

Mother Nature smote Croc Hunter
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By Rick Snee

When Steve “The Crocodile Hunter” Irwin was killed by a stingray last week, it confirmed a theory I've kept silent for a long time: Mother Nature is angry with us.

It may seem goofy, but no more than any other quasi-religious belief. I would dismiss the idea of a wrathful mother goddess, but evidence otherwise has yet to surface.

The National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) lists the following as the “10 Leading Causes of Death in the U.S., 2003”: (1) heart disease; (2) cancer; (3) cerebrovascular diseases; (4) chronic lower respiratory diseases; (5) unintentional injuries; (6) diabetes; (7) the flu and pneumonia; (8) Alzheimer's Disease; (9) nephritis, nephrotic syndrome and nephrosis and (10) septicemia.

So, other than number 5—which may or may not include stingray attacks—we are overwhelmingly dying of (Mother) natural causes.

Irwin was an icon, an almost superhuman representation of upsetting the natural balance of things found outdoors. Human beings are soft with flimsy nails and orthodontically corrected teeth. Crocodiles, on the other hand, are thickly scaled behemoths that allow birds(!) to clean their rows of long, pointy teeth.

This proves two facts, and by “fact,” I mean my undereducated, pseudo-intellectual opinions.

First, crocodiles and the rest of animals do not have braces. Therefore, dorks do not naturally occur in nature. Point: crocodile.

Second, when a man confronts a crocodile (aka: Nile death machine), the crocodile should win. The odds against the man should be compounded if his hands are full of baby and raw chicken leg. Point: crocodile, again.

Actually, both man and infant should have died from the chicken leg's salmonella, but that further proves my point: Mother Nature is no one to screw with. Yet, time and again, we test Her and Her razor-clawed minions.

Roy Horn, of Siegfried and Roy, narrowly avoided death in 2003 when one of his tigers mauled him on stage. This lent credence to the old wive's tale: “Tigers do not like to ride unicycles.”

After three more years of televised animal exploitation, Mother Nature finally took the kid gloves off.

With her global warming, hurricanes, tsunamis, bears and West Nile skeeters (the technical term for “mosquitos”), She will not rest until we cower in our homes. The feds will recommend duct tape and plastic wrap; I recommend a fort made with a blanket draped over your dining room table and chairs.

Steve Irwin's tragic death is a final warning to stop picking up the world's most venomous snakes and creepiest arachnids and—for the love of all that is holy—going outside. Remember, Henry David Thoreau may have advocated the outdoors, but then he also died of natural causes: tuberculosis. Be safe; stay inside.

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