

McDaniel College  
2 College Hill  
Westminster, MD 21157  
240-671-9493  
mkbliss00@gmail.com

# Morgan Bliss

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## PGC EXPERIENCE

This is my third year participating in Project Green Challenge. It's amazing to look back and see how much I've grown throughout that time! The first year was part of a mandatory high school assignment, but here I am now, voluntarily tackling extra work on a busy schedule because I want to actively better myself and expand my knowledge of the issues facing the environment today. Each year I learn more not only about sustainability and solutions, but about myself, and each year I am grateful for having taken this challenge up.

## WHY THESE TEN

I feel these 10 PGC submissions not only exemplify my typical quality of work, but show a unique creativity and diverse set of passions that I hold in everything I do. I am extraordinarily proud of each work, from the green to the extra credit. These pieces express the knowledge I've gained throughout PGC, in a way that is entirely my own style, integrating intersectional beliefs, experiences, and ideas. They are impactful, they exhibit growth, and many feature my personal favorite aspect of PGC - educating others.

## THANK YOU

I'd like to extend my gratitude to the Turning Green Staff and sponsors for organizing PGC! It truly is an excellent introspective and educational opportunity that I'd recommend to anyone, even, and especially those who aren't as initially environmentally inclined as myself. I look forward to the opportunity to continue working with you in the future.

## ABOUT ME

Hi! My name is Morgan Bliss, I'm 18, and I'm originally from Poolesville, Maryland. I am a freshman at McDaniel College, where I plan to double major in Political Science and Environmental Science. In high school, I was a part of the Global Ecology magnet program that acted as a catalyst for my interest in environmental justice. I am also passionate about intersectionality, especially as it relates to human rights and the queer community. My pronouns are they/them, and I currently have fourteen plants in my dorm room!

**Headshot:**



**Full body picture:**



Morgan Bliss

10/1/2018

PGC - Day 1

Greenest



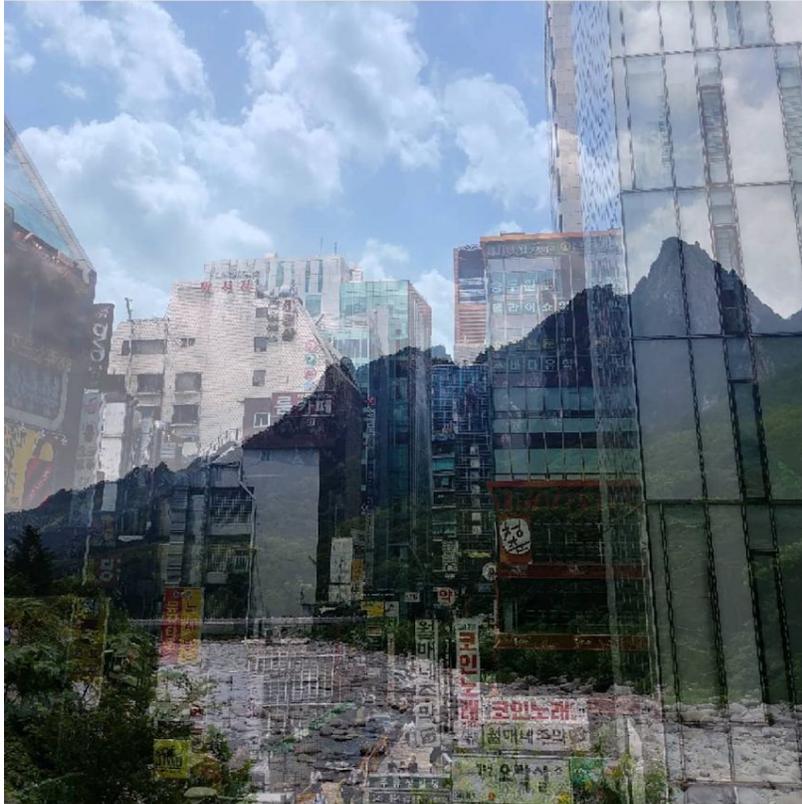
Morgan Bliss  
10/1/2018  
PGC - Day 1  
Greenest

6:25 PM

← Photo



m.orgreen



Liked by [raquel\\_sobczak](#)

[m.orgreen](#) we live in cities and skyscrapers today,  
but we lived in the mountains and forests yesterday,  
and maybe tomorrow we'll go back

[#empathygap](#) [#pgc2018](#) [#projectgreenchallenge](#)

[m.orgreen](#) picture creds are: [@m.orgay](#) !!!

