

# Off the grid and on target: One man's response to political correctness

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The collapse of civilization is a fun place to visit in movies like “Apocalypse Z” or books like “Alas, Babylon,” but I wouldn't want to live there.

Rich Scheben, on the other hand, is ready and waiting.

Scheben, of Eureka, Mont., is convinced (and he is not alone in this) that as Americans in general become more and more dependent on the mechanisms of big government and big business for their well-being, the only path to true security in the coming years is going to be self-sufficiency.

That's why he wrote a book called “One New York Man's Journey to Off Grid Living in Montana,” and published it himself. As he wrote in the Introduction:

“I just hope that a few folks, here and there, can benefit from the possibility of a new lifestyle: life in which they can have a little more control of their own destiny.”

Scheben has been living off the grid in Eureka since 2007. How he got there makes up the bulk of the introduction and the first two chapters of the book. Scheben tells of growing up in metropolitan New York City, and of his growing disillusionment with East Coast liberal society, plus his years working in what I think he would not mind me calling “the belly of the beast” — corporate America in the form of Big Pharma.

The next several chapters develop his thesis that “political correctness” is a social disease that is sapping the strength out of America's middle class, its traditions and its principles. In a confessional mode, Scheben describes how being an “average white male” made him a target of opportunity for employers, fellow employees, and attorneys in one setback after another as he felt himself being deflected from achieving his version of the American Dream.

In describing his own circumstances, Scheben will speak to the heart of many Americans who are fed up with big banks, big government and, yes, even the Fed. How many of us have not thought this at some time:

“We now live in a culture that rewards mediocrity and oppresses accomplishment. Such a system will one day implode. It is inevitable. That is why the “powers that be” are beefing up the police state, so they can protect their own [butts].”

Ultimately, Scheben opted out of the game and set his own rules. After first moving to Montana as a pharmaceutical salesman, he worked toward his dream that one day he would “plant [his] feet on 100 acres of Montana country,... stand at the foot of [his] own river, and ... would embrace a simpler lifestyle.”

He’s done that in spades, and he wants to spread the wealth of independence around. As he notes, “off-grid living is not just healthier but also a more grounded way to live from day to day. It also becomes the common man’s strategy for fighting back against a disaster he otherwise has little control over.”

The second half of Scheben’s book is a how-to guidebook for thinking through the choices you have to make if you want to follow his example and give yourself a chance to survive — and thrive — off the grid, either before or after the potential collapse of civilization.

He walks you through it all: Choosing your off-grid location; building your off-grid home; hunting, fishing and trapping; wild-game preparation; hobby-farm animals; alternative power; edible and medicinal plants; and lots more.

No, this isn’t for everybody. It isn’t for me and my family. Like many of you, we enjoy the conveniences of supermarkets, Starbucks and satellite TV, but we are gambling on society somehow holding together long enough that we’ll be too old to care when it collapses. In the meantime, we know that like Blanche in “A Streetcar Named Desire,” we depend on the kindness of strangers.

But more and more people aren’t willing to sit back and pretend everything is all right. It’s for those people that Scheben has written his book, and it has touched a chord.

“My book ‘hit the streets’ in mid-October with no publicity at all,” Scheben told me Friday. “By the end of November, radio programs across the country have heard about the book. I can’t believe how many contacts I am getting for radio interviews. Since my number one objective with this book is to help people, I really feel I am making a difference.”

Broadcaster Vincent Finelli has made Scheben an instructor for his online show at USAprepares.com, and he has also appeared on “Off the Grid News,” and radio shows with John Moore, Dr. Bill Deagle and Randy Yarbrough.

If you are interested in finding out more about Scheben's journey from Queens, N.Y., to remote Northwestern Montana, just visit [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com), [BarnesandNoble.com](http://BarnesandNoble.com) or [eBay.com](http://eBay.com) and search for "Rich Scheben" or the title "One New York Man's Journey to Off Grid Living in Montana."

Warning: Do not buy this book if you are still drinking the Kool-Aid of "political correctness" as you might drop dead from the sudden shock of too much reality hitting the system at once.