STUDY GUIDE

LEFT AND RIGHT DIFFERENCES: DOES IT FEEL GOOD OR DOES IT DO GOOD?

KEY TERMS: good, evil, peace, activism, affirmative action, public policy, pacifism

NOTE-TAKING COLUMN: *Complete this section <u>during</u> the video. Include definitions and key terms.*	**CUE COLUMN:** *Complete this section <u>after</u> the video.*
What question does the Right ask in regards to public policies? What question did the New York Times editorial page become preoccupied with? How is great evil defeated?	How does the way the Left addresses public policies differ from the Right? What is the difference, in terms of how ideology directs policy positions, between feeling good and doing good?

DISCUSSION & REVIEW QUESTIONS:

- How do the questions 'Does it do good?' and 'Does it feel good?' reflect the values of the Right and Left? Which do you think is better- actually doing good for the poor or feeling like you've done good for the poor? Why? Won't you feel good after having actually done something good for the poor? Do you think that helping a church feed homeless people during the holidays is better than voting to increase the minimum wage (presumably to prevent homelessness)? Why or why not?

- When discussing how the Right wishes for a peaceful and harmonious world just as much as the Left, Mr. Prager acknowledges reality when stating, "Nothing guarantees the triumph of evil like refusing to fight it." What does he mean by this exactly? Why do you think that the Left refuses to accept the reality that a completely peaceful world is not possible; that there will always be conflict because part of the human condition is that people will always value things and there will always be evil, especially when certain cultures and religions call for the destruction of others?

- When discussing why liberals support race-based affirmative action, Mr. Prager explains that, "It makes liberals feel good about themselves. They appear to be righting the wrongs of historical racism." Why do you think that liberals think this way? What is flawed about this reasoning? We learn that, "Study after study -- and, more importantly, common sense and facts -- has shown the negative effects that race-based affirmative action has had on many black students." Why do you think that liberals tend not to 'think things through' and tend to not draw conclusions based on evidence- even when the truth reveals that the thing they are supporting is actually hurting them?

- Mr. Prager points out that young people are , "...much more likely to be liberal than conservative. [because] They haven't lived long enough to really know what does good. But they do know what feels good." Do you agree with this assessment? Why or why not? Why don't more young people focus earlier in their lives on what does good rather than on what feels good? How do you think that the caring adults in a young person's life could help them transition to what actually does good earlier in their young lives? What conditions do you think would have to present for this to happen?

- Mr. Prager ends the video by noting that, "As society moves further and further to the left, so does the preoccupation with feeling good over doing good. The world is getting worse and worse, but many people are feeling better and better about themselves while it does." What are some examples of the world getting worse and worse? What are some things that people could do about it that actually do good instead of make them feel good? What can be done to steer society back towards focusing on doing good rather than feeling good?

EXTEND THE LEARNING:

CASE STUDY: ewaste

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the articles “Ghana: Digital Dumpling Ground” and “Meet The Children Who Live In Ghana’s Hellish Digital Dump,” then answer the questions that follow.

- What is Ghana’s digital dumping ground? Why does it exist? How much ewaste is processed at Sodom and Gomorrah each month? What do the children there do? Who is helped by ewaste recycling? How? Who is hurt by it? In what ways? What is the Basel Convention?

- Recycling ewaste sounds like a good idea… until the reality of its cost and the unintended consequences are revealed. Do you think that people, such as the Democratic state senators and Democratic governor who brought SB20 (Electronic Waste Recycling Act of 2003) into law in California feel good about what they have done? Do you think that ewaste does good? Why or why not? Why do you think that they didn’t legislate any provisions to prohibit the transport of ewaste to other countries?

- What fundamental condition motivates people on the left to value feeling good over doing good? Do you think that people on the left delude themselves into thinking that they are doing good when actually are only doing things to make themselves feel good? Why or why not? Why do you think that people on the left tend to be satisfied with doing just enough to feel good, and nothing more? If they were truly committed to doing good, wouldn’t they be willing to do the hard work and follow through with a proper investigation of the issues? Explain.

QUIZ

LEFT AND RIGHT DIFFERENCES: DOES IT FEEL GOOD OR DOES IT DO GOOD?

1. **Why did the New York Times change its position on minimum wage 27 years later?**

    a. The Times editorial page had moved further and further left
    b. The Times became preoccupied with the question “does it do good”?
    c. The Times began to employ more minorities.
    d. The Times based their first position on faulty studies.

2. **What effects has race-based affirmative action has had on many black students?**

    a. Black students have had higher GPAs.
    b. Black students are more likely to donate to charity.
    c. More black students graduate college.
    d. More black students fail to graduate college.

3. **The Right knows that pacifism and most “peace activists” increase the chances of war, not peace.**

    a. True
    b. False

4. **Why are young people so much more likely to be liberal than conservative?**

    a. They have conservative parents.
    b. They haven’t lived long enough to really know what feels good.
    c. They haven’t lived long enough to really know what does good.
    d. The length of the school day has been extended.

5. **Nothing guarantees the triumph of evil like_____.**

    a. A strong military.
    b. Refusing to fight it.
    c. Large army reserves.
    d. A strict immigration policy.

