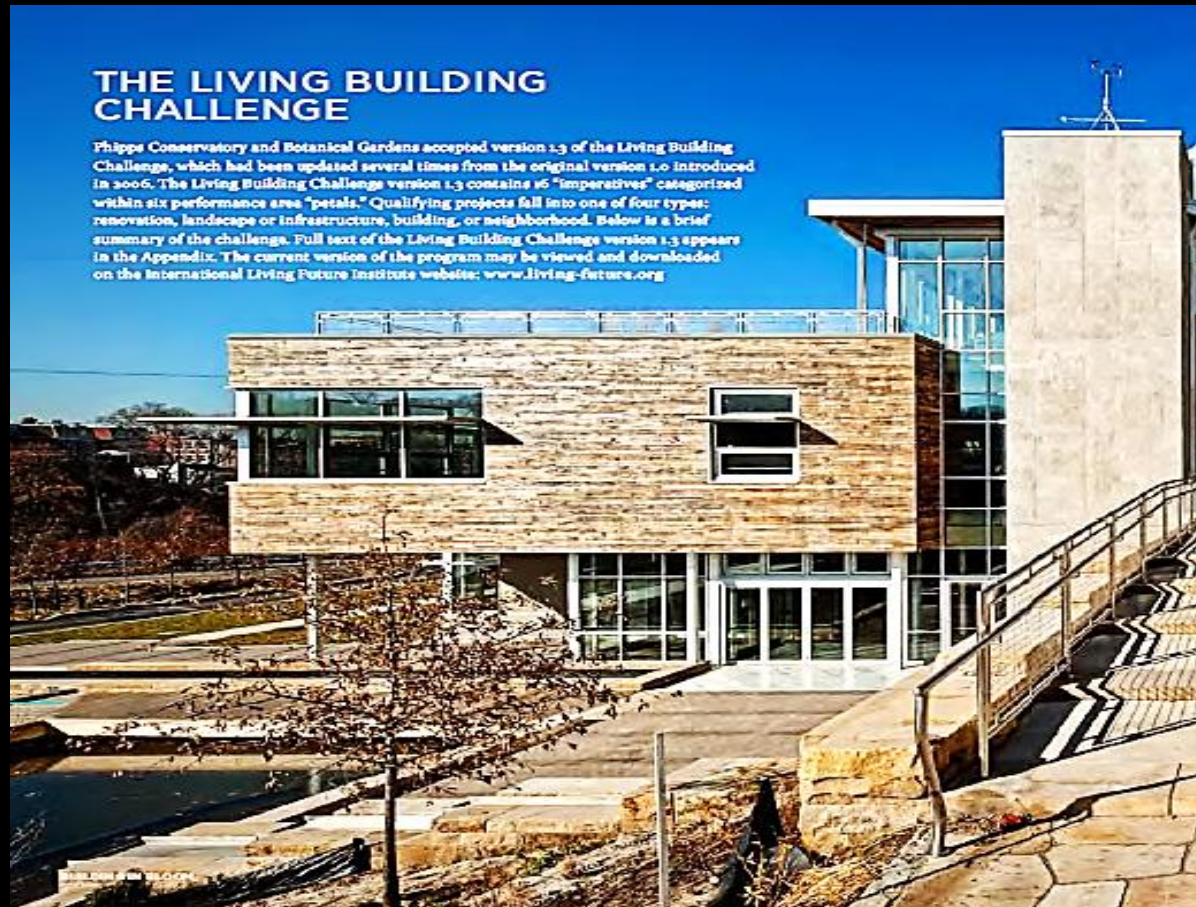
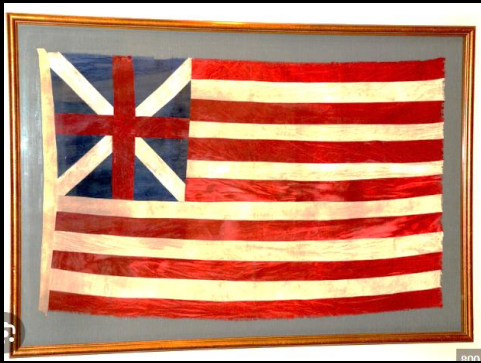


our “finest hour” looking back from the year 2276:



David W. Orr



1776



2026

?

2276

the year 2276:

CO₂

~ 350

population:

<4 billion

nuclear weapons:

abolished

natural systems

recovering

biodiversity

stabilized

democracy

flourishing

poverty

eliminated

A.I.

controlled

how did it happen?

too partisan!

Not if it's about the rules that apply to our public life.
Imagine a football game with no rules or referees!

Democracy requires civility, honesty, fair elections,
respect for law, no oligarchy, & civic competence.

“we don’t do politics”

You can’t ‘not do’ politics . . . staying on the sidelines supports the politics of the present. If you’re happy with the way things are . . . stay seated if not stand up . . . either way, you’re doing politics.

Even if he dies and Vance takes over, there will be nothing left of the America we knew four years before. All institutions, norms, government, you name it, all of it gone. The political-societal equivalent of a neutron bomb.

Robert Litan, Brookings Institution
in Tom Edsall, *NYT*, 9-8-2025

There is no law, there's just power I don't give a shit what you call it.

J.D. Vance

I have the right to do anything I want to. I'm president of the United States.

D. J. Trump

The executive will not necessarily snap back as soon as a new president is in office; dismantled institutions will not magically reconstitute themselves; the habits of performance and submission will not miraculously be discarded . . .

What do you call an emerging age of right-wing technopolitics, of institutional collapse, of retribution as government policy, of gleeful and militarized nativism, of cultural retrenchment and revanchist history of selective legalism and international abdication—furthered by a formalized system of executive impunity?

Carlos Lozada, *NYT*, 9/9/2025



We are the storm. And our enemies cannot comprehend our strength or determination, our resolve, our passion . . . you have nothing. You are nothing, You are wickedness, you are jealousy, you are envy, you are hatred, you are nothing . . . You have no idea the dragon you have awakened.

Stephen Miller 9/21/2025, Charlie Kirk's memorial service

July 19, 2024

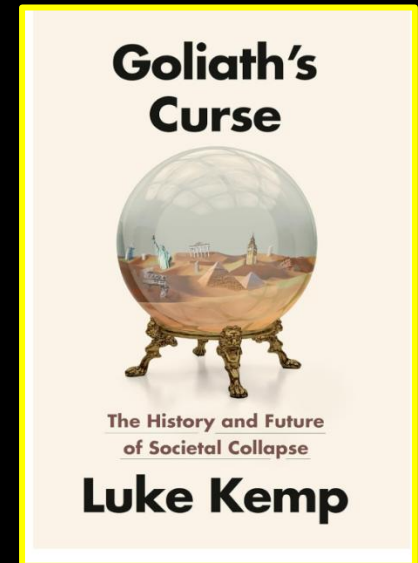
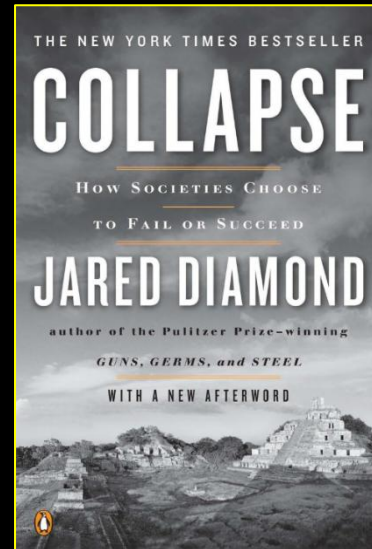
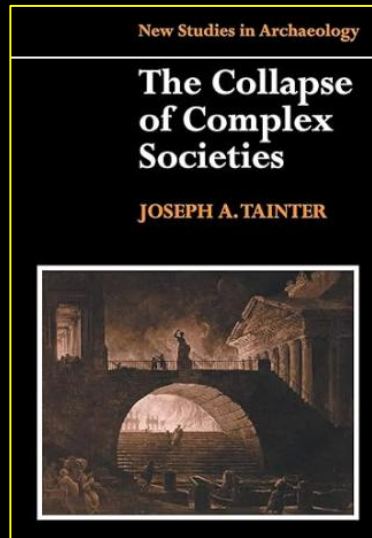
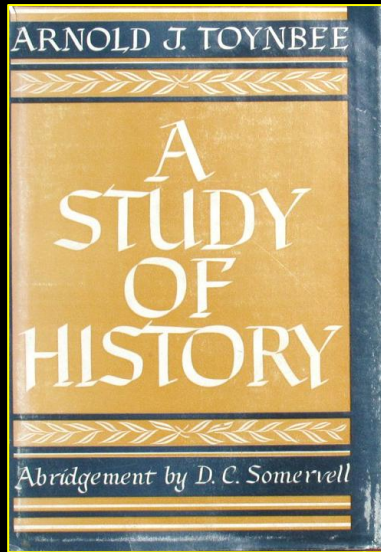
When civilizations collapse

