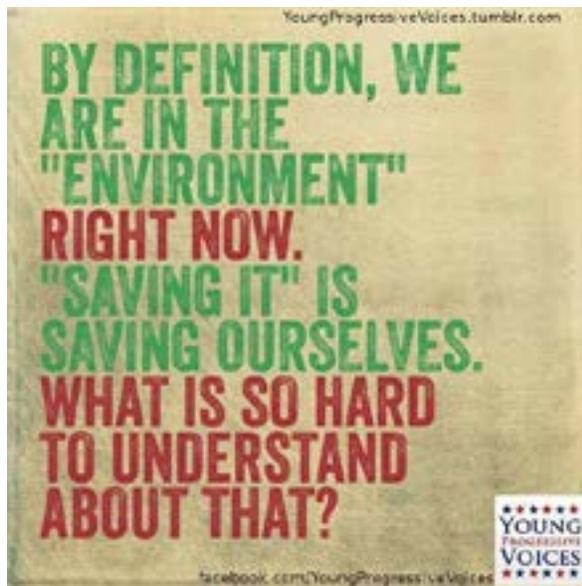
Seattle, WA - Sept 17th, 2030
Radiation Levels – Severe (Red)
Heat Index – 111 degrees F

Another earthquake hit Japan today. Nuclear rods from the core were exposed at the last Fukushima plant, releasing a terrifying amount of radiation into the already polluted Pacific Ocean. Tidal waves are headed for America's West Coast. It is mayhem. Some people are going on as if nothing is wrong, while others are wailing. I don't have much time. The kids are packing necessities into their backpacks; water, trail mix, socks, and sweatshirts. I am anxious and confused. Kevin swiped me twenty minutes ago, told me to come to the boat docks, that he could help get us out. I am terrified. I will go to the docks to get his advice. My sister and brother are picking up the children on their way to Canada now. I hope the car can make it with enough battery charge. My brother left me his deceased wife's electric car. After saying goodbye to Kevin, I'll drive north and escape this disaster area.

I am crouched behind a door in an alley. Don't have time. I came to the docks where Kevin was waiting with his wife and daughters. As I made my way to the front of the crowd, I saw his wife in an orange cage elevator to be taken up to a helicopter. People were scared and yelling, desperate to get away. Kevin looked handsome with the wind blowing his hair and suit. He looked at me as he loaded his girls into the metal box beside their mom. The pilot shouted that they were full, room for one more. Kevin's family was urging him in. He turned back to me and his eyes were deeper than I'd ever seen. I noticed wrinkles around his temples as he stepped in and turned out, hurt in his solemn expression. The pilot, having no idea who I was, without empathy, slammed the mesh doors with a clang and the elevator rose. I watched as if in a dream with chaos all around me. Kevin's wife and children had no idea, afraid for their own lives. As the orange bottom of the elevator lifted them from view, the crowd swallowed me up. I had to fight with all my strength and balance to avoid being trampled. I found a doorway to hide behind. It looks like a dark abandoned convenience store rowed with empty shelves. I'm not venturing inside. There was just a knock at the door. My adrenaline is pumping as I slowly reach for the handle and pull back a sliver, light shining through as my pupils adjust to see Kevin standing in the alley, his back turned, shoulders hunched forward. He turns to me and his eyes are bigger than I've ever seen. "Come on. We need to find another way out."

Millenials have a daunting task ahead, but also potential to become a generation of forward

thinkers and conscious contributors. Utilizing our resources and embracing the very transparency we crave, our global race can halt our climate's instable temperature spike. By focusing our intentions and establishing a constant connection to our actions with wisdom, strength, and empathy, we can become the change we seek.



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Offices in Milwaukee, WI and Hilton Head Island, S.C.

www.garyhubbellconsulting.com

Corporate Office:
3143 East Hampshire Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53211
414-962-6696