26 MINUTES AGO

Caption reads “we live in cities and skyscrapers today, but we lived in mountains and forests yesterday, and maybe tomorrow we’ll go back” with the tags. Pictures are by me!

Morgan Bliss  
McDaniel College  
mkbliss00@gmail.com  
10/2/18  
PGC - Day 2  
Greenest

Good morning America! I am your newly elected, *not technically fitting within the bounds of our legal system as I am under the age of 35* president! In my incredibly short term, I firstly plan to undo **literally everything** the previous president, Donald Trump, did, through an all encompassing executive order. This includes:

- Resigning the Paris Climate Agreement
- Reinstating the USA in the United Nations Human Rights Council
- Removing the so-called “Muslim Ban”
- Stopping any and all planning of a wall at the country’s southern border
  - Instead lessening border control, ICE raids, and supporting legal immigration without criminalizing refugees and encouraging intolerance
- Removing support for Brett Kavanaugh as Supreme Court nominee
- Stop efforts to repeal Obamacare
- Ending tax cuts to the rich and corporations
- Cutting approval to transnational oil pipelines
- Reinstate all protected land that has been decreased since Trump took office
- Attempting to shift foreign policy away from “America First” and into a “helping others when we can afford to” mindset.
- Many more laws, cases, and executive orders would be undone as well, following my principle of anti-bigotry and education

I am constantly mad and upset in our political climate, and curiously enough when given the opportunity to wreak havoc upon it I find it difficult to pick a starting point. Everything is interconnected and related, each action has a reaction, and well, I'm not one to worry about my approval ratings.

My second action as President would be a number of original policy measures, to be phased in gradually over the next five years (time subject to change so long as significant progress is being made) to avoid massive social and economic upheaval. I focus generally in government regulatory policies on the economy as they relate to the access of sustainable resources and the idea of an eventually more environmentally friendly country.

- Removing subsidies on gasoline, so consumers see the true cost of fossil fuels and are deterred from purchasing them
  - Gasoline would then go from around \$3 a gallon to \$12 a gallon
- Removing corporate and federal subsidies on fossil fuels in general, and giving them to renewable energy companies instead
- Allocating money for improving public transportation infrastructure
- Holding preexisting environmental legislation to higher standards of prosecution in courts
- Add a time constraint to Superfund sites, in which companies responsible must clean up the site in a timely fashion, subject to review by the government

- Legislate that while farming using GMOs is legal, companies that produce these seeds cannot patent them so strictly to where neighboring farms cannot harvest and replant their own, non-GMO seeds
- Break up agricultural monopolies and hold them to strict, unrelenting standards of worker health and documentation, as well as animal health
  - Limiting CAFOs
- Make an introductory level environmental science class mandatory for all congresspeople
  - This can be taken when elected to office, but must be completed within six months of election

Noted, as the President I would have aides and policy advisors to help me research policy plans, however I am just a college student under a time constraint so this are the top priorities to my recognition currently. It is imperative as a nation to stop favoring corporations over citizens, and the economy over the environment. We need review standards, and to hold corporations to the law, especially as it comes to negligence and environmental degradation through loopholes of preexisting policy. Understandably, this is a great deal of ideas that necessitate further expansion, as well as legislation that recognizes the nuances and gradual shifts necessary to lasting, beneficial change in the United States. It serves more as a brief overview of my policy ideas if I were to be president.

Thanks to [this](#) BBC article for the overview of Trump legislation!

Morgan Bliss  
McDaniel College  
Username: mkbliss00  
[mkbliss00@gmail.com](mailto:mkbliss00@gmail.com)  
10/7/2018  
PGC - Day 7  
Greenest

Representative John Delaney,

You've been vocal in your support for clean energy, climate change action, and sustainability especially as it affects the state of Maryland, and for this I thank you. Your continued work on the Maryland Clean Air Act 126(b) petition is important for the health of your constituents as well as for the environment.

However, sustainability is more than just renewable energy. Sustainability is crucial to all manner of systems, from ensuring the aesthetic of our natural landscape for future generations, to budgeting, to agriculture.

Organic agriculture, or at the very least, non-conventional agriculture will be critical to feeding a growing world population, while maintaining the environment. Conventional agriculture, including the antibiotic, hormone stuffed chickens produced by massive monopolies that pollute our Chesapeake Bay with their runoff, and the farms that produce more corn and soy to feed these animals than they do to feed us, pick away at our natural environment piece by piece. This system, of CAFOs, of massive pesticide and fertilizer use, of GMO corporations and monopoly, isn't sustainable.

