



The Slow Movement Movement

Posted by [Prof. Goose](#) on March 18, 2007 - 12:24pm

Topic: [Environment/Sustainability](#)

Tags: [community](#), [relocalization](#) [[list all tags](#)]

This is a guest post from Hans Noeldner, a trustee in the village of Oregon, Wisconsin, a rapidly growing bedroom community of about 8,300 near Madison, Wisconsin. Hans' first piece on the rules of downtown revitalization can be found [here](#) and his "Declaration of Dependence" can be found [here](#).

By now many millions of gourmands are familiar with "The Slow Food Movement," and the notion of a "100 Mile Diet" is spreading quickly among the sustainability-minded.

What do they have in common? Both concepts share central themes – a focus on quality rather than quantity, re-localization, greater self-reliance, and strengthened bonds with one's geographic community (as opposed to abstract "communities" of the comfortably like-minded).

Although these two concepts relate to food, they are highly extensible in an algebraic sense, and we can fruitfully apply them to many more facets of life. For example:

"10 Block Entertainment Diet"

"Slow Recreation Movement"

But here is a variation that I find especially promising: "Slow Movement Movement"

What's that? Did I stutter just now?

Absolutely not. I am talking about a movement whose purpose is to champion moving slowly as opposed to moving rapidly via energy-gobbling, planet-dominating, climate-altering machines. Slow movement like walking. Bicycling. Strolling. Meandering. Sauntering. Wending. Skipping. Striding.

In particular I am talking about re-grounding ourselves in the human-scale rather than the automobile-scale. Why?

Because our technological will-to-power has seduced us into a perverted and ruinous disharmony with Earth. By collapsing a mile into one or two minutes, the automobile in motion has so profoundly distorted our sense of space and time that few living Americans comprehend the nature of a truly walkable community.

And the automobile further warps reality when at rest. The amount of real estate "consumed" by only four or five off-street surface parking stalls would suffice for a modest-sized retail business and several floors of residential units. Multiplied by hundreds and thousands in a community, the resulting chaotic patchwork of surface parking scatters day-to-day and week-to-week

destinations over miles rather than blocks, thereby establishing a ceiling on density well below practical thresholds for pedestrians, cyclists, and public transit users. Multiplied by a billion and more, accommodations for the automobile have rendered the greater portion of modern-day “developed” America unfit habitation for the non-motorist.

The Slow Movement Movement will recapture the field for *homo erectus*, and relegate the species *homo automobilicus* to a safe and highly subordinate SUPPORTING role. Please join!



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 United States License](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/us/).