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Society and Politics spurs discussion between Badgers

By Erin Berge

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In the beautiful state of California, the medical use of Marijuana is legal. Community members in California fought for this liberty, but Derrick Jensen, a recent speaker for WUD Society and Politics, posited the question: Would anyone apply this same persuasion to fight overkill of salmon, energy conservation or other diminishing resources on our planet?

The WUD Society and Politics committee welcomed Jensen to Varsity Hall last Tuesday to speak on the topic of civilization and resistance. He has authored 15 books and holds the title of Utne's Readers "50 Visionaries Who Are Changing Your World." Jensen wanted to speak to the citizens of Madison about how our civilization is killing the planet.

With Jensen's sarcastic tone and the occasional f-bomb, he kept the audience both amused and captivated with what he had to say. Even though he dismantled and criticized economists—along with the appointed leaders in our government—his comparison of Indigenous and Western culture resonated within the minds of those attending. Jensen made it clear that "how you perceive the world is how you treat it."

He said the Western culture's exploitation of finite resources is not just a recent issue, but rather "a 6,000-year pattern," with no end in sight. If we continue our exploitation of the world's resources, it may lead to no resources at all. Already, about 75 percent of marine fish in our oceans are depleted, according to the "Global Education Project."

It is refreshing to see a student organization present material worth exposing to young college students and Madison residents. Everyone is part of these environmental changes and should have the opportunity to be informed about them—even if they do

not believe they should take action.

WUD Society and Politics' goal with bringing Jensen in to speak was not necessarily to persuade all students to one side or another on this issue. They purposefully maintain a non-partisan stance on hot-button topics with the hopes of spurring open discussion—basically creating a more knowledgeable community. Not all events are specifically about the environment, but the committee instead tries to bring relevant issues into focus “through dinners, discussions, speakers, special projects, and volunteer work,” as stated on their web page.

So, instead of referring to blogs that cater to one point of view, take the time to challenge your ideas and opinions with your Badger peers at WUD Society and Politics.

*Want suggestions for more ways to get involved with WUD? Contact **eberge@wisc.edu**.*

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