

My Brief Career as Sloganeer for HAP

by Gary Hardaway

I needed a job. They needed a writer without humanistic moral qualms to create slogans for the Human Annihilation Project that would encourage both brisk donations and 100% die-off of the human population, especially in the developed world where life expectancies have gotten way out of hand.

The irony of the group's struggle to fund-raise for survival never flashed inside their tightly focused and devoted brains. Of course, recognition of irony requires something like a sense of humor. HAP leadership never heard a joke it could understand. This should have been a harbinger of doom both for my job prospects and their enterprise. You can get a smallish cult to drink a bitter cup of Kool-Aid, but not six-plus billion hammering away at the planet all across the planet. Nonetheless, we agreed upon a salary and I began my work.

It was tough to get started. But I had mammoth student loans to pay for after earning my MFA through the University of Phoenix Low Residency Creative Writing Program. I now realize I should have opted for the PHD in Communications, but youthful dreams of a Nobel Prize in Literature die hard.

I worked at home so the siren calls of beer and daytime History Channel alien astronaut theorists and apocalyptic plate tectonics were hard to resist. After a week of nothing, I decided I really needed the job and had to start putting words to paper. At three AM the Monday of my first nine o'clock review meeting with the board and executive director, I had what I thought were some great slogans to share:

Homo sapiens-
the one species
the planet would
be better off
without.

* * *

Cheer for bacteria
and viruses. Let the meek
inherit the earth.

* * *

Exterminate the humans.
Leave the plants
and other animals
alone.

* * *

Cheering for humanity
is rather like
cheering for the Nazis.
Sure, they've got
whiz-bang technology
and boffo graphic design.
But, they're pretty much
a bunch of assholes.

I was stoked but fell asleep by three-fifteen.

The meeting did not go well. The coffee was weak, there was no half and half, and the Danish were from Wal-Mart. The room was too bright for the PowerPoint to have much punch. And the board and director were dismayed that the slogans weren't more upbeat, subtle and subliminal. By 10:00 AM, I was out of work, again. I should have used a different font.