QUIZ - ANSWER KEY

LEFT AND RIGHT DIFFERENCES: DOES IT FEEL GOOD OR DOES IT DO GOOD?

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http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/stories/ghana804/video/video_index.html

GHANA: DIGITAL DUMPING GROUND

On the outskirts of Ghana's biggest city sits a smoldering wasteland, a slum carved into the banks of the Korle Lagoon, one of the most polluted bodies of water on earth. The locals call it Sodom and Gomorrah.

Correspondent Peter Klein and a group of graduate journalism students from the University of British Columbia have come here as part of a global investigation -- to track a shadowy industry that's causing big problems here and around the world.

Their guide is a 13-year-old boy named Alex. He shows them his home, a small room in a mass of shanty dwellings, and offers to take them across a dead river to a notorious area called Agbogbloshie.

Agbogbloshie has become one of the world's digital dumping grounds, where the West's electronic waste, or e-waste, piles up -- hundreds of millions of tons of it each year.

The team meets with Mike Anane, a local journalist who has been writing about the boys at this e-waste dump.

“Life is really difficult; they eat here, surrounded by e-waste,” Anane tells them. “They basically are here to earn a living. But you can imagine the health implications.”

Some of the boys burn old foam on top of computers to melt away the plastic, leaving behind scraps of copper and iron they can collect to sell. The younger boys use magnets from old speakers to gather up the smaller pieces left behind at the burn site.

Anane says he used to play soccer here as a kid, when it was pristine wetland. Since then, he's become one of the country's leading environmental journalists.

“I'm trying to get some ownership labels,” Anane tells reporters. “I'm collecting them because you need them as evidence. You need to tell the world where these things are coming from. You have to prove it. Now, just look,” he says, pointing to an old computer with the label: “School District of Philadelphia.”

When containers of old computers first began arriving in West Africa a few years ago, Ghanaians welcomed what they thought were donations to help bridge the digital divide. But soon exporters learned to exploit the loopholes by labeling junk computers "donations," leaving men like Godson to sort it out.

Godson, one of the e-waste dealers who have set up shop close to the port, shows the contents of the container he has bought.

“Some are from Germany and the U.K., and also from America,” he says, when asked where the equipment has come from. He sorts through them looking for working electronics that can be sold. He says that maybe 50 percent of the shipment is junk and the rest he will be able to salvage in some way.

After it’s sorted, a lot of the contents of the container will still be dumped at the burn site outside of town.

Hard drives that can be salvaged are displayed at open-air markets. Off camera, Ghanaians admit that organized criminals sometimes comb through these drives for personal information to use in scams.

As part of the investigation, one of the students buys a number of hard drives to see what is on them, secretly filming the transaction to avoid the seller's suspicions.

The drives are purchased for the equivalent of US$35.

The students take the hard drives to Regent University in the Ghanaian capital and ask computer scientist Enoch Kwesi Messiah to help read what is on them.

Within minutes, he is scrolling through intimate details of people's lives, files left behind by the hard drives' original owners.

There is private financial data, too: credit card numbers, account information, records of online transactions the original owners may not have realized were even there.

" I can get your bank numbers and I retrieve all your money from your accounts," Messiah says. "If ever somebody gets your hard drive, he can get every information about you from the drive, no matter where it is hidden."

That's particularly a problem in a place like Ghana, which is listed by the U.S. State Department as one of the top sources of cyber crime in the world. And it's not just individuals who are exposed. One of the drives the team has purchased contains a $22 million government contract.

It turns out the drive came from Northrop Grumman, one of America's largest military contractors. And it contains details about sensitive, multi-million dollar U.S. government contracts. They also find contracts with the defense intelligence agency, NASA, even Homeland Security.

When the drives' data are shown to James Durie, who works on data security for the FBI, he's particularly concerned about the potential breach at the Transportation Security Administration (TSA).

"The government contracting process is supposed to be confidential. If I know how you're hiring the people for security related job, TSA air marshals, then I can prepare a person to fit that model and get my guy in," Durie says. "Once I have my guy in, you have no security."

Northrop Grumman refused to speak to FRONTLINE/World on camera. But they did issue a statement saying the potential security threat was disconcerting, and they pledged to investigate.

Right now there are no tough U.S. laws regulating the disposal of e-waste, leaving companies and consumers to sort out the claims of recyclers on their own.

Following the recycling process as a consumer would, students drop off some e-waste at a facility on America's West Coast. They are wearing a hidden camera and are assured that what they are bringing in will be disposed of safely and locally.

One worker at the facility tells them: "What they literally do is dump it into a blast furnace and it burns it all up; and all they get out of it is a bunch of ash and some of the precious metal. Everything else gets consumed, burnt. And that's an actual fact."

The team notes the container numbers leaving the facility and, using public records, traces where they're sent. A few weeks later, their reporting takes them to the port of Hong Kong.

Just a few miles from Hong Kong's port, hidden behind eight-foot-high corrugated walls, are mountains of computer monitors, printer cartridges from Georgia, relics of old video arcades…

In China, e-waste has become big business.

The southern Chinese city of Guiyu has been completely built around the e-waste trade. Miles and miles of nothing but old electronics.

Jim Puckett is an environmental activist credited with discovering this harmful e-waste route to China. He has accompanied the team to Guiyu, a place he first visited eight years ago, and calls it the dirty little secret of the hi-tech industry.