You've made a commendable point to support farmers with your legislation. I urge you, in your proposed updates to the Farm Bill, to support organic agriculture. Organic agriculture helps to build healthy soil, to combat erosion, to discourage algal blooms, and encourages biodiversity, in addition to producing healthier, fresher food for consumers. Government support makes these products easier to get to consumers,

Morgan Bliss  
McDaniel College  
Username: mkbliss00  
[mkbliss00@gmail.com](mailto:mkbliss00@gmail.com)  
10/7/2018  
PGC - Day 7  
Greenest

who are often off-put by high prices. Similarly, please reduce corporate farming subsidies and fight against companies like Monsanto, who seek to profit off the country's farmers in GMO seed schemes, preventing non-GMO and sometimes organic farmers from using their own seeds by strange offshoots of patent law. We cannot allow this, nor can we allow the continued use of known carcinogenic chemicals in agriculture.

The United States falls behind the world average of food produced per acre, despite massive amounts of fertilizers and pesticide and money spent on ensuring successful crops. The United States falls behind in a lot of things. We still appoint sexual assaulters to the highest courts in the nation. We still discriminate against LGBTQ people. There's a great deal of things we could fix, because I know that America was never really great; built on stolen land by slaves, rife with rape, sexism, discrimination, and pervasive inequality. We've trusted you, our elected official, to make at least something of a change.

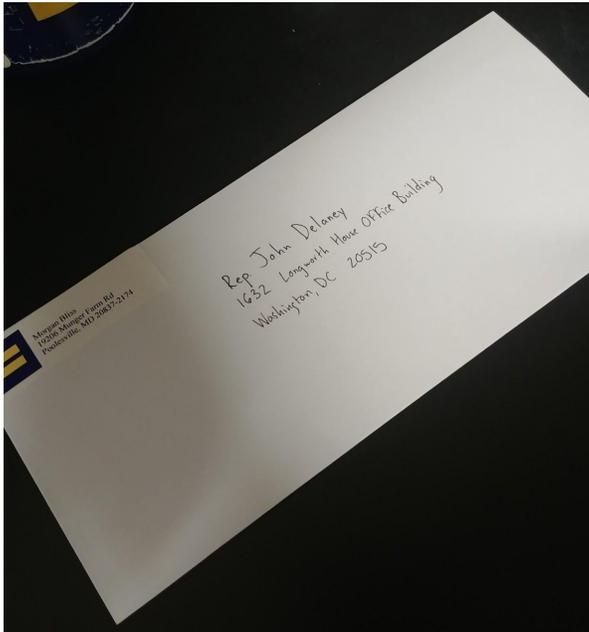
You are running for re-election this November. I am a voter from your district. I urge you to continue making your stance on climate change, organic agriculture, and the necessity of becoming more sustainable clear to both your constituents as well as the house you serve in the future.

Best,

Morgan Bliss

Morgan Bliss  
McDaniel College  
Username: mkbliss00  
[mkbliss00@gmail.com](mailto:mkbliss00@gmail.com)  
10/7/2018  
PGC - Day 7  
Greenest

My letter, ready to be brought to the post office tomorrow morning (where I will purchase a stamp also):



My social media post, caption reading “just a lil sample of my letter to Rep. Delaney! Call them out! Vote them out! Hold your elected officials accountable!”:

 m.orgreen

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m.orgreen just a lil sample of my letter to Rep. Delaney! call them out! vote them out! hold your elected officials accountable! #pgc2018

1 SECOND AGO

Morgan Bliss

McDaniel College

Username: mkbliss00

[mkbliss00@gmail.com](mailto:mkbliss00@gmail.com)

10/7/2018

PGC - Day 7

Greenest

Morgan Bliss  
McDaniel College  
Username: mkbliss00  
[mkbliss00@gmail.com](mailto:mkbliss00@gmail.com)  
10/8/2018  
PGC - Day 8  
Greenest

There is not a farmer's market within walking distance of my campus, and I don't have a car, nor do I have a kitchen. For the sake of this challenge, I'll be pretending I have access to a kitchen stocked with standard cooking equipment and spices (*aka my home address when I'm not away at school*).