An archaeologist probes ancient insights on how to cope when things fall apart

By Thomas E. Levy



Why and how do civilization collapse?



Outline:

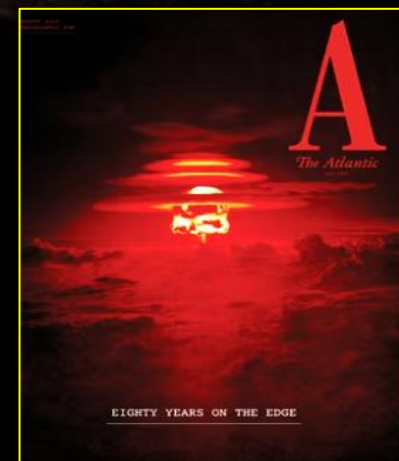
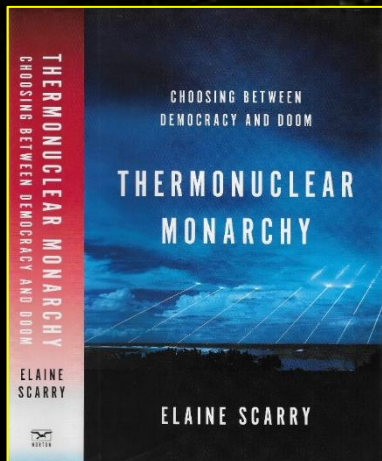
1. the gauntlet ahead:

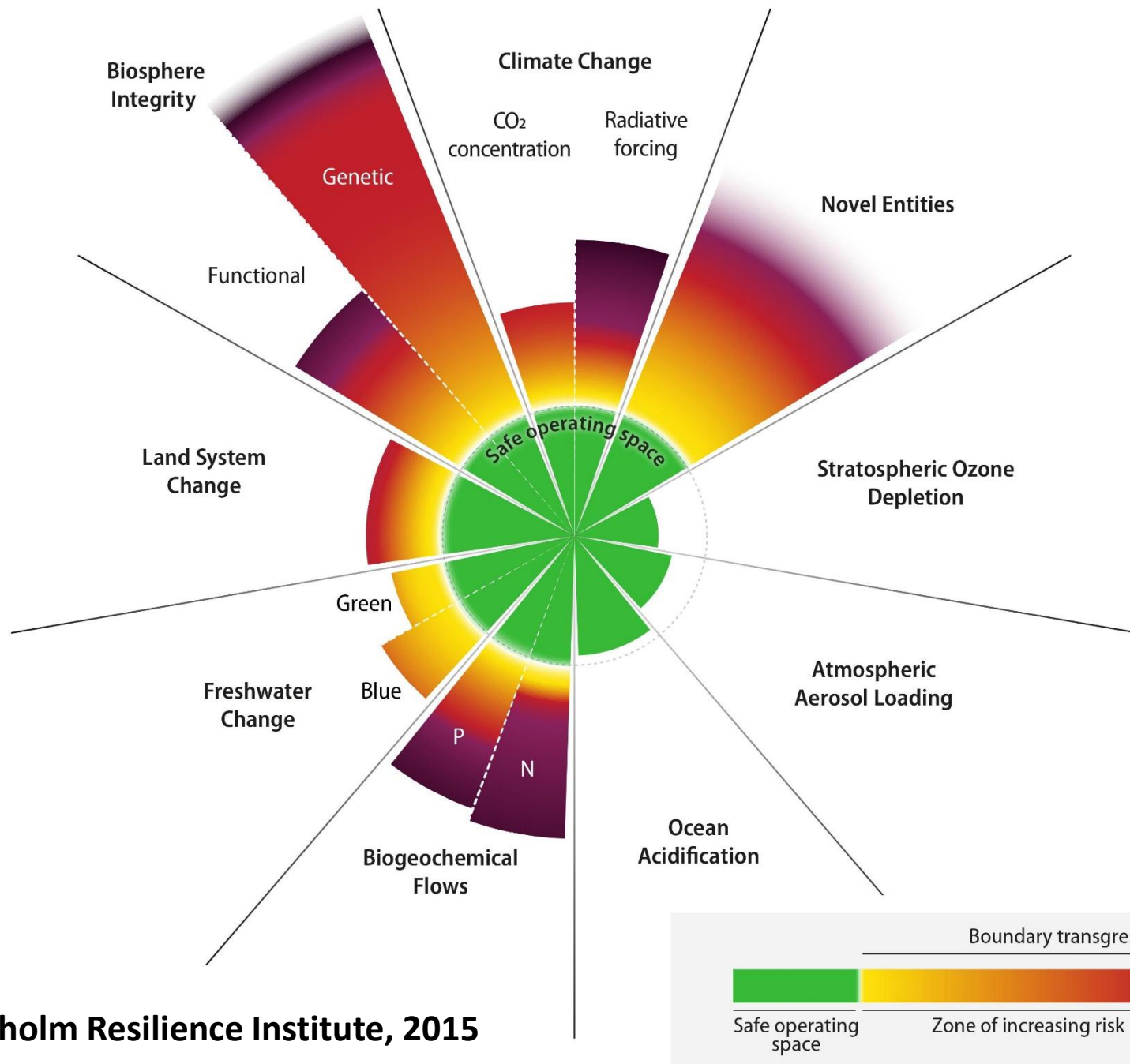
nuclear war
climate chaos
rogue technology
(human madness)