Video Puckett shot in 2001 was the first anyone had documented showing Western computers being dumped in Guiyu. He found tens of thousands of people working here in the toxic trade. On this return visit, Puckett says things have gotten worse.

“I was there first in 2001 and it was shocking enough then. It had gone from very bad to really horrific. And what is happening there is rather apocalyptic.”

One of the most disturbing things Puckett points out is happening behind closed doors. Women literally cooking circuit boards to salvage the computer chips, which have trace amounts of gold.

“All these old mother boards and other types of circuit boards are being cooked day in and day out, mostly by women, sitting there, breathing the lead tin solders. It’s just quite devastating,” Puckett says.

To find out who is making money off this hazardous work, the team travels to downtown Hong Kong, home to hundreds of companies that import e-waste into China. No one here will speak to the reporters on camera, so they film surreptitiously.

Puckett and one of our reporters arrange to meet an e-waste broker willing to explain the e-waste trade from the inside.

The man explains how hundreds of thousands of tons of American e-waste makes its way into China, despite laws intended to stop it.

“If we were to send you our material, would our recyclers get in trouble with the Chinese government if they find their material coming into mainland?” Puckett asks the broker.

“I can only say that if they get caught it has nothing to do with you. Because I buy from you, and then I sell to him. He is buying from me; he's not buying from you,” the man explains.

He says that since Hong Kong ships millions of containers to the U.S. and most return empty, it's cheap to load them with e-waste, and too expensive to dispose of the waste safely -- no matter what recyclers claim.

When the reporters ask what sort of due environmental due diligence there is, the man responds:

“I can only say one thing, if you want to do it environmentally, you have to pay. They have to invest in machinery, labor, everything. It isn’t worth it to pay so much money.”

On the last trip of the assignment, the team heads to India. No longer just a dumping ground, India is now generating its own e-waste at an alarming rate, thanks to a growing middle class with a taste for high tech.

“Last year, we sold more than seven million PCs in India,” says Indian businessman Rohan Gupta. “We generated 330,000 tons of electronic waste within India. So all these are going to comeback to the waste stream sooner or later. It’s a growing industry.”

Gupta is giving a tour of his state-of-the-art facility outside Bangalore.

He is betting on a new Indian law that could force its high tech industry to recycle responsibly and maybe one day put the digital dumps out of business.

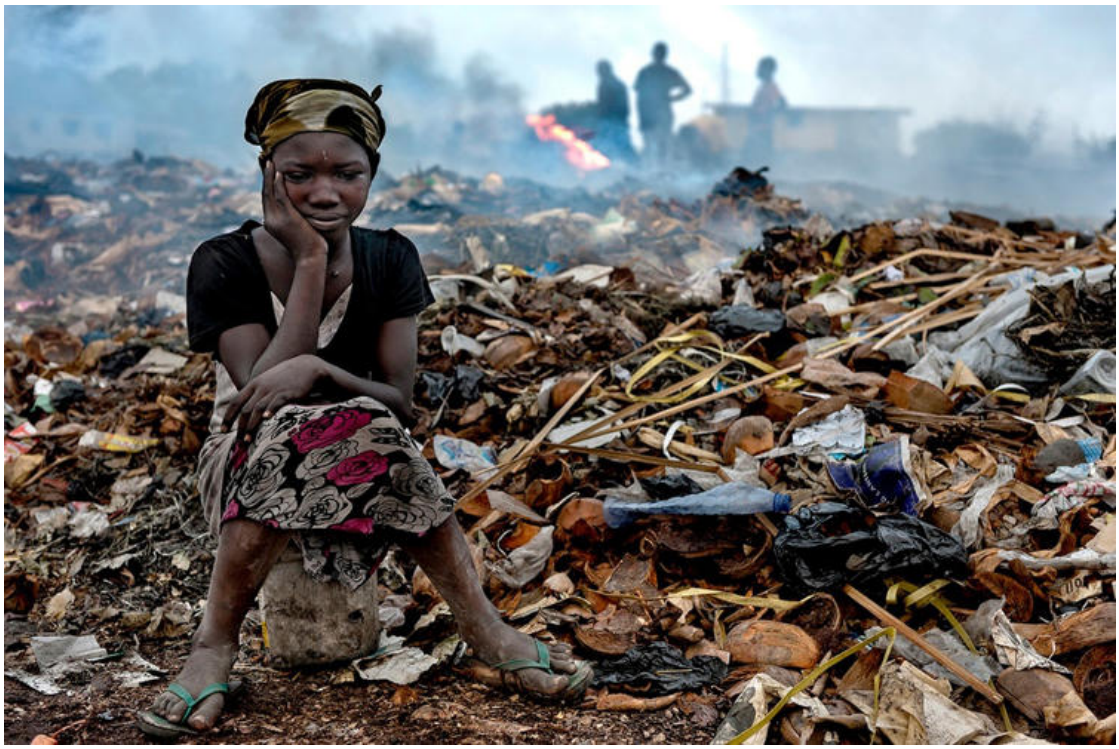
At another recycling plant in Bangalore, they are literally trying to spin the waste into gold, refining the scrap in a safe environment and fashioning it into watches and jewelry they market as eco friendly.