**Morgan's shopping list:**

- Squash (2 zucchinis, \$3 at Harris Teeter would buy at Farmer's Market)
- Onion (\$~1 depending on weight, would buy at Farmer's Market, but will accept generic grocery store brand)
- Brown Cow Cream Top Yogurt (4 for \$3 at Co-Op)
- 1 pound quinoa (bulk, \$2.29 at Co-Op)
- All purpose flour (bulk, \$1.78 for 2 pounds at Whole Foods)
- Yeast (\$.99 for three packets at any grocery store)
- Butter (around \$4, for enough butter to last me the month)
- Annie's Organic Fruit Snacks (2 for \$6 at Co-Op, would buy one for \$3)
- Organic pasture raised eggs (\$4 for a dozen at Whole Foods, but preferably from a friend who raises chickens or the Farmer's Market)
- Spaghetti (\$1.39 for one box organic at Harris Teeter)
- Garlic (\$.59 for one organic at Harris Teeter)
- Canned crushed tomatoes (\$.99 at any grocery store)
- Apples (\$~2 for three at local orchard)
- Organic sweet potatoes (\$1.94 for two at Harris Teeter)

**Total spent: \$~29.97**

Morgan Bliss  
McDaniel College  
Username: mkbliss00  
[mkbliss00@gmail.com](mailto:mkbliss00@gmail.com)

10/8/2018

PGC - Day 8

Greenest

**Day 1:** I would make my bread at the beginning of the week, usually on Sunday, to be able to eat it throughout the week, using most of the flour (I overestimated in case of disaster), about a spoonful of sugar, and one packet of yeast.

- **Breakfast:** Yogurt
- **Lunch:** Egg sandwich with fresh bread and two eggs
- **Dinner:** Roasted squash and onions with quinoa
- **Snacks:** Fruit snacks, probably bread fresh from the oven

**Day 2:**

- **Breakfast:** Yogurt
- **Lunch:** Leftover squash and onions with quinoa
- **Dinner:** Spaghetti with homemade sauce (canned tomatoes, garlic, and assorted kitchen spices)
- **Snacks:** Fruit snacks, apple

**Day 3:**

- **Breakfast:** Yogurt
- **Lunch:** Leftover spaghetti
- **Dinner:** Egg sandwich with fresh bread and two eggs and spinach
- **Snacks:** Fruit snacks, probably more bread

**Day 4:**

- **Breakfast:** I don't eat breakfast on Thursdays because I have no morning classes and take the time to sleep in! I take a brunch sort of meal around noon.
- **Lunch:** More leftover spaghetti and bread, I have a habit of making far too much

Morgan Bliss  
McDaniel College  
Username: mkbliss00  
[mkbliss00@gmail.com](mailto:mkbliss00@gmail.com)

10/8/2018

PGC - Day 8

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- **Dinner:** Quinoa, sweet potato, and spinach bowls, loosely following [this](#) recipe (spinach and cilantro are not on the shopping list because they're growing in my garden!)
- **Snacks:** Fruit snacks, apple

#### Day 5:

- **Breakfast:** Yogurt with apple
- **Lunch:** Leftover quinoa bowl
- **Dinner:** Scrambled eggs with quinoa and spinach
- **Snacks:** Fruit snacks, more bread with butter

Averaged out, each day of my budgeted menu costs around \$6. I was able to save money by purchasing only what I needed, not purchasing many premade items, buying bulk items, and buying local, seasonal produce. This isn't necessarily the healthiest diet, seeing as I made a point to include bread and fruit snacks, but it is seasonal and definitely suits a college student's budget. If I was living like this long term, I'd definitely need to incorporate more protein into my diet, probably by way of peanut or almond butter, tofu, and beans. Still, I'm pretty proud of my work, and am interested in trying some of these recipes out in my day-to-day life (once I have access to a kitchen again, that is).

Morgan Bliss  
McDaniel College  
Username: mkbliss00  
[mkbliss00@gmail.com](mailto:mkbliss00@gmail.com)  
10/24/2018  
PGC - Day 24  
Greener

Biodiversity is the variety of earth's species, quite simply. There is diversity within species and between species, as well as genetic and ecosystem diversity. Diversity is beautiful, it is the natural change and variance and ability to adapt within ecosystems, it is the differences that fill every niche and make human medicines for any ail, it is the aesthetic we seek in wildlands and natural photography, it is what allows our ecosystems to function.

Biodiversity is integral to ecosystems that provide goods and services beneficial to human health and wellbeing. Regardless of human benefit, biodiversity is the natural state of being in the world. It is us humans who have disrupted and degraded the planet to be less and less diverse.