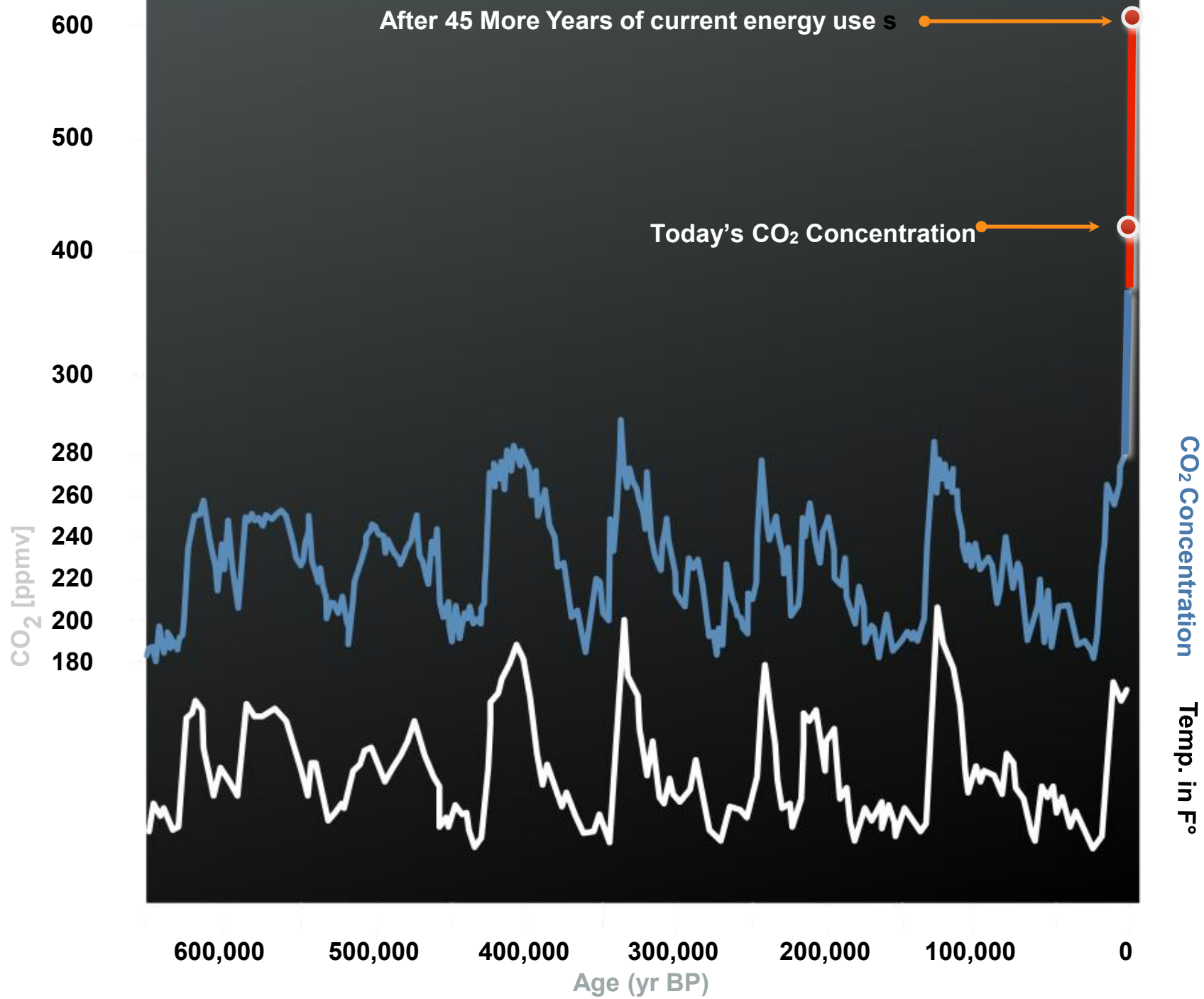
2. Axial Age/Enlightenment:

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. language/words | 6. steady-state economy |
| 2. systems perspective | 7. theology |
| 3. democracy 4.0 | 8. no billionaires |
| 4. law/Constitution | 9. education |
| 5. government | 10. civic action |

Who gave one or two guys the right to end civilization?







The climatic impacts of releasing fossil fuel CO₂ to the atmosphere will last longer than Stonehenge. Longer than time capsules, longer than nuclear waste, far longer than the age of human civilization so far. Each ton of coal that we burn leaves CO₂ gas in the atmosphere. The CO₂ coming from a quarter of that ton will still be affecting the climate one thousand years from now.

David Archer

Humans Are Altering the Seas. Here's What the Future Ocean Might Look Like.

Some marine ecosystems could soon be unrecognizable, according to new research.



Share full article

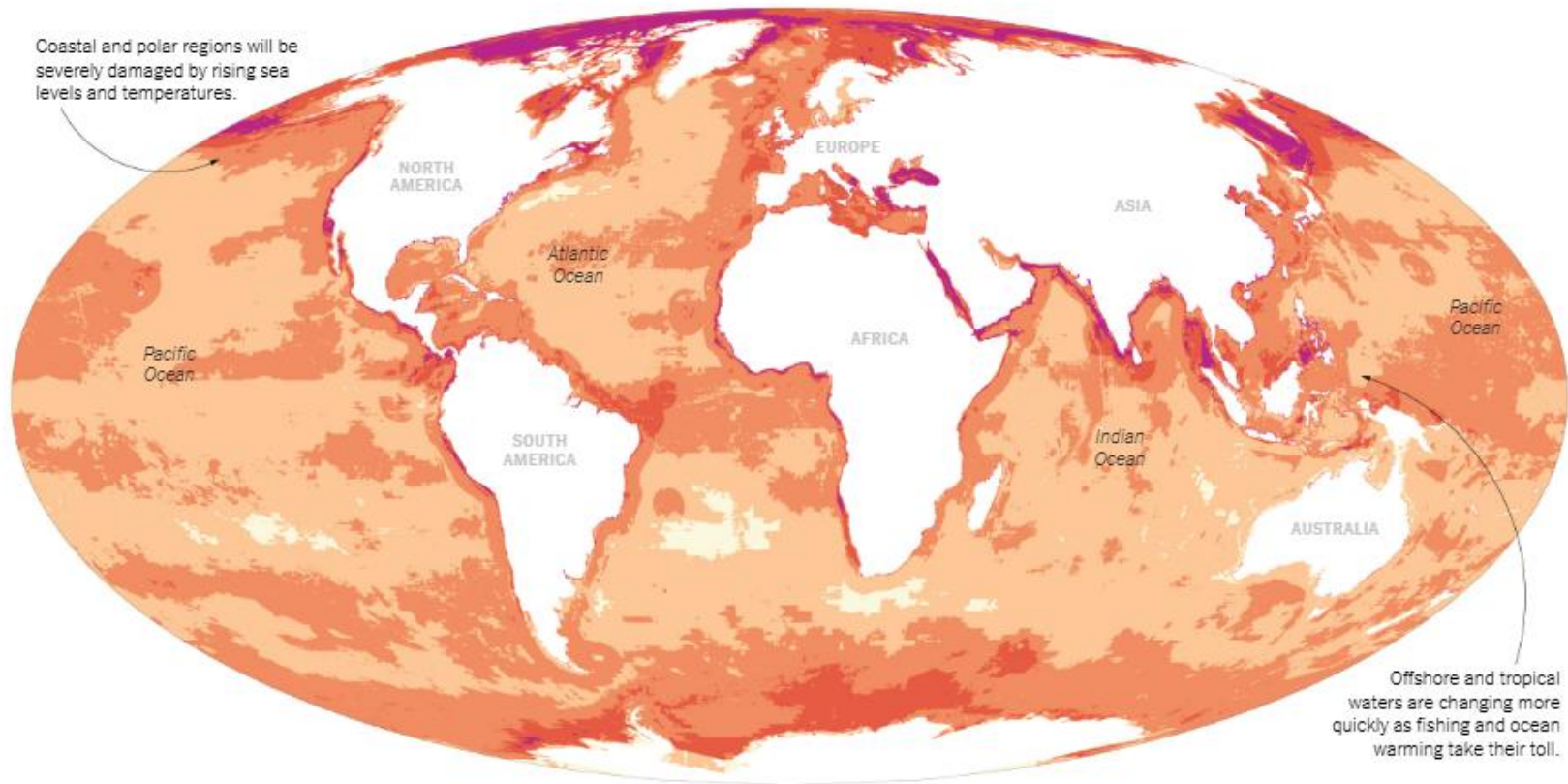


49

2025 | 2050

Cumulative human impacts on the oceans

LOW MODERATE HIGH VERY HIGH SEVERE



Source: Halpern, et. al., Science (2025)

The Economist

MARCH 29/30 - APRIL 4TH 2014

economist.com

Obama v Obamacare
How to make a chromosome
Will Japanese women rebel?
Marine Le Pen woos France
Understanding the first world war

RISE OF THE ROBOTS

A 14-PAGE SPECIAL REPORT



ISSN 0950-0804



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A NEW YORK TIMES NOTABLE BOOK OF THE YEAR

THE AGE OF SURVEILLANCE CAPITALISM

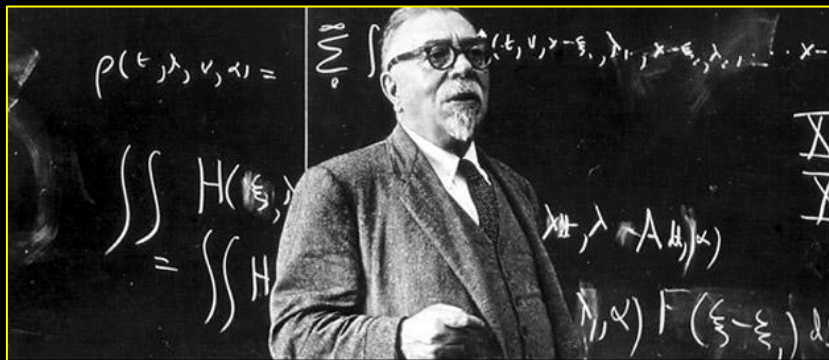
THE FIGHT FOR
A HUMAN FUTURE
AT THE NEW
FRONTIER OF POWER

SHOSHANA
ZUBOFF

"Groundbreaking, magisterial, alarming.... Unmissable." —Financial Times

We must face the fact that every degree of independence we give the machine is a degree of possible defiance of our wishes. The genie in the bottle will not willingly go back in the bottle, nor have we any reason to expect them to be well disposed to us.

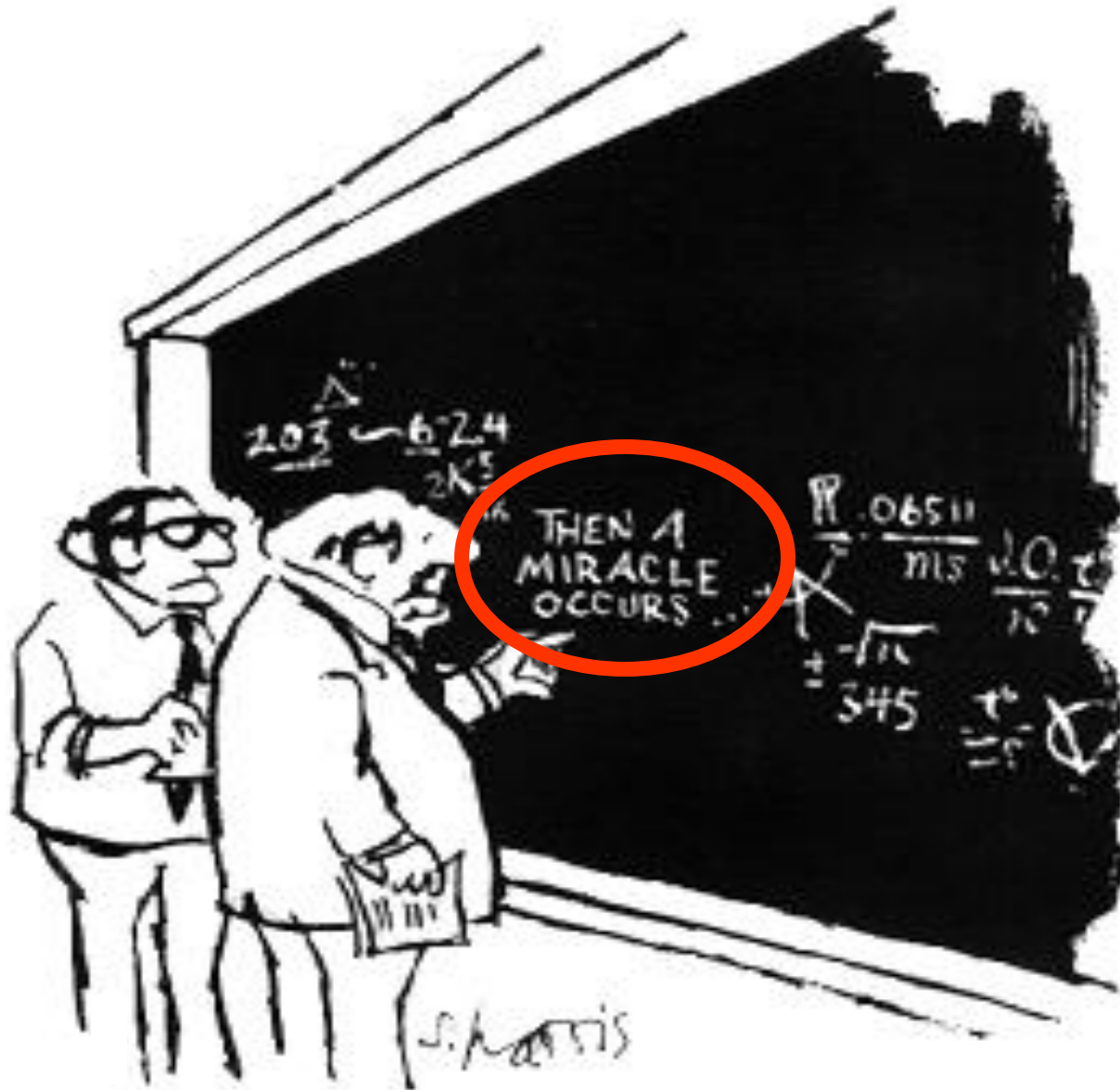
Norbert Wiener, 1948



The point of disagreement is no longer whether A.I. could wipe us out. It could . . . It definitely could. A destructive A.I. like a nuclear bomb, is now a concrete possibility.

Stephen Witt

New York Times 10/10/2025



"I think you should be more explicit here in step two."

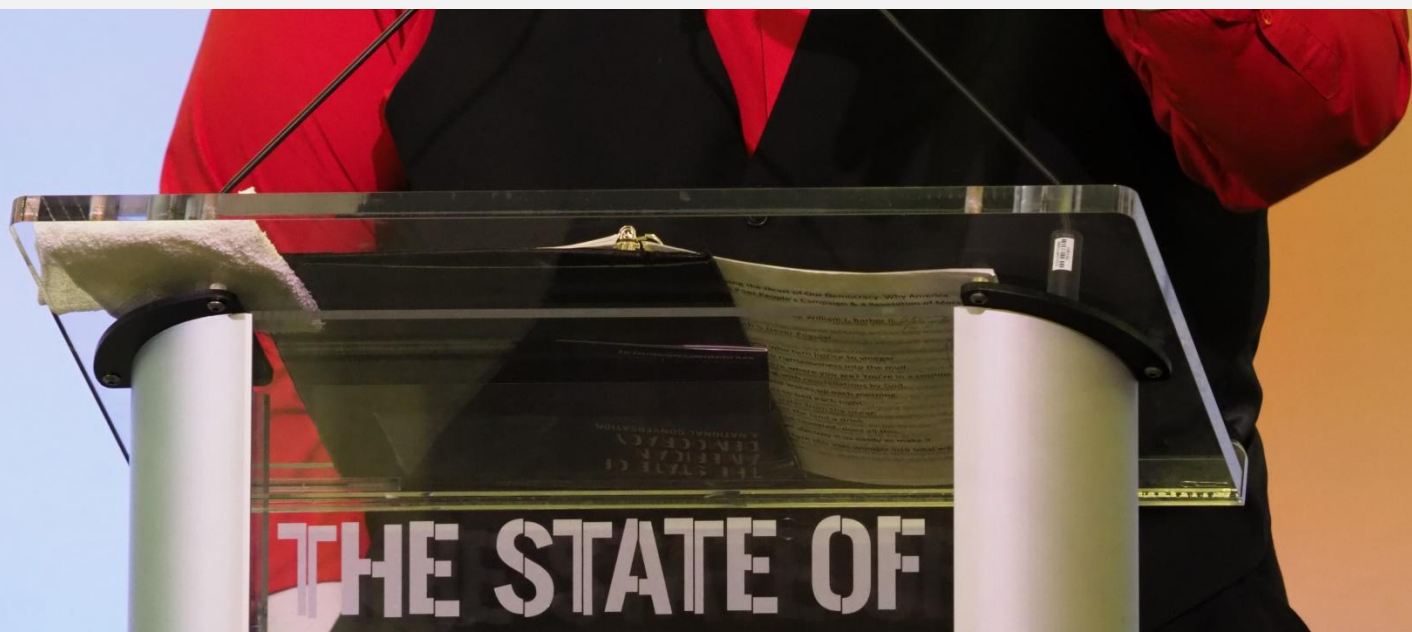
Outline:

2. Axial Age/Enlightenment: (Karl Jaspers)

1. language/words
2. systems thinking
3. democracy 4.0
4. law/Constitution
5. government
6. steady-state economy
7. theology
8. no billionaires
9. education
10. dual citizenship



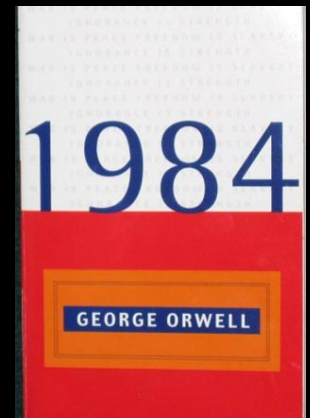
“Our ideas are too puny for our circumstances”



#1 language

The insufficiency of words to describe a disproportionate reality makes it necessary to create a whole system of new words for the size of our reality.

Gabriel García Márquez, The Scandal of the Century



restore the integrity of public words

patriotism

conservatism

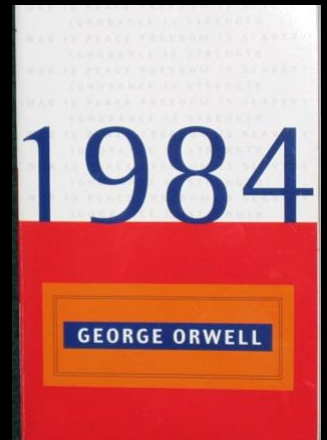
liberalism

government

public service

rights and responsibilities

taxation



#2 systems revolution

there are few accidents, only the working out
of the rules of the system, so

design a system for maximum economic growth and
little oversight no foresight—the results are climate
chaos, species extinction, inequality, conflict, war.

systems thinking v. Descartes, Bacon . . .

- feedback—positive/negative
- stocks and flows
- non-linear, i.e. counter-intuitive, surprising
- step-level changes, last straw that breaks . .
- leads and lags.
- emergent properties at higher levels, H₂O
- embedded in other systems

systemic solutions:



don't cause other problems

solve for pattern/security by design

technically feasible

competitive . . . CO₂/\$

can be deployed quickly

resilient, redundant, repairable

ecological design:

nature is the standard

protect diversity

account for all costs

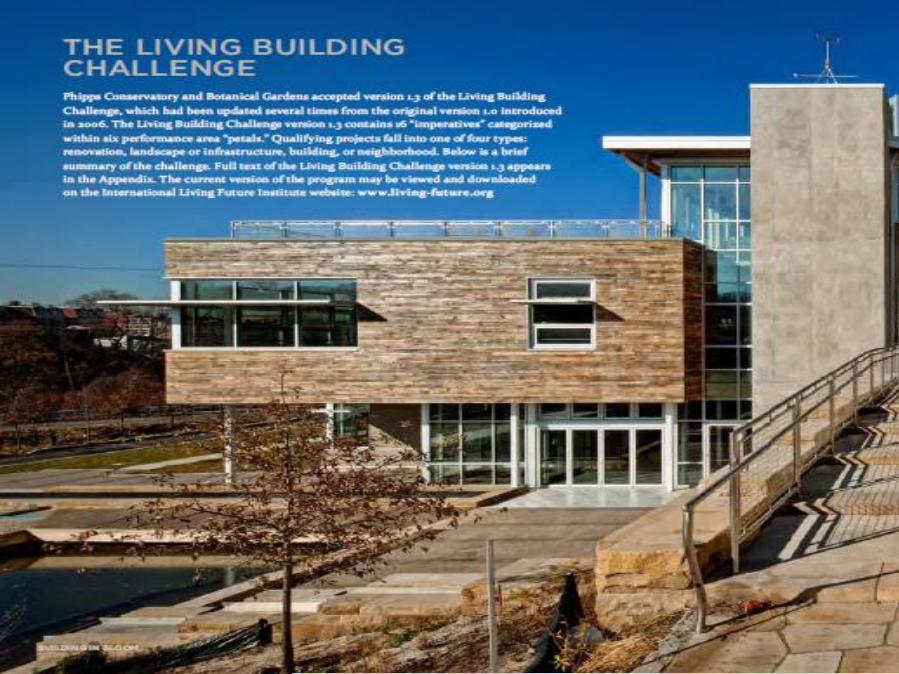
whole systems, not parts

use current sunlight

eliminate waste

THE LIVING BUILDING CHALLENGE

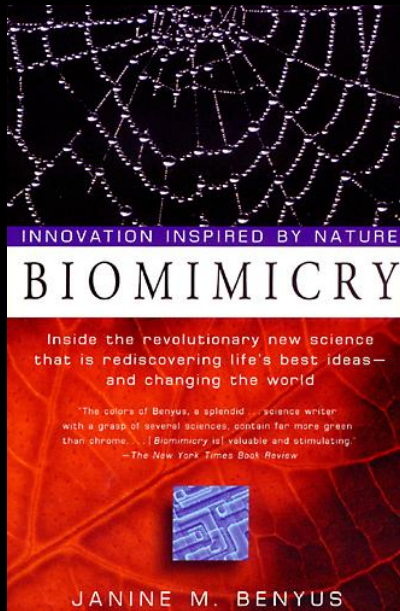
Philips Conservatory and Botanical Gardens accepted version 1.3 of the Living Building Challenge, which had been updated several times from the original version 1.0 introduced in 2006. The Living Building Challenge version 1.3 contains 96 "imperatives" categorized within six performance area "petals." Qualifying projects fall into one of four types: renovation, landscape or infrastructure, building, or neighborhood. Below is a brief summary of the challenge. Full text of the Living Building Challenge version 1.3 appears in the Appendix. The current version of the program may be viewed and downloaded on the International Living Future Institute website: www.living-future.org



A photograph of a large-scale solar panel installation on a flat roof. The panels are arranged in neat, parallel rows that recede into the distance. The sun is high in a clear blue sky, creating a prominent starburst effect. The background shows a line of green trees and a building under a bright, sunny sky.

fossil fuels to sunshine
+ ecological design and efficiency

nature as mentor



spiders make silk stronger than steel, tougher than kevlar from digested flies—at room temperature, w/o oiling sulfuric acid and high pressure extruders!

Natural Systems Agriculture



#3 Democracy . . .

The one idea to have emerged from the long story of human oppression that insists upon a people's inalienable right to rule themselves.

Shoshana Zuboff

The real reason for democracy, is that mankind is so fallen that no man can be trusted with unchecked power over his fellows . . . no men are fit to be masters.

C. S. Lewis

Democracy 4.0 . . . A new covenant

- rights of future generations & other species
- steady-state economy of reciprocity
- limits to wealth, within and between generations
- design as civic/ecological education
- work-place democracy; worker owned companies
- decisions about technology; deliberative democracy
- militarism . . . abolition of nuclear weapons



Genuine politics—politics worthy of the name, and the only politics I am willing to devote myself to—is simply a matter of serving those around us: serving the community, and serving those who will come after us. Its deepest roots are moral . . .

Václav Havel,
Summer Meditations

I favor politics as practical morality, as service to the truth, as essentially human and humanly measured care for our fellow humans.

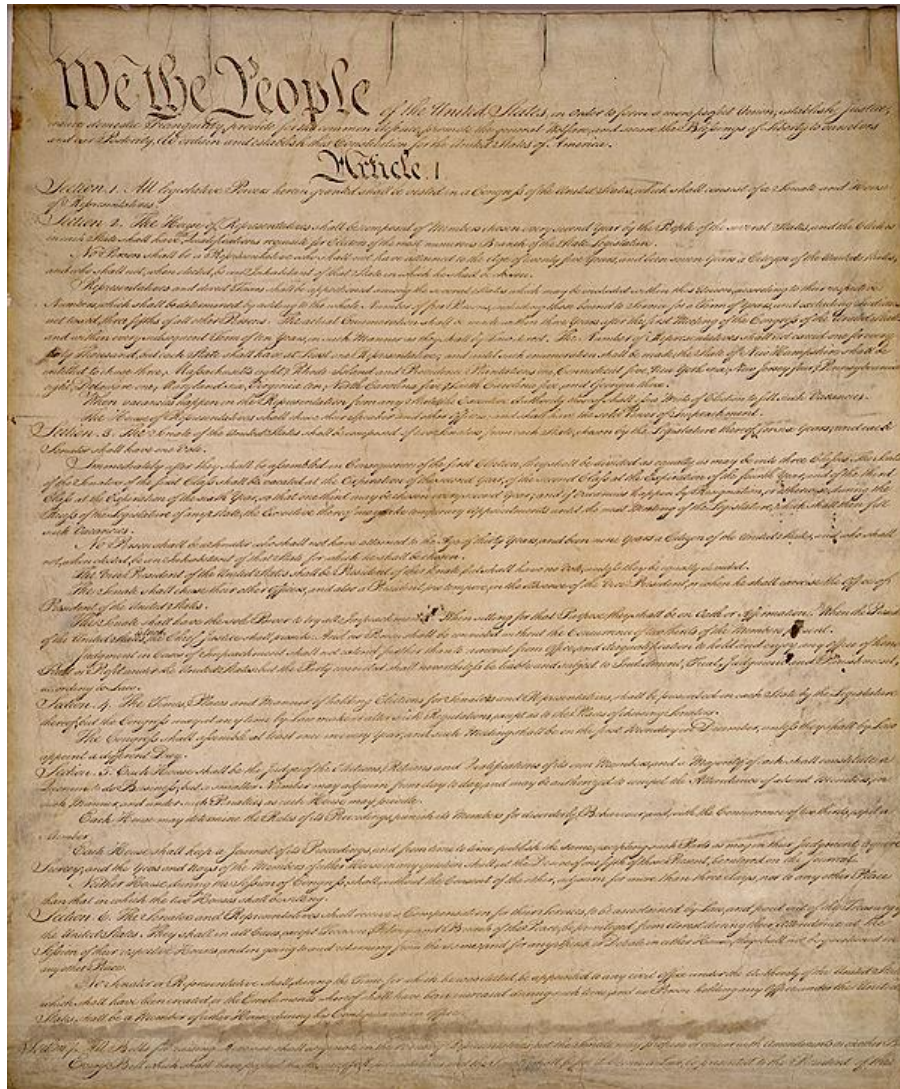
Václav Havel,
Living in Truth

- Interdependence obliges us to think of *one world with a common plan* an agreement on systems of governance for the 'global commons.' 102, 107
- A healthy politics is sorely needed, capable of reforming and coordinating institutions, promoting best practices and overcoming undue pressure and bureaucratic inertia (111)
- Unless citizens control political power, it will not be possible to control damage to the environment. 110
- Politics must not be subject to the economy . . . There is an urgent need for politics and economics to enter into a frank dialogue in the service of life. 115
- What is needed is a politics which is far-sighted and capable of a new, integral and interdisciplinary approach.

#4 . . . Constitution and law

If the founders had known then what we know now about how the Earth works as a biophysical system . . . How would they have written a Constitution for a world of interdependent ecosystems, leads/lags, stock and flows, feedback loops, and nasty surprises?

We the people of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect union, establish Justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.





#5

If men were angels no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary.

James Madison
Federalist, no. 51



Man's capacity for justice makes democracy possible; but
man's inclination to injustice makes democracy necessary.

Irresponsible and uncontrolled power is the greatest source of
injustice.

Reinhold Niebuhr, Children of Light and The Children of Darkness: A
Vindication of Democracy and Critique of its Traditional Defense (1944)

Governments do what markets and oligarchs don't do

Security . . . war and peace

Justice, enforce voting rights

Disaster recovery

Foresight

Research and development

Public investment: schools, parks, hospitals . . .

Fair taxation

Countervailing balance to corporate power

Education

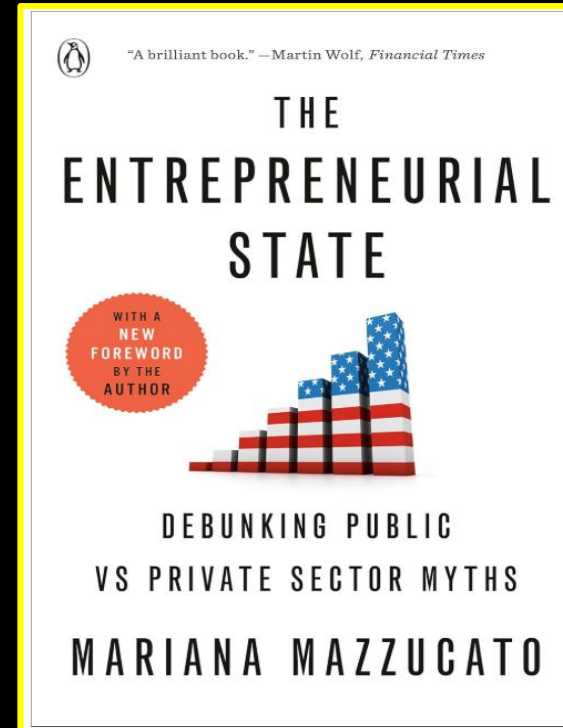
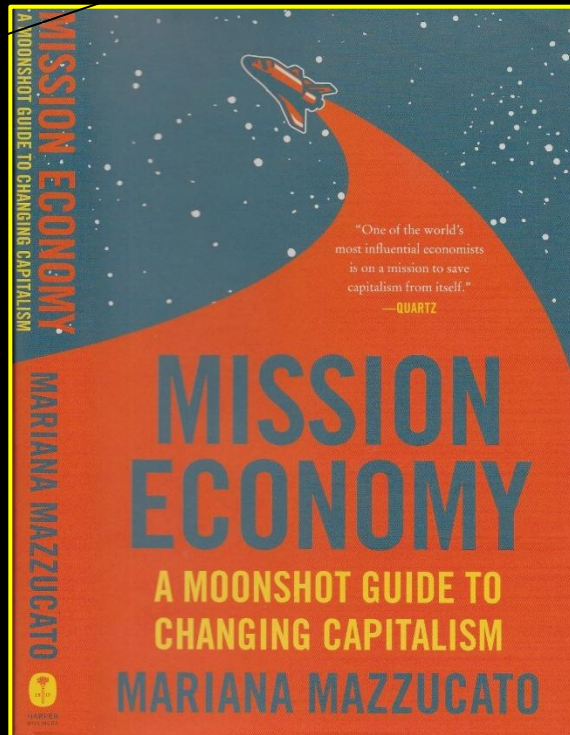
Economic fairness

Environmental protection

Consumer protection

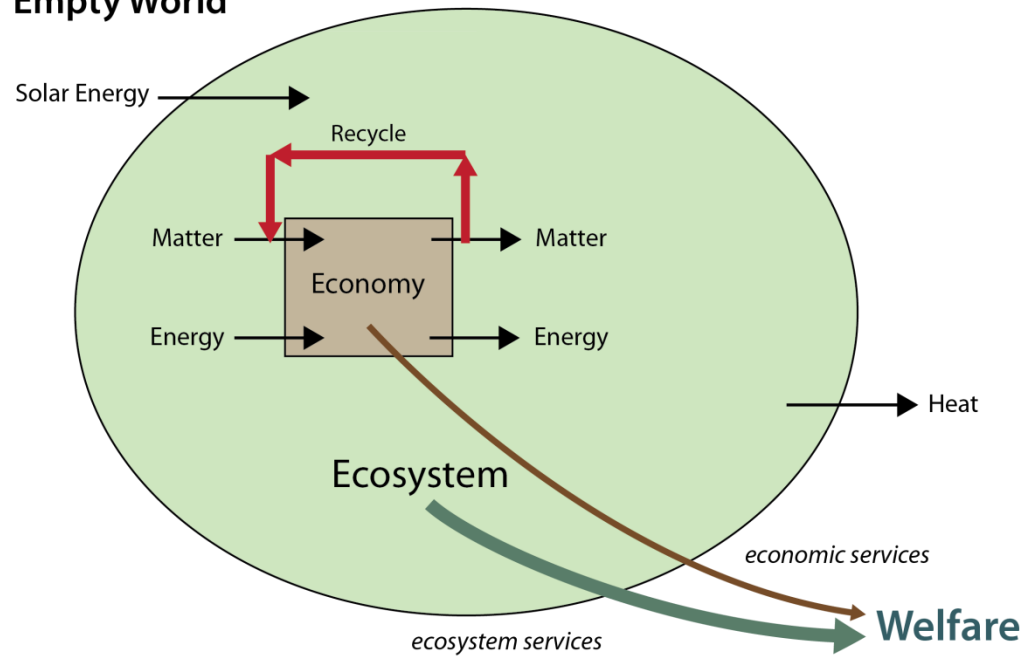
Healthcare . . .

reimagining government & governance

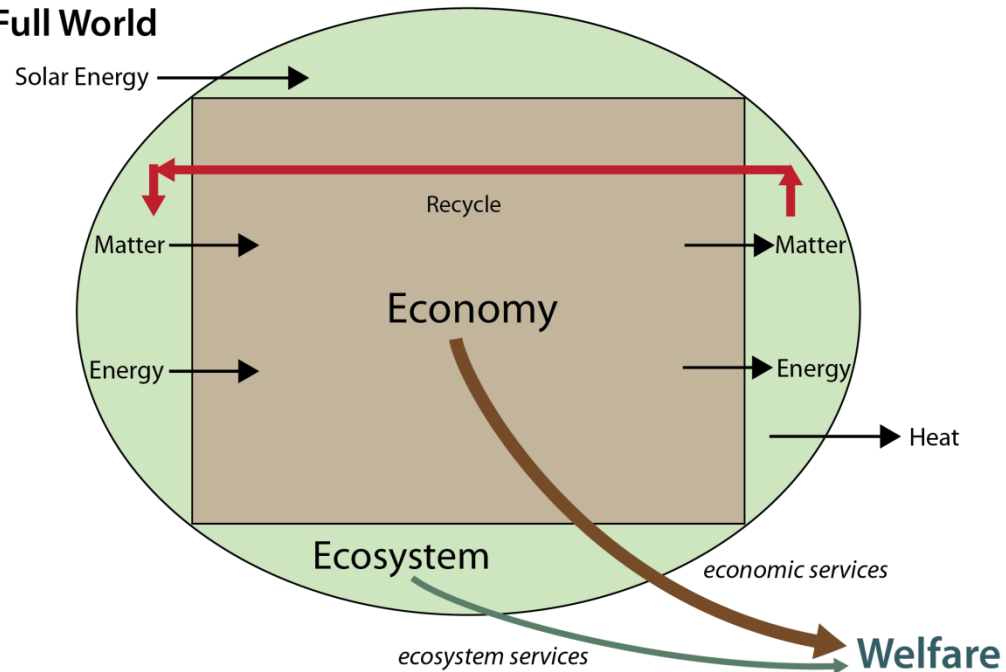


#6

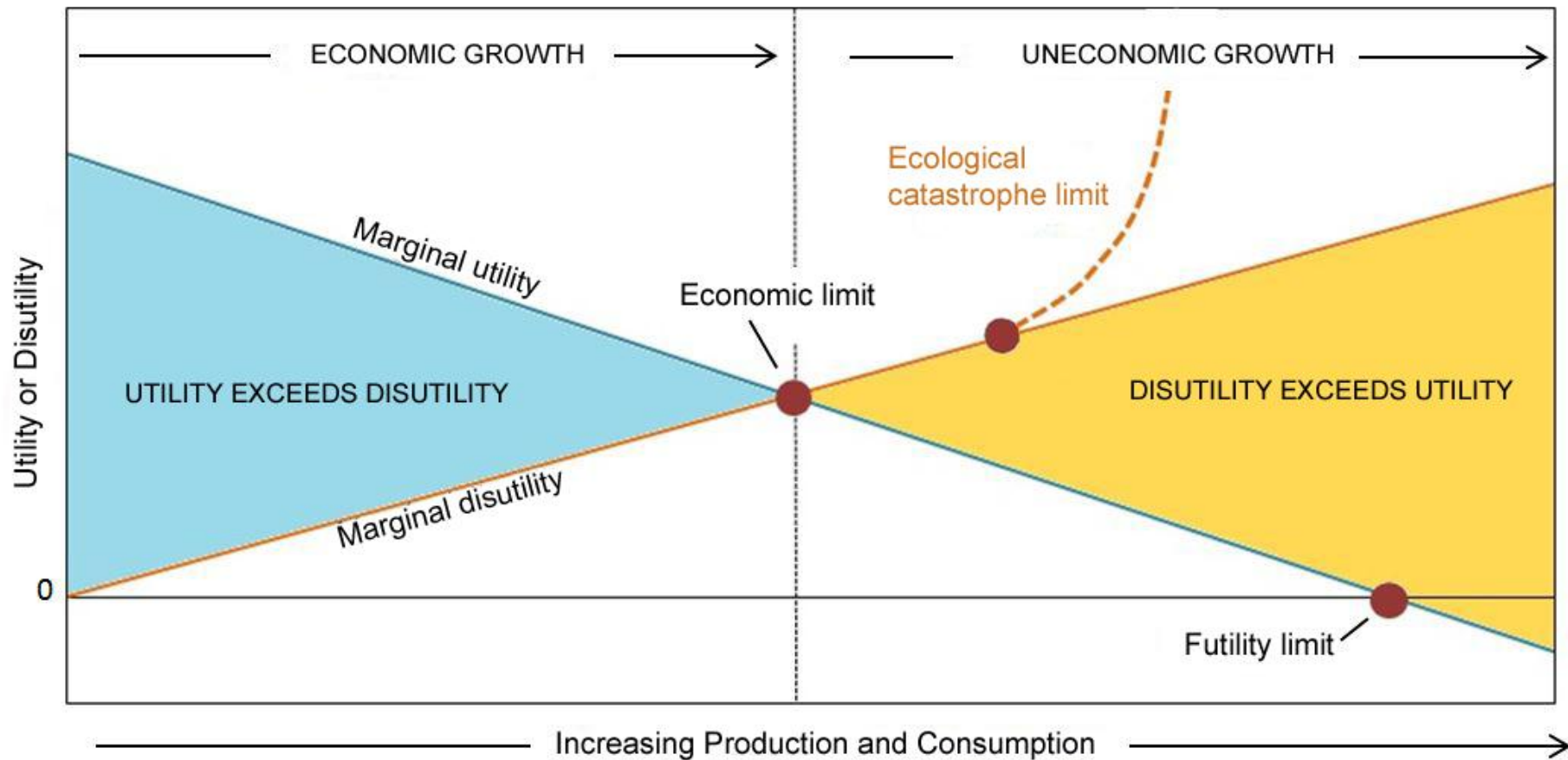
Empty World



Full World



Herman Daly, The Steady-State Economy, 1973; 1977



End the Divine Rights of Capital

1886 Santa Clara Co. v. Southern Pacific
(corporations as persons protected under the 14th)



Buckley v. Valeo, 1976



Citizens United, 2010

Psychopathic behavior . . .

- ✓ callous unconcern for feelings of others
- ✓ incapacity to maintain enduring relationships
- ✓ reckless disregard for the safety of others
- ✓ deceitfulness, repeated lying
- ✓ incapacity to experience guilt
- ✓ failure to conform to social norms & laws

Dr. Robert Hare, consultant
FBI on psychopaths*

*Achbar, Abbott, Bakkan, film: The Corporation, 2004.



1. that laws of economics 238 years old can be made to work with those of evolution ~3.8 billion years in the making;
2. i.e. that infinite growth can continue in a finite system;
3. that nature's capital [soils, biological diversity, climate stability, clean air and water etc] has no value;
4. technology can substitute for ecological scarcity
5. that more stuff = more happiness

#7



Let ours be a time remembered for the awakening of a new reverence for life, the firm resolve to achieve sustainability, the quickening of the struggle for justice and peace and the joyful celebration of life.

Laudato Si'

the Great Work:

we are citizens in the community of life &

trustees for all yet to live;

everything is connected;

violence is self-defeating;

whole, health, healing, holy are one thing



PRICE \$5.99

JUNE 7, 2010

THE NEW YORKER

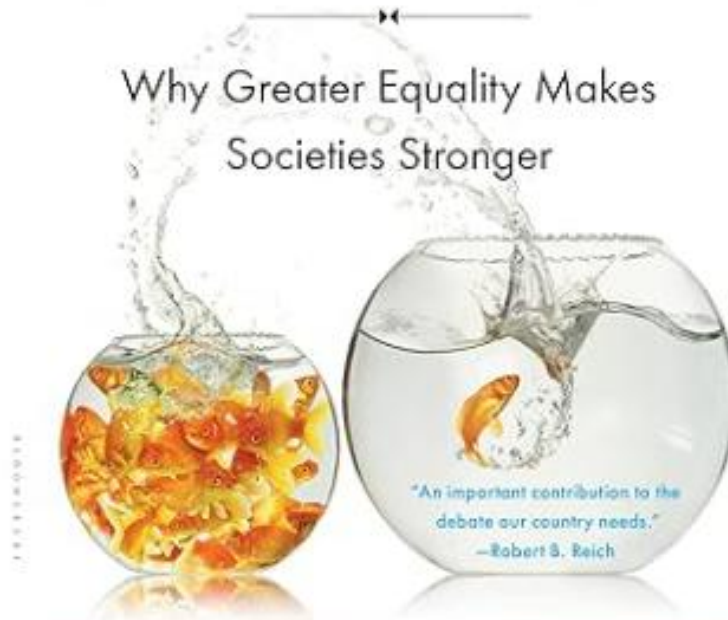


#8 no bill

INTERNATIONAL BESTSELLER

THE SPIRIT LEVEL

Why Greater Equality Makes
Societies Stronger



RICHARD WILKINSON AND KATE PICKETT

Foreword by Robert B. Reich



in politics

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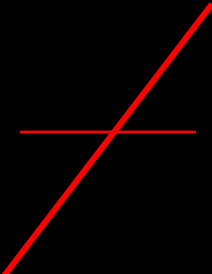
EN
UP



#9 Education

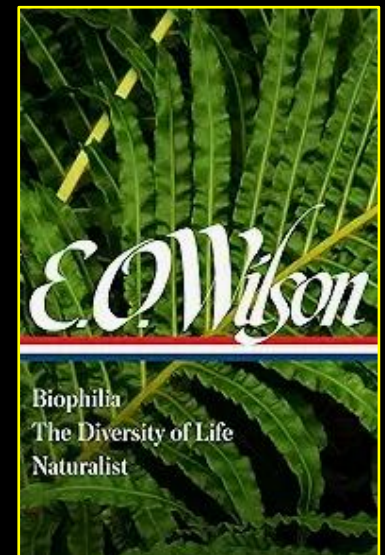
All students graduate knowing

- how the earth works as a physical system,
- the basic principles of democracy and good governance,
- they are citizens of one indivisible civic and ecological community, and that they are
- kin to everything that lives or will live.



Can the psychic thread of life on Earth be snapped
without eventually fatal consequences?

E. O. Wilson





Life $\neq$ Career!

Be anything you like, be madmen,
drunks, and bastards of every shape
and form, but at all costs avoid one
thing: success.

Thomas Merton

#10 informed and engaged citizenry.
“good trouble, necessary trouble”



HAISTEN'S MATTRESS & AWNING COMPANY

INVEST IN REST

BUY THE BEST



the year 2276:

CO ₂ . . .	~ 350
population:	<4 billion
nuclear weapons:	abolished
natural systems	recovering
biodiversity	stabilized
democracy	flourishing
poverty	eliminated
A.I.	Controlled

We made it and it began in 2026!

Now is the time for telling new tales, for retelling old dilemmas: how to live in the world *and* preserve it; how to sustain tradition *and* foster invention; how to promote freedom *and* cultivate order; how to forge identity *and* value difference; how to appreciate the parts *and* grasp the whole.

Anne Whiston Spirn, The Language of Landscape

non-puny ideas

justice
decency
fairness
compassion
democracy
mercy
foresight
stewardship
land ethics
living in truth
humility
reverence for life
kin to all living beings

Learned in kindergarten:

play fair