Plants like this could become part of a global network of certified e-waste recyclers that Puckett's group is trying to get off the ground. But even Puckett realizes it's an uphill struggle.

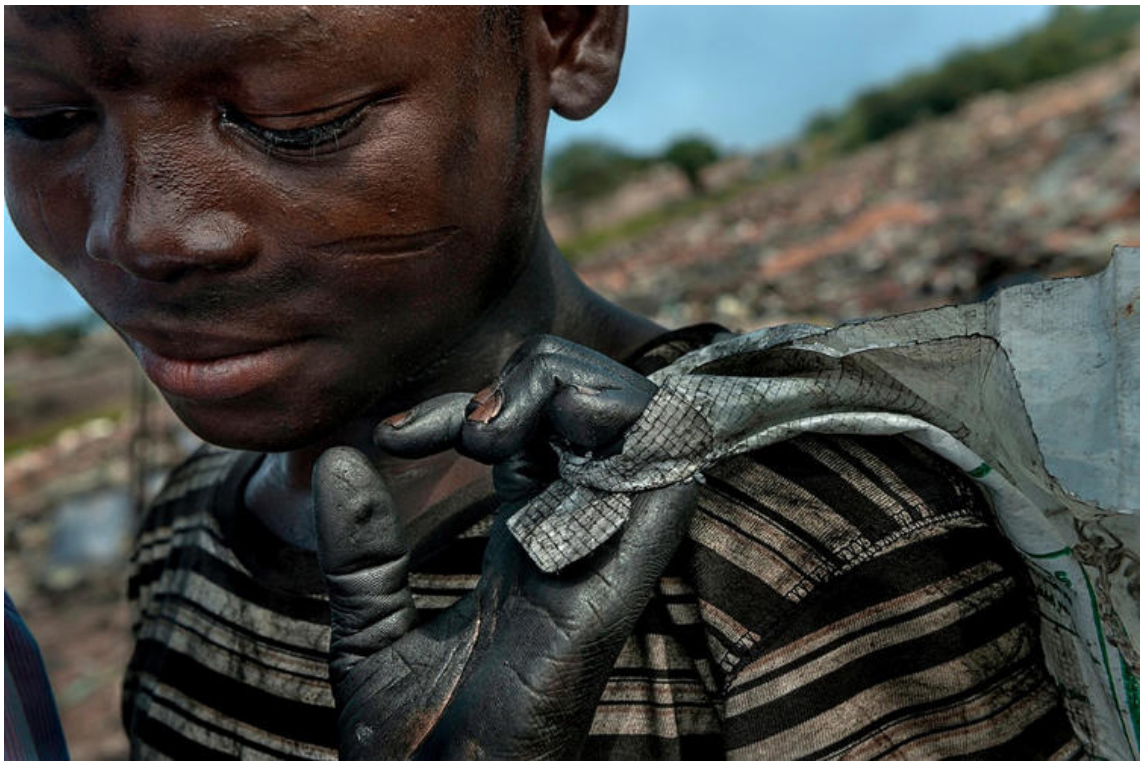
“Even if you have a state-of-the-art facility in a country like India, the free market there will send it to the lowest common denominator, to the worst facilities where people are sitting on the streets just picking through it by hand,” he says. “It’s a myth to think that you can just solve the problem immediately with technology alone.”

http://www.fastcoexist.com/3047681/meet-the-children-who-live-in-ghanas-hellish-digital-dump

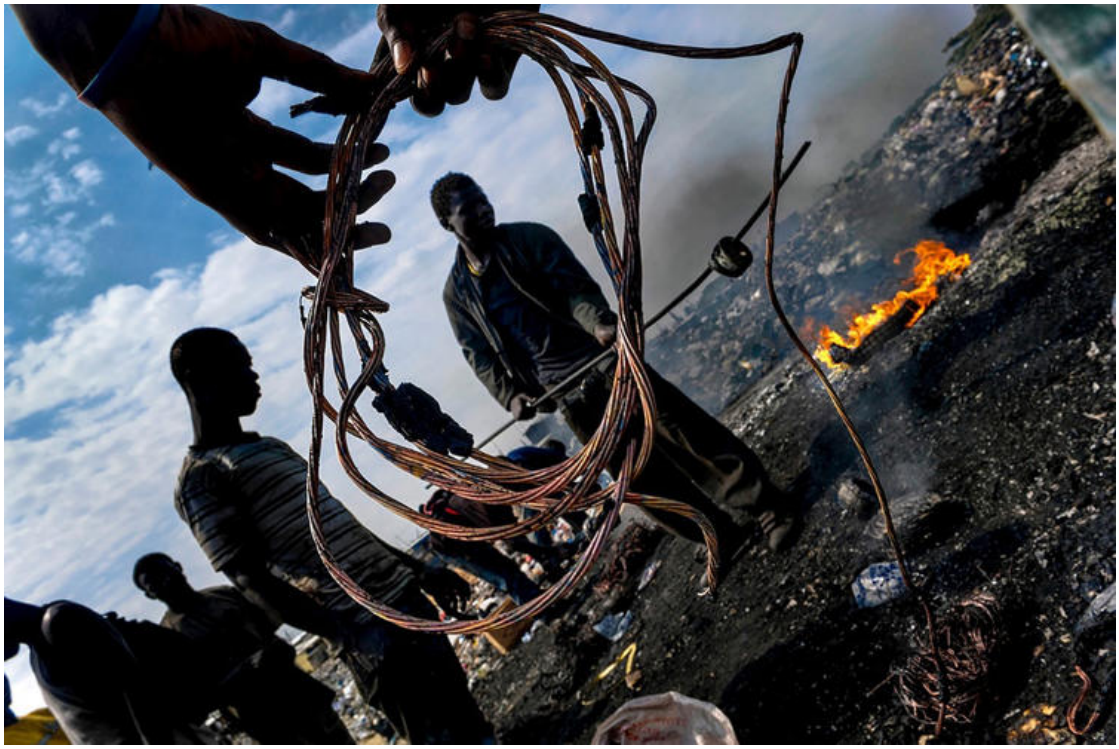
Meet The Children Who Live In Ghana's Hellish Digital Dump



