

TIME TO WAKE UP

As Monty Python's Flying Circus once observed: **"Nobody expects the Spanish Inquisition"** Add to this the so-called **Spanish Flu**... That unexpected, and unprecedented 1918 outbreak infected 500 million people around the world, or about 27% of the world population back then. The death toll was estimated as anywhere from **17 million to 50 million, and possibly as high as 100 million.** As if the disaster of **World War I** wasn't bad enough. To maintain morale, wartime censors minimized early reports of illness and mortality in Germany, the United Kingdom, France, and the United States. But the media was free to report the epidemic's effects in neutral Spain. These stories created a false impression of Spain as especially hard hit, leading to the pandemic's nickname: **"Spanish flu."**

Of course there was a connection between wartime conditions and the Pandemic- Troop movements in confined transport didn't help, but analysis of medical journals from the period found that *the viral infection was no more aggressive than previous influenza strains.* Instead, **malnourishment, overcrowded medical camps and hospitals, and poor hygiene** at a time of dramatic increase in transportation technology and travel helped promoted bacterial superinfection.

If ever there was a time to have **Universal Health Care** This would be it. Could it be that this is what it takes to have that change in policy seriously considered?

Maybe the Horror of **Disaster Capitalism** described so well by **Naomi Klein** could have a more people friendly antidote/antibody like: **Disaster Socialism**- Wherein necessity finds its way into the hive-mind of our social milieu- where the narrative of social dynamics begins to reflect the actual needs of people. And in a public health crisis - Public health becomes more important than an insurance industry that acts as middleman to medical assistance. or the industries that profit from treatment.

There is no doubt change is afoot. Chinese Vice premier **Sun Chunlan** toured ground zero for photo shoots aimed at claiming victory over the microbe and the efficiency of supplying quarantined apartment dwellers, confined in their homes since February 12th. The delegation was met with derisive chants from windows of **"FAKE, IT'S ALL FAKE..."** Implying the staged deliveries did not reflect reality. This sort of outburst is not common or allowed in China and can be dangerous. **Xu Zhiyong**, a former law lecturer and founder of the social campaign **New Citizens Movement**, was taken away by police February 15th during a fresh crackdown on freedom of speech precipitated by the coronavirus crisis. detained for criticizing President **Xi Jinping's** handling of the outbreak, he is being held on a state security charge that carries a maximum sentence of 15 years in jail. Civil rights are sure to suffer if the martial law of medical management manages to whip-up adequate fear. Watch for the established order taking advantage of a viral emergency to cloak their already desired economic and political outcomes in the language of emergency and expedient response.

Fear is so relative, after all, more than **90 people die in car accidents everyday** - 3 million people in the U.S. are injured **every year in car accidents.** Many of these no doubt avoidable, but no one ever proposes a blockade on cars or a quarantine of Highways.



A few years ago, **Peter Daszak** is a zoologist who works in China and runs the **EcoHealth Alliance**, an organization that studies the connections between human and wildlife health, was working with the **World Health Organization**, plotting out what the next global pandemic could look like, when he and some other scientists came up with the idea of **"Disease X."** Disease X would hit an epidemiological sweet spot: It would transmit easily from person to person, and it would be deadly, but not *too* deadly. These scientists knew this sort of virus was coming. While the story was told, the world didn't adequately prepare. Daszak says that even when this outbreak is contained, it won't be the last one. We're going to get bigger pandemics, and they're going to happen more often. But if we pay close attention to what's happening right now, next time could be different.

Daszak Explains:

"We've got used to this idea that we're in a reductionist strategy to deal with things. We find this virus. We learn everything about the molecules on the surface. We have high-tech solutions to design vaccines and produce them. But all this doesn't work quickly enough to actually deal with an outbreak.

We need voices out there that advocate for dealing with pandemics as a process, not just individual pathogens. And it's not just vaccines and drugs. We have the basic public health message of getting to rural communities that are on the front line and helping them reduce risk, talking to companies that are building roads to new mining facilities and asking about building a clinic. As we think about a more sustainable approach to doing business, sustainability regarding our health and the environment should be a part of it. What's frustrating is telling people repeatedly that we will see more, and more frequent, pandemics and then not seeing much change to get ready for that.

I think in some cases there are going to be significant outbreaks that are just seeded and moving forward. And when we find out about them, they're going to be pretty hard to control -

We're going to see things happen that we didn't expect would happen. I think we're going to see a personal invasion of our daily lives that we've not seen for a long time. I really hope this is a wake-up call, and that we start to get more proactive on this. But let's talk in two years and see if that really happens."

- **Joshua Golden**



Call for Extinction Rebellion

In the age of coming climate apocalypse, the narcissistic self-regard of humans in their exploitive relationship with the natural world is so disgusting, so utterly reprehensible, so vain and vacuous and unworthy of intelligent beings that it makes

me want to repudiate humanism altogether and call for humans to be wiped off the goddamn planet.

The film **Planet of the Apes**, issued in 1968, had it right when the apes quoted their sacred scrolls:

"Beware the beast man, for he is the Devil's pawn. Alone among God's primates, he kills for sport or lust or greed. Yea, he will murder his brother to possess his brother's land. Let him not breed in great numbers, for he will make a desert of his home and yours."

There's my rant, and enough of it. I'm part of this absurdist cavalcade aimed at climate doom, I'm the problem as much as anyone else, and I haven't any high horse on which to climb to judge my fellow beasts.

What I know is this: Humankind as currently organized - organized for ever-more unnecessary consumption - will burn in the hell of a climate-warmed world and will indeed make a desert of the place we called home.

Good riddance? No way. I have two daughters, aged 7 and 24, to think about. Do we actually give a shit about these kids and their future? Of course not. There are profits to be made.

Which is to say: *let's stab a knife in the back of my daughters and watch them bleed out in the street years hence.* Fuck the kids! Let them die so we can have more and more in our imperious carbon-intensive moment of profligacy.

Like I said, it's so disgusting, so dispiriting, that it could turn you into an anti-humanist, someone who might wish the filthy species of entitled shithheads to wipe itself out.

But then again: my daughters. Humans, sweet and gentle and open and uncorrupted, not yet anyway, not if I can prevent it.

I want them to grow up in the world that I grew up in, a world of lovely natural rhythms, in which the biotic expressions of the complexity and richness of the other-than-human runs riot across the seasons. Here - look, kids! - is the newness and strangeness and bewilderment of the repeating cycles of nature. Here is the ground of our being. Without it, we are nothing. There is no humankind without nature.

And here, kids, is a smartphone which I smash with a hammer. My seven-year-old, Josie, who walks the woods of the Catskills with me, finds this destructive idea at least as entertaining as tree identification. (Note to parents: destroying phones with a hammer works - it is proven by physics.)

The point is this: whenever you feel the terrible weight of misanthropy - I feel it every time I wake up and look in the mirror - think of future generations, your love for them, your honoring of them, and try to militate against our economic system that condemns them to destruction.

I can think of one and only one political movement today that serves this purpose, and it is called Extinction Rebellion. Check it out. The idea behind Extinction Rebellion is that if we all get together and disobediently shut down the mad system, we might no longer have to feel ashamed at being the mere beast called man.

Christopher Ketcham

author of

"This Land: How Cowboys, Capitalism and Corruption are Ruining the American West"

Sab Yaad Rakha Jayega
(Everything Will Be Remembered)



Kill us, we will become ghosts and write of your killings, with all the evidence.
You write jokes in court;
We will write 'justice' on the walls.
We will speak so loudly that even the deaf will hear.
We will write so clearly that even the blind will read.
You write 'injustice' on the earth;
We will write 'revolution' in the sky.
Everything will be remembered;
Everything recorded.

Aamir Aziz
from Delhi, India



सत्यमेव जयते

HAIKUS FROM GRACE

A pearl of water
Reveals a magical world
Perched on a flower

Sometimes the babble
Of people leaves me hopeless
Won't they just shut up?

Humans need the earth
But the earth doesn't need us
We learned this too late.

It's all so surreal
Man destroying the planet.
Life and death, flowers

Grace Woods

**"After ninety five years on this planet, I have come to the conclusion that religion should be based on only one thing: helping your fellow man.
If everybody followed that religion, helping his fellow man- armies would vanish overnight."**
- Kirk Douglas
b.12/9/16 d.2/5/20

"When a man's faith is never tried, I don't think he'll ever learn anything. You have to have trial and tribulation, or what are you going to learn?"
- McCoy Tyner
b.12/11/30 d.3/6/20

"If Jesus came back today, and saw what was going on in his name, he'd never stop throwing up."
- Max Von Sydow
b.4/10/29 d.3/8/20

"Love the earth and the sun and animals, despise riches, give alms to everyone that asks, stand up for the stupid and the crazy, devote your income and labors to others, hate tyrants, argue not concerning God, re-examine all you have been told at school or church or in any book, dismiss whatever insults your own soul, and your very flesh shall be a great poem and have the richest fluency."

—Walt Whitman



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