The seed bank video resonated most with me. I understand the need for seed banks, I do, I follow the precautionary principle and realize it is much better for us in the long run to store these seeds and protect their genetic diversity for future generations and potential pandemics. However, I resent the fact that we've necessitated such actions. Humans since the industrial revolution and even before have been massively greedy and corporative, from the variety of East India Companies to the partitioning of Africa, humans have been taking what is not, nor ever should have been ours. Are we as a species inclined to avarice? Or is this a compounding of our racism, our

Morgan Bliss  
McDaniel College  
Username: mkbliss00  
[mkbliss00@gmail.com](mailto:mkbliss00@gmail.com)  
10/24/2018  
PGC - Day 24  
Greener

homophobia, our xenophobia, our imperialism, our overwhelming desire to believe we are better than anyone and anything, the planet included?

Humans are causing the sixth mass extinction event on this planet. Seed banks can only save so much, captive breeding programs can only sustain species so long. We need to fix what we've broken, before it's too late, and climate change destroys what we've not yet even discovered.

One of my favorite biodiversity related resources is Michael Largo's Big Bad Book of Botany. As the title suggests it is more related to botany than to ecology, however it highlights the incredible amount of biodiversity the world holds, the amazing variance of the species we seek to protect. Additionally, I found that [this](#) website showed a more hopeful and narrowed aspect to the issue, in that biodiversity can be restored.

Morgan Bliss  
McDaniel College  
Username: mkbliss00  
[mkbliss00@gmail.com](mailto:mkbliss00@gmail.com)  
10/9/2018  
PGC - Day 9  
Greener

### **Social justice on campus:**

I'm thinking about sexual assault. I'm thinking about the pervasive heteronormativity of my campus, the fraternity culture, the fact that I'm afraid to walk alone at night on the campus my tuition money funds. I'm thinking about the intersectionality of all my identities, all of which make me equally vulnerable and valuable to society.

Everything exists within its own little bubble; the environmental science majors come to climate change events, the queer community goes to queer outreach events. This is no sustainable way to educate people, nor to create a community with a diverse, intersectional education.

### **Sexual assault:**

The statistics are overwhelmingly clear that college campuses rarely follow through with disciplinary actions as it regards to sexual assault. I know for a fact there is a rapist on my campus, a repeat offender, who according to our handbook should be expelled. And yet he's still here, and I am told by upperclassmen who to avoid for my own safety, passed along like some forbidden knowledge.

This isn't right. There's no justice for survivors, no protection from repeat offenses. I don't want to be afraid of becoming another statistic.

Morgan Bliss  
McDaniel College  
Username: mkbliss00  
[mkbliss00@gmail.com](mailto:mkbliss00@gmail.com)  
10/9/2018  
PGC - Day 9  
Greener

This isn't even new. We've known about these trends and nothings happened in more than thirty years, brought back into relevance, daily, by new events and movements. This time, Kavanaugh, #MeToo. I hope they bring permanent, lasting change to the country and campuses within.

Schools, by not removing rapists from campuses, contribute to a hostile environment and thus discriminate in education, violating Title IX. The allegations are true. Rapists are sheltered on campuses.

I suppose this factors into prioritizing corporations over citizens. Perpetrators are protected because institutions have a financial incentive to do so. Institutions have a reputation to uphold, they have a brand to maintain - one free of any tarnishes. In the future, I suppose institutions will have to grapple with the reputation they'd prefer: a moral, justice-holding institution that protects and supports its students, or an institution that maintains money over justice, rapists over victims.

### **Becoming a changemaker:**

I've so far interacted with the Progressive Student Union, and very recently participated in a discussion on sexual assault on campus. This has recently been a hot button issue on campus, and I hope to see further events, discussions, and action on camus in the future.

Morgan Bliss  
McDaniel College  
Username: mkbliss00  
[mkbliss00@gmail.com](mailto:mkbliss00@gmail.com)  
10/9/2018  
PGC - Day 9  
Greener

I think we need education you can't escape from, no easy pass consent course or seminar. The college needs to deal appropriately with assaulters and keep them off campus. This education, in whatever form it may take, needs to permeate fraternities, ROTC, and athletics on campus, in addition to all students, without the unnecessary censoring and squeaky cleanliness that makes it easy to ignore the severity of these crimes.

In my action plan, education is central, but so are survivors. It is imperative to support them. I would, hopefully, work with the PSU, to facilitate further discussion events, and to educate myself further on consent, and campus sexual assault.

My next steps are to firstly, educate myself, probably by looking through Title IX in its entirety, and seeking out facts, anecdotes, and information on the matter. Only then will I feel confident enough in my ability to reach out to others, theoretically in another discussion like the one I'm in tonight, or on an even larger scale.

Morgan Bliss  
McDaniel College  
Username: mkbliss00  
[mkbliss00@gmail.com](mailto:mkbliss00@gmail.com)  
10/9/2018  
PGC - Day 9  
Greenest

I presented my presentation to McDaniel's Allies group, the Gender Sexuality Alliance on campus.

There really aren't differing perspectives on the issue itself, only on how to go about our lives in relation, and how to fight back. We discussed a variety of ways to combat our own oppression, from simply existing and being trans and doing as we need to do, eventually circling back to Mikhail Bakunin's philosophy of institutionalized violence, and as Maddy said, "punch the state." Violence and violent solutions aside, we seek to band together and support each other in times of crisis and disempowerment. We exist, we have always existed, and we cannot be erased.

### **Research:**

Firstly, as a trans and nonbinary person, I generally keep well-informed on issues that affect me. There's a great deal of verbiage and knowledge that comes just from experience in existing. However, for this presentation itself I primarily used "*Transgender' Could Be Defined Out of Existence Under Trump Administration*" from the New York Times, as well as the book *Transgender History*, by Susan Stryker.

**My video:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nECHe2UI7hM&feature=youtu.be>



# Trans\* Rights

Morgan Bliss



# *What's Going on This Time?*

- The Trump administration is planning to narrow the legal definition of gender under Title IX, which is federal anti-discriminatory law
- It would determine sex as either male or female, unchangeable, and decided upon at birth
- Needed to adopt definitions that are “clear” and “grounded in science”

*At every step they've had the choice, this administration has actively rolled back protections for transgender and gender-nonconforming people.*



# Potential Consequences

- This would exclude transgender and intersex individuals from civil rights protections
- As according to Ms. Lhamon of the Obama Education Department this “**quite simply negates the humanity of people**”



# What Allies Can Do

- Introduce yourself with your pronouns
  - Put them in your emails! On your name tags!
- Fight with and support trans people
  - Don't leave the burden all on us, please, it's exhausting to have to fight for your existence
- Educate yourselves
  - Check out videos like <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J-TjnVuw2b8>

**Vote! Vote! Vote!**

it's ok to be mad and scared  
that the state is trying to  
undermine trans people

it's also good to remember

- that the state will never protect us from itself
- that the state has not recognized us in the past and we have survived

i want for my siblings to

- a. protect each other and
- b. refuse to rely on legal regulatory realities to say what is real to us



*From @malefragility on instagram.*



TRANS RIGHTS  
ARE  
HUMAN RIGHTS



THE FUTURE  
ISNT  
BINARY

*You are valid and cannot be erased!*

Morgan Bliss  
McDaniel College  
Username: mkbliss00  
[mkbliss00@gmail.com](mailto:mkbliss00@gmail.com)  
10/19/2018  
PGC - Day 12  
Extra Credit

Humans produce nearly 300 million tons of plastic each year, half of which is destined for single-use existences. Justifiably, there is an outcry to reduce our consumption of these single-use plastics, most of which are not disposed of properly and end up in our oceans, in our forests, and in our soils. Recently the anger of the informed people has turned to disposable plastic straws.

It is irresponsible and uninformed to ignore the complexities lying under the practice of complete plastic straw bans. Americans alone do use 500 million straws each year, and for those of us who can afford to stop using them, excellent! Stop using plastic straws. However, not everyone has that luxury, to not need a straw in order to drink. Quite simply, banning straws under the assumption that they a non-essential tool for beverage consumption is ableist.

For disabled people, straw solutions such as stainless steel or glass simply aren't practical due to the design flaws even able-bodied people recognize - the temperature fluctuations, the possibility of breaking, the necessity to sterilize, the potential for injury. Compostable or edible straws increase likelihood of potentially fatal allergic reactions in some individuals, and often require specific handling and waste treatment procedures that aren't available en masse in many places, as well as being cost-prohibitive for many businesses and consumers. Additionally, banning straws increases stigmatization of those who must request them or tote around their own. It isn't acceptable to judge, or

Morgan Bliss  
McDaniel College  
Username: mkbliss00  
[mkbliss00@gmail.com](mailto:mkbliss00@gmail.com)  
10/19/2018  
PGC - Day 12  
Extra Credit

to guilt-trip, or to shame others for doing what they need to do, even when it is done differently than most. We should take note to apply this principle to straw bans, and recognize the potential mental health consequences they may have and do have on disabled people.

Individual action is undoubtedly important. I use my reusable straw all the time. It is a manner of shifting habits, in not reaching for a straw when you could just as easily sip from the cup, in telling a server that you don't need a straw. But as a whole, our efforts should shift from just banning single use plastics to finding a suitable sustainable alternative. The burden should be on corporations, not consumers. Similarly, the burden should not be on disabled people to find their own solutions. We should work together to find or create a disability friendly, sustainable, environmentally friendly straw alternative.

Plastic straws, according to a cited study, make up 7.5% of the products and packaging deemed to harm the environment. But what about the food wrappers that make up 18.6% of this waste? The plastic bottle caps that are 16.7% of plastic waste? Where is the outcry over this? The bans on plastic wrappers? The bans on plastic bottle caps? We should focus our efforts on what is most relevant, and understanding that straws are an easy fix for many, the choice whether or not to have a straw should be left to the consumer, not law.

Morgan Bliss  
McDaniel College  
Username: mkbliss00  
[mkbliss00@gmail.com](mailto:mkbliss00@gmail.com)  
10/19/2018  
PGC - Day 12  
Extra Credit

There are solutions to reducing single use plastic straw waste beyond full-fledged bans. For instance, providing straws only on request, or providing reusable or compostable straws both reduce waste, while still allowing access to straws for those who need them. Both the dining hall and “pub” eatery on campus have straws available upon request, easy accessible for those who need or want them, but no straws are forced upon people who don’t need or want the extra plastic.

I understand the necessity of drastically reducing human consumption of single use plastics. Even so, we must include everyone in our activism. In not providing truly comprehensive solutions, we leave more issues to solve. Sustainable solutions for a better future allow everyone to succeed, and the human race as a whole to move forward. We cannot grow when we leave people behind.

Lastly, I apologize to the Project Green Challenge organizers for this challenge answer that does not quite answer the call of the challenge. I just thought this was an important note, as I feel I morally can’t advocate for banning of straws in my campus or community. We’re all in this together.

Morgan Bliss  
McDaniel College  
Username: mkbliss00  
[mkbliss00@gmail.com](mailto:mkbliss00@gmail.com)  
10/19/2018  
PGC - Day 12  
Extra Credit

**Sources:**

1. <http://cdrnys.org/blog/disability-dialogue/grasping-at-straws-the-ableism-of-the-straw-ban/>
2. <https://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2018/07/11/627773979/why-people-with-disabilities-want-bans-on-plastic-straws-to-be-more-flexible>
3. <https://theestablishment.co/straw-ban-ableism/>
4. <https://thelastplasticstraw.org/>
5. <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5522e85be4b0b65a7c78ac96/t/5aa0618a8165f553aa68b8b8/1520631281665/5+Gyres+BAN+List2.pdf>

Morgan Bliss  
McDaniel College  
Username: mkbliss00  
[mkbliss00@gmail.com](mailto:mkbliss00@gmail.com)  
10/13/2018  
PGC - Day 17  
Extra Credit



Look at those informative and thematic tampons. While periods are generally a feminine experience, it's important to remember that nonbinary people and trans people menstruate too - not just women.

My social media post:

Morgan Bliss  
McDaniel College  
Username: mkbliss00  
[mkbliss00@gmail.com](mailto:mkbliss00@gmail.com)  
10/13/2018  
PGC - Day 17  
Extra Credit

8:32 PM

← Photo



m.orgreen



2 likes

**m.orgreen** conventional tampons can hold all sorts of nasties without your knowledge. consider organic cotton, reusable cups or reusable pads instead !!

#menstrualhygiene #periods #pgc2018

#theperiodprince

4 HOURS AGO



Morgan Bliss  
McDaniel College  
Username: mkbliss00  
[mkbliss00@gmail.com](mailto:mkbliss00@gmail.com)  
10/20/2018  
PGC - Day 20  
Greener

I learned that the demand for coffee is expected to double, while the area suitable for growing coffee is going to be cut in half as a result of climate change. There is a movement to make coffee more sustainable through planting trees equivalent to coffee produced, an ethic that Starbucks follows - 99% of their coffee is sustainably sourced. I personally don't drink coffee, so I don't know much about K-Cups other than that they're another form of single-use plastics, but I did learn through the offered resources that empty, refillable K-Cups exist, where one just adds their own ground beans and reuses the container! Maybe I can get the coffee-drinkers I know to switch to this method.

Intentional and informed coffee purchases support sustainable development, restorative agriculture, and an all around healthier planet and people. Fair trade coffee supports local communities and workers, and environmentally sustainable coffee as well as the socially sustainable protects against habitat and biodiversity loss, and supports the forests coffee is grown in.



Morgan Bliss  
McDaniel College  
Username: mkbliss00  
[mkbliss00@gmail.com](mailto:mkbliss00@gmail.com)  
10/20/2018  
PGC - Day 20  
Greener

While I don't drink coffee I do wear socks daily. Most of the socks I own are cotton, a crop often laden with chemical pesticides and fertilizers, even in the production of the socks themselves. Additionally, I tend to buy cheap socks, a dollar or less per pair kind of cheap socks. Since they're so cheap they aren't high quality and tend to fray or wear holes quickly, leading to waste going to a landfill. And, since they're so cheap, the workers mass producing my socks can't possibly be getting paid a living wage, or have safe and clean working conditions.

If I make the conscious decision to purchase more sustainable socks - organic cotton, fairtrade cotton, or even hemp or bamboo rayon fabric that's more sustainable to begin with - I can greatly reduce the footprint of my footwear. While a bit more expensive (a pair of Maggie's organic cotton socks are \$9, and Pact's fair trade factory organic cotton socks are \$10 a pair) I am certain these socks will last better, leading to less waste on my part. In addition, I feel more socially and environmentally responsible, knowing the working conditions of the people who made my socks, and that they won't degrade the environment in their production - if anything, the restorative agriculture practices involved may even better the land used.

I also am a big fan of chapstick, that tiny glorious multipurpose product. However, the petroleum products involved in making most traditional chapstick products are atrocious in their production and use for both the environment and person. They destroy the environment in their extraction, and their production involves a whole slew of

Morgan Bliss  
McDaniel College  
Username: mkbliss00  
[mkbliss00@gmail.com](mailto:mkbliss00@gmail.com)  
10/20/2018  
PGC - Day 20  
Greener

chemicals not really meant for personal care use. And, honestly, who wants to be putting processed dead dinosaurs on their mouth? Not me.

In changing my chapstick favorites to natural products, like EcoLips and Dr. Bronner's, I not only see a change in the health of my lips - no extraneous drying from petroleum products, but I support changes for the better in the environment. Natural chapsticks can be FairTrade and better the communities that produce the coconut oil that is often used as a primary ingredient. Plus, sustainable agriculture and good apiary practices restore environment health through bees! Bees are imperative to biodiversity and any human agriculture - supporting sustainable beeswax supports bee populations.

My social media post:



**m.orgreen** in this capitalist hell society we, as consumers, draw attention to the issues we want solved when we spend money! purchase fair trade! purchase sustainable! #pgc2018 @turninggreenorg

6 MINUTES AGO

Morgan Bliss  
McDaniel College  
Username: mkbliss00  
[mkbliss00@gmail.com](mailto:mkbliss00@gmail.com)  
10/24/2018  
PGC - Day 24  
Greener

Biodiversity is the variety of earth's species, quite simply. There is diversity within species and between species, as well as genetic and ecosystem diversity. Diversity is beautiful, it is the natural change and variance and ability to adapt within ecosystems, it is the differences that fill every niche and make human medicines for any ail, it is the aesthetic we seek in wildlands and natural photography, it is what allows our ecosystems to function.

Biodiversity is integral to ecosystems that provide goods and services beneficial to human health and wellbeing. Regardless of human benefit, biodiversity is the natural state of being in the world. It is us humans who have disrupted and degraded the planet to be less and less diverse.

The seed bank video resonated most with me. I understand the need for seed banks, I do, I follow the precautionary principle and realize it is much better for us in the long run to store these seeds and protect their genetic diversity for future generations and potential pandemics. However, I resent the fact that we've necessitated such actions. Humans since the industrial revolution and even before have been massively greedy and corporative, from the variety of East India Companies to the partitioning of Africa, humans have been taking what is not, nor ever should have been ours. Are we as a species inclined to avarice? Or is this a compounding of our racism, our

Morgan Bliss  
McDaniel College  
Username: mkbliss00  
[mkbliss00@gmail.com](mailto:mkbliss00@gmail.com)  
10/24/2018  
PGC - Day 24  
Greener

homophobia, our xenophobia, our imperialism, our overwhelming desire to believe we are better than anyone and anything, the planet included?

Humans are causing the sixth mass extinction event on this planet. Seed banks can only save so much, captive breeding programs can only sustain species so long. We need to fix what we've broken, before it's too late, and climate change destroys what we've not yet even discovered.

One of my favorite biodiversity related resources is Michael Largo's Big Bad Book of Botany. As the title suggests it is more related to botany than to ecology, however it highlights the incredible amount of biodiversity the world holds, the amazing variance of the species we seek to protect. Additionally, I found that [this](#) website showed a more hopeful and narrowed aspect to the issue, in that biodiversity can be restored.