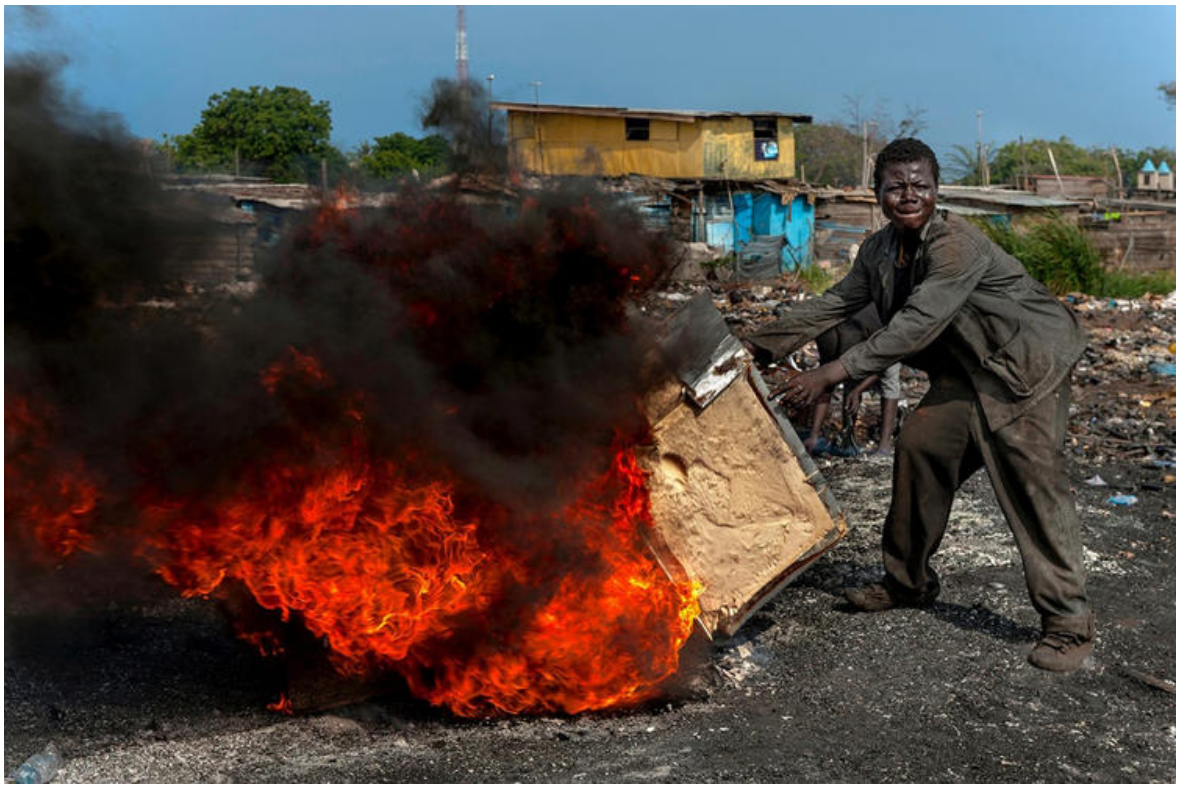
What used to be the pristine waters of the Korle Lagoon in the city of Accra, Ghana is now an electronics dumpsite so toxic that neither fish nor worms survive. Ayisha, 10, works there.



There are no environmental codes or regulations as no one is wearing a mask or protective clothing. Much of these waste materials are burned, and these children are often exposed to the resulting toxic fumes. Philimona's charcoal black hands show the carbon residue and soot. His eyelashes are singed from the flames. He is 14 years old and he uses his hands to sift through the burned-over soil to find bits of precious metals. Most nights he sleeps on the street.

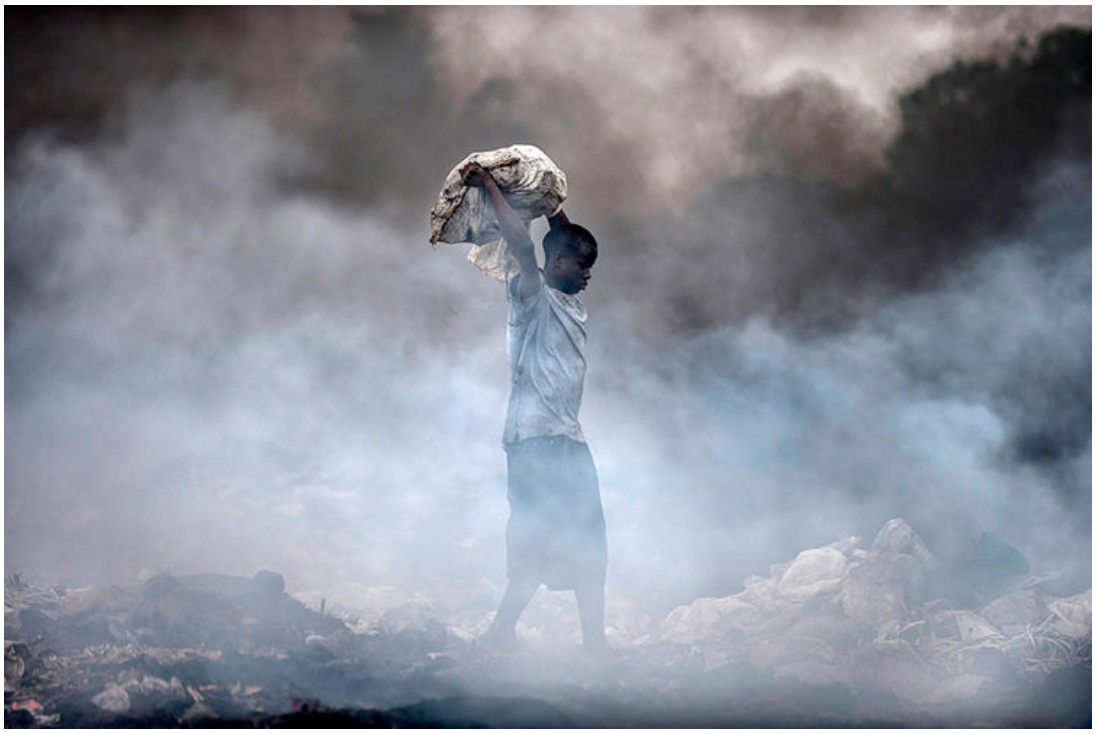


Older boys, such as Mohamed Abukari, 17 (framed center), usually are first to burn and pick through the residue of discarded computers for copper wiring or any other valuable metals. In the background, other boys are getting ready to ignite more items into flames.



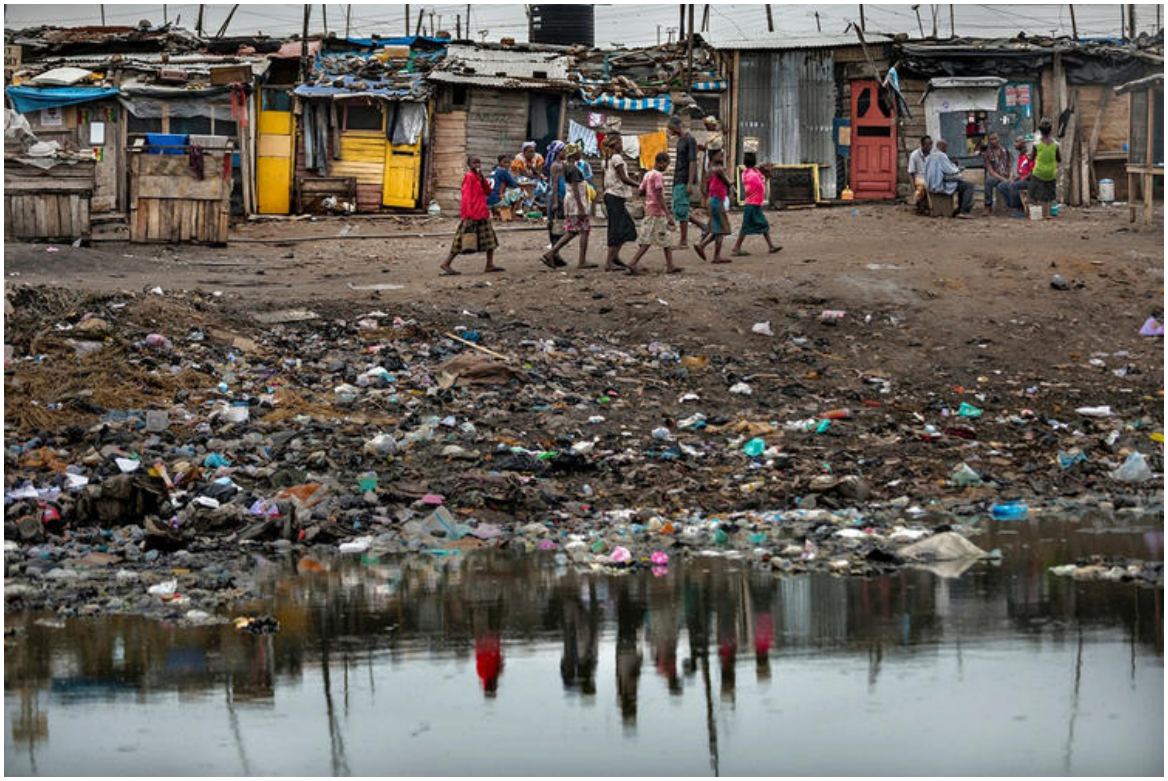
Mohamed Abukari, 17, has no education and basically lives with six other boys in a very tiny wood structure in the electronic dump area. He pays one Ghana CD to live there each day. He says he sometimes can make 8 Ghana CD a day but some days he makes nothing. While working, he exposes himself to toxic fumes that gather in his clothes, skin, and lungs.

In an e-waste dump that kills nearly everything that it touches, Fati, 8, works with other children searching through hazardous waste in hopes of finding whatever she can to exchange for pennies in order to survive. While balancing a bucket on her head, containing the little metal she has found, tears stream down her face as the result of the pain that comes from the malaria she suffers.

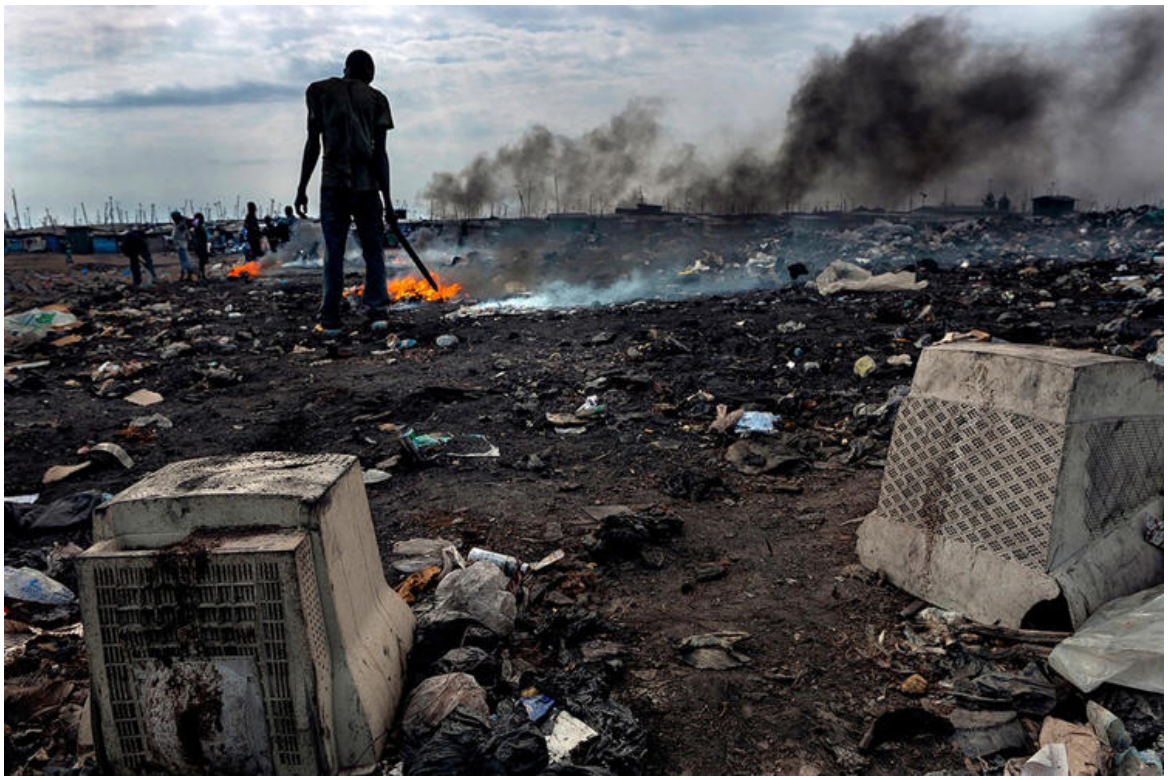


The children that work on this e-waste dumpsite burn computers in order to extract any valuable metals that might fall to the ground. In the process they expose themselves to toxic fumes that gather in their clothes, skin, and lungs.
© Rene C. Byer

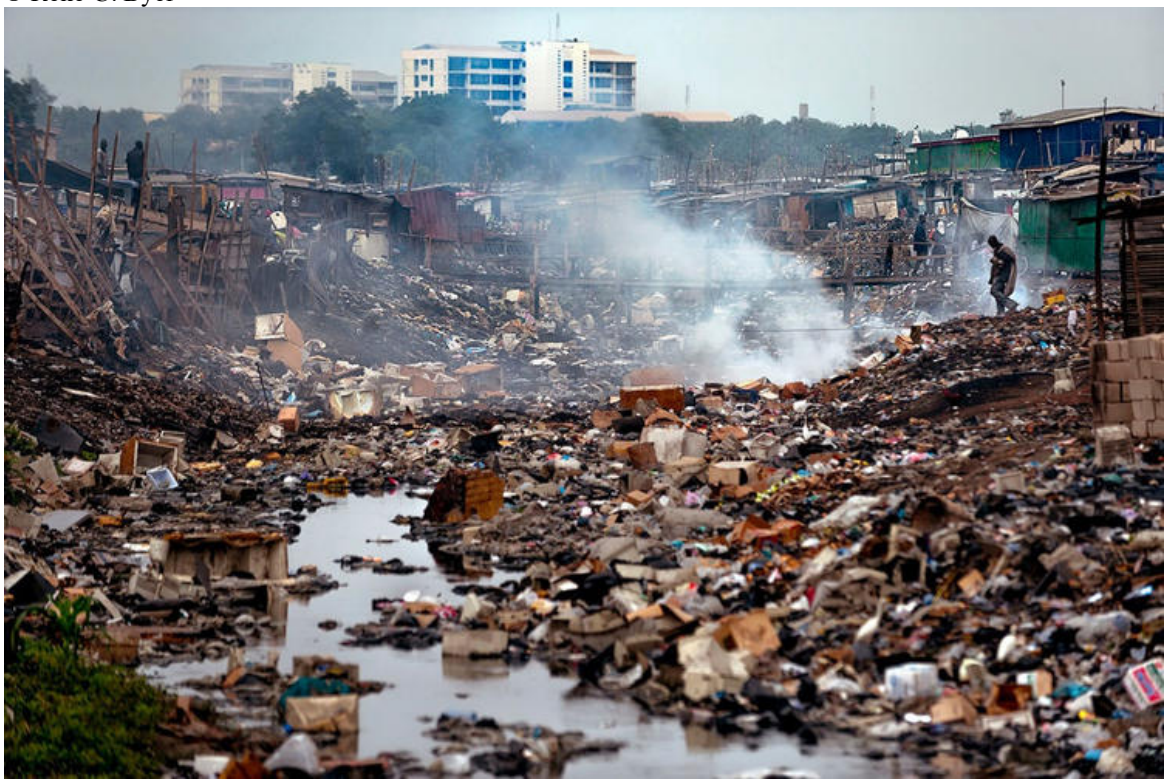
The remnants of an old keyboard are embedded on the pathway to the e-waste dump in Ghana.
© Rene C. Byer



A group of small girls walk along the Korle Lagoon toxic e-waste dump where they had been sifting for metals with magnets. Many of the children are homeless, living together in a 10x10 foot shack (seen behind them) that has no toilets or electricity.



Throughout the world, the poor are often asked to take on some of our worst jobs. Here, a young man in Ghana burns and sifts through discarded computers in hopes of finding any valuable metals. If he's lucky, his life-threatening work will bring him a dollar a day.



"I don't think anyone really envisions this when they buy a computer," says photojournalist Renee C. Byer.

Meet The Children Who Live In Ghana's Hellish Digital Dump

When we toss our unwanted electronics, we rarely think about where they end up. Now you won't forget.

Fifty years ago, the Korle Lagoon was a thriving fishery. Now, the former wetland outside Accra in Ghana is a place where old electronics go to die.

As part of a book called *Living on a Dollar a Day*, photojournalist Renee C. Byer visited the e-waste dump—now part of a sprawling slum that locals call Sodom and Gomorrah, and one of the most polluted places in the world. There, she met the children who work trying to make a living from the metals they can extract from old computers and cell phones.

"They're burning plastic to collect metal, and they're using magnets to dig through this toxic waste to earn maybe a dollar or two a day," says Byer. "I don't think anyone really envisions this when they buy a computer."

Nor do most people think of dumps like the one in Ghana when they drop off a laptop or phone for recycling. But recyclers don't always recycle: Since labor costs and environmental laws make electronics expensive to process in a place like the U.S., companies can often make more money by selling old gadgets to waste traders who ship to Asia and Africa. The majority end up in China, followed by India, Nigeria, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Benin, and Liberia.

Many of those electronics are still working and sold for use. But for others—which might last a year or two after repairs, or just not turn on at all—it's a quicker path to the dump. Others may end up there five or ten years later. The site in Ghana processes hundreds of tons of e-waste each month.

A handful of U.S. states have e-waste laws that require certification for recycling companies, and those certifications can help address the question of whether waste is ultimately handled responsibly. But managing the waste stream is an incredibly challenging problem, and even the certifications aren't an absolute guarantee that electronic waste won't ultimately end up in an unregulated dump. As people go through electronics faster and faster, the problem gets harder to solve: By 2017, the world may be producing around 65 million tons of e-waste every year.

The U.S. has yet to sign on to the Basel Convention, an international treaty that makes it illegal for rich countries to send hazardous waste to poorer countries unless the poorer country specifically consents. But even EU countries that have signed on still manage to get around the regulation and export e-waste anyway by changing how it's labeled. Most of the e-waste at the Ghana dump originally came from Europe.

Some say that the answer lies in helping countries like Ghana set up safer recycling facilities, rather than trying to stop exports of e-waste altogether, especially because old technology is valuable if it works and recycling is a source of jobs. "Instead of stopping the flow, we need to build the capacity to safely handle the waste," says Scott Cassel, CEO and founder of the Product Stewardship Council. "We need to be working with top officials to make sure what we're putting in place is working for everyone."

At the moment, it isn't working. "Right now, recycling facilities are being mismanaged, and putting people at risk, particularly young people," says Cassel.

Byer wanted her photos to tell the stories of some of those young people, like Fati, an 8-year-old girl who works in the Accra dump even though she has malaria.

"I don't think that anyone can envision this sort of prison of poison that children are working in to survive," Byer says. "We really need to become more conscious to how we are dumping our electronic waste."

[All Photos: © Renée C. Byer]

Adele Peters

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