

Sharon Levy

Biologist, Writer, Speaker

Once and Future Giants: what Ice Age extinctions tell us about the fate of Earth's largest animals



Mammoths, camels and saber-toothed cats once walked the ground that has become Wilshire Boulevard in Los Angeles, and foraged on the marsh land now buried beneath Chicago's streets. Then, just as the first humans reached the Americas, these Ice Age giants vanished forever. Today great beasts like elephants, lions and grizzly bears are threatened worldwide. New research on the demise of ancient megafauna offers vital insights for modern conservation.

Sharon is a biologist and veteran science journalist who covers conservation and biology for *OnEarth*, *New Scientist*, *BioScience*, *Audubon*, *Nature*, and other magazines. She is also the author of the new Oxford University Press book, *Once and Future Giants*. Her talks explore relationships between people and big wild animals, past and present. Sharon is available to speak on a range of topics, including:

- To save the elephant, first understand the mastodon
- Introduced species: filling the ecological gap left by Ice Age giants?
- The fire this time: people, torches and megafauna from the Stone Age to the present
- The big heat: climate change and extinctions in the Pleistocene and modern worlds.
- Top predators: the essence, and the end, of Ice Age biodiversity

“Sharon deftly grasped the audience at the outset, forcing each of us—from freshmen to seasoned professors--to connect on a surprisingly personal level with the world of a Pleistocene giant. Yet the meat of her talk was in her presentation of the ramifications for today, and in a challenge against deeply held notions in ecology and conservation. She invited us to consider what the world was like not just before Columbus, but before modern human migration around the world, using Pleistocene and extant megafauna-based ecosystems as models.”

--Graeson Harris-Young, Humboldt State University
Anthropology Department

“Sharon’s subtle humor was highly appreciated, and certainly helped to underscore her points. The extinction of the megafauna has to be a topic of concern to all who recognize, as she so clearly reminded us, that humankind now occupies that position in the chain of life. The far distant past may be much more relevant to the future than one might think.”

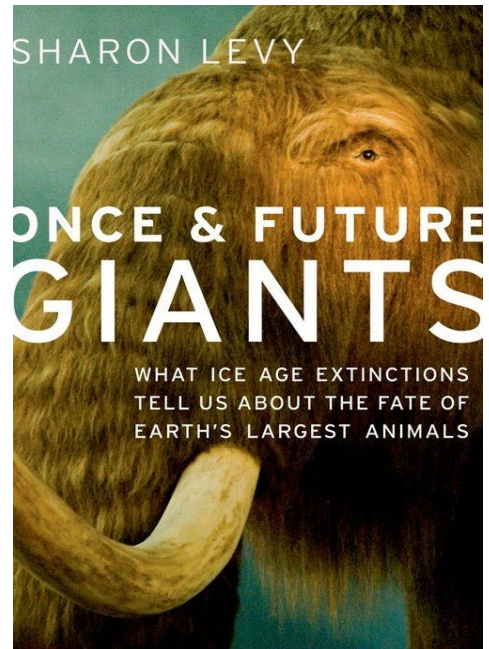
--Nancy Nieboer, PhD, Mensa North Coast

“*Once and Future Giants* is a fascinating, timely, and excellent book. A real page-turner, and a great example of popular science writing—I plan to use it in my teaching.”

--Warren Allmon, Paleontological Research Institution and Cornell University

“Lions and Tigers and Bears, Oh My! Sharon Levy’s thought-provoking book takes us on a journey through the vanished worlds of now-extinct megafauna and assesses the role of humans in contributing to their disappearance. Anyone interested in the conservation of the remaining large wild animals on earth should read this timely essay.”

—Brian Fagan, University of California, Santa Barbara, author of *The Great Warming: Climate Change and the Rise and Fall of Civilizations*



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