

# CLIMATE DISRUPTION DISPATCHES

We've never experienced anything like this: We are living with the full knowledge of our collapsing biosphere and watching huge portions of it vanishing before our very eyes. Meanwhile, the industrial growth society (as eco-philosopher, author and Buddhist scholar Joanna Macy calls it) continues to grind on, and this veneer of normalcy persists one more day.

I have been giving a lot of lectures lately about the climate catastrophe that is upon us and have increasingly been led to discuss grief. My own experience has shown me that only by facing what is happening head on, and allowing my heart to break, can I begin to respond accordingly.

I find myself led back to one of my teachers, the aforementioned Joanna Macy. "Refusing to feel pain, and becoming incapable of feeling the pain, which is actually the root meaning of apathy, refusal to suffer, that makes us stupid, and half alive," Macy told me in an interview. She described how that refusal to feel pain doesn't mute the sense that there is something wrong - so people simply take that sense and project anxieties elsewhere, usually onto marginalized communities. "Not feeling the pain is extremely costly," Macy said. "The most radical thing any of us can do at this time is to be fully present to what is happening in the world." And so, over the years, I've aimed to be fully present, and I've had my heart broken, and I've now had enough practice at this that I have seen, repeatedly, the transformational qualities of despair and grief. In the face of our overwhelming climate and political crises, that grief is transformed into a new clarity of vision, and a depth of passion for action that was previously inaccessible.

So, dear reader, I urge you to find your own work that reconnects - or to find another way to ground yourself, as you read on, and as we each travel through another crises-ridden day into an increasingly bleak future. That future is perhaps most visible at the poles. Greenland is melting much faster than previously understood, as melting has increased six-fold in recent decades, according to a study published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. The study also shows how sea level rise is accelerating, and will continue to do so with each passing year, as the effects compound upon themselves. On that note, Indonesia recently announced it will be moving its capital city of Jakarta, partly due to the sinking of the land and sea level rise. This is a city of 10 million people.

Permafrost in the Arctic is now thawing so fast that scientists are literally losing their measuring equipment. This is due to the fact that instead of there being just a few centimeters of thawing each year, now several meters of soil can become destabilized in a matter of days. Adding insult to injury, another study revealed that this permafrost collapse is further accelerating the release of carbon into the atmosphere, possibly even doubling the amount of warming coming from greenhouse gases released from the tundra. Already in Greenland, the ice sheet's melt season began about a month early, while in Alaska several rivers saw winter ice break up on their earliest dates on record.

The recent U.N. report showing that one million species are now in danger of going extinct has grave implications for the future of humanity. Human society is under urgent threat because the global ecosystem upon which we depend is, quite literally, under threat of unraveling. In the U.S., Mike Rosmann, a clinical psychologist working with farmers, wrote a heartbreaking article for The New Republic about depression among farmers in the wake of historic flooding that ravaged the Midwest. Rosmann detailed the psychological and personal pain he is experiencing while working with suicidal farmers, as the direct human toll of climate disruption becomes more apparent in the U.S.



Meanwhile, the refugee crisis from rising seas and extreme weather events continues apace in Bangladesh. Already one of the most vulnerable countries in the world to sea level rise, it is now estimated that more than 10 million people there are estimated to lose their livelihoods in the next decade. The larger cities are already overwhelmed with the number of people streaming into them from the submerging coastal areas.

The devastating flooding that has wracked farmers in the Midwest and wiped out crops, ruined stored crops and drowned livestock is due to abnormally warmer Eastern Pacific waters, according to scientists. Just after the U.S. wrapped up its wettest 12 months on record, storms dumped enormous rainfalls across Texas, Louisiana and Mississippi. Scientists warned that the extreme weather Houston is currently experiencing is no anomaly - it is what the area can expect regularly from now on.

Scientists also recently announced that global sea levels could reach a two-meter rise by 2100 - the warning effectively doubles the previous worst-case scenario provided by the U.N.'s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, published in 2013. This new warning means that large portions of numerous major coastal cities will be completely submerged, according to Jonathan Bamber of the University of Bristol. "If we see something like that in the next 80 years we are looking at social breakdown on scales that are pretty unimaginable," Bamber told The New Scientist.

Scientists have also found what they call "extraordinary thinning" of ice sheets deep within Antarctica. The affected areas are losing ice five times faster than they did during the 1990s, with some areas having lost 100 meters of thickness. Up in the Arctic, things are just as bad. Methane and CO2 released from permafrost thawing will accelerate global warming by amplifying it nearly five percent.

Earth experienced its second warmest April on record, ranking only behind April 2016. Earth's CO2 levels, for the first time in human history, reached 415 parts per million. The last time there was this much CO2 in the atmosphere, global average temperatures averaged between 4°C to 10°C (39°F to 50°F) warmer than they are today, depending on the location around the planet.

The U.S. is now one of the world's leaders when it comes to climate change denial. A recent polling of the 23 largest countries in the world found that 13 percent of Americans believe the climate is being disrupted but that humans are not the cause, in addition to another five percent of Americans who believe the climate is not changing at all. The only other countries that are more anti-science than the U.S. are Saudi Arabia and Indonesia, according to the survey.

On the other hand, nearly half of younger Americans (between the ages of 18 to 29 years) believe human-caused climate disruption is a "crisis" and demand "urgent action," according to a recent poll. Another poll found that more than 80 percent of parents in the U.S. want climate disruption taught in the schools of their children. Among all parents, two-thirds of Republicans and nine out of every 10 Democrats agreed the subject should be taught in school.

With the ongoing acceleration of the climate crisis, it is clear that even if we believe the best-case scenarios, governments are not reacting according to the gravity of the situation at hand. Each one of us, knowing what we now know, must take full responsibility for preparing ourselves for the adaptation required to live on this increasingly warming, melting world as civilizations and societies continue to disintegrate.

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## Police Admit Search Of A Journalist's Home Was Probably Illegal

After someone in the San Francisco police department leaked a police report in an effort to smear a prominent public defender following his unexpected death, an investigation was opened.

Bryan Carmody had shopped copies of the police report to a few news stations, which resulted in the SFPD raiding his home and seizing \$10,000 of his equipment, including phones, laptops, and storage devices.

After a brief round of "this is all by the book" by a number of SF officials, it soon became apparent this was not at all by the book. In addition to Carmody's First Amendment protections, the stringer was also likely shielded by state law, which forbids searching and seizing journalists' property for the sole purpose of trying to identify a source.

The mayor walked back her statement defending the SFPD for its actions. So did a couple of council members. The District Attorney delivered the harshest criticism of the police force, saying he couldn't imagine a situation where this search would have been appropriate.

*After two weeks of growing outrage, San Francisco Police Chief Bill Scott apologized Friday for raiding a journalist's home and office in a bid to unmask a confidential source, admitting the searches were probably illegal and calling for an independent investigation into the episode.*

*Police "should have done a better job," Scott said. "I'm sorry that this happened. I'm sorry to the people of San Francisco. I'm sorry to the mayor. We have to fix it. We know there were some concerns in that investigation and we know we have to fix it."*

Among Chief Scott's concerns are the possibility the search warrants didn't specify Carmody's occupation. It seems clear they didn't. If they did, they likely would have been rejected as impermissible under state law, not to mention the First Amendment.

Scott has seen the underlying documents, so this hedging is a little disingenuous. But it's probably necessary, at least from the department's perspective. The SFPD is likely planning its defense against Carmody's inevitable lawsuit, so it does the agency no

favors if the chief states plainly officers conducted illegal searches using warrants obtained untruthfully. The SFPD may also be holding out hope the judge presiding over the coming lawsuit will find stringers aren't journalists, but that eventuality seems unlikely.

It is also incredibly unlikely the officers didn't know what Carmody did for a living. Stringers are fixtures at crime scenes, car accidents, and other emergency calls. This information appears to have been downplayed in the affidavit, if not omitted completely.

The independent investigation could lead to additional charges. Not only will this investigation try to find the source of the leak, but it's going to go after the officers who used a bogus affidavit to violate the state's journalist shield law. The end result of all of this is the stripping away of another layer of trust and a widening of the gap between the police and the policed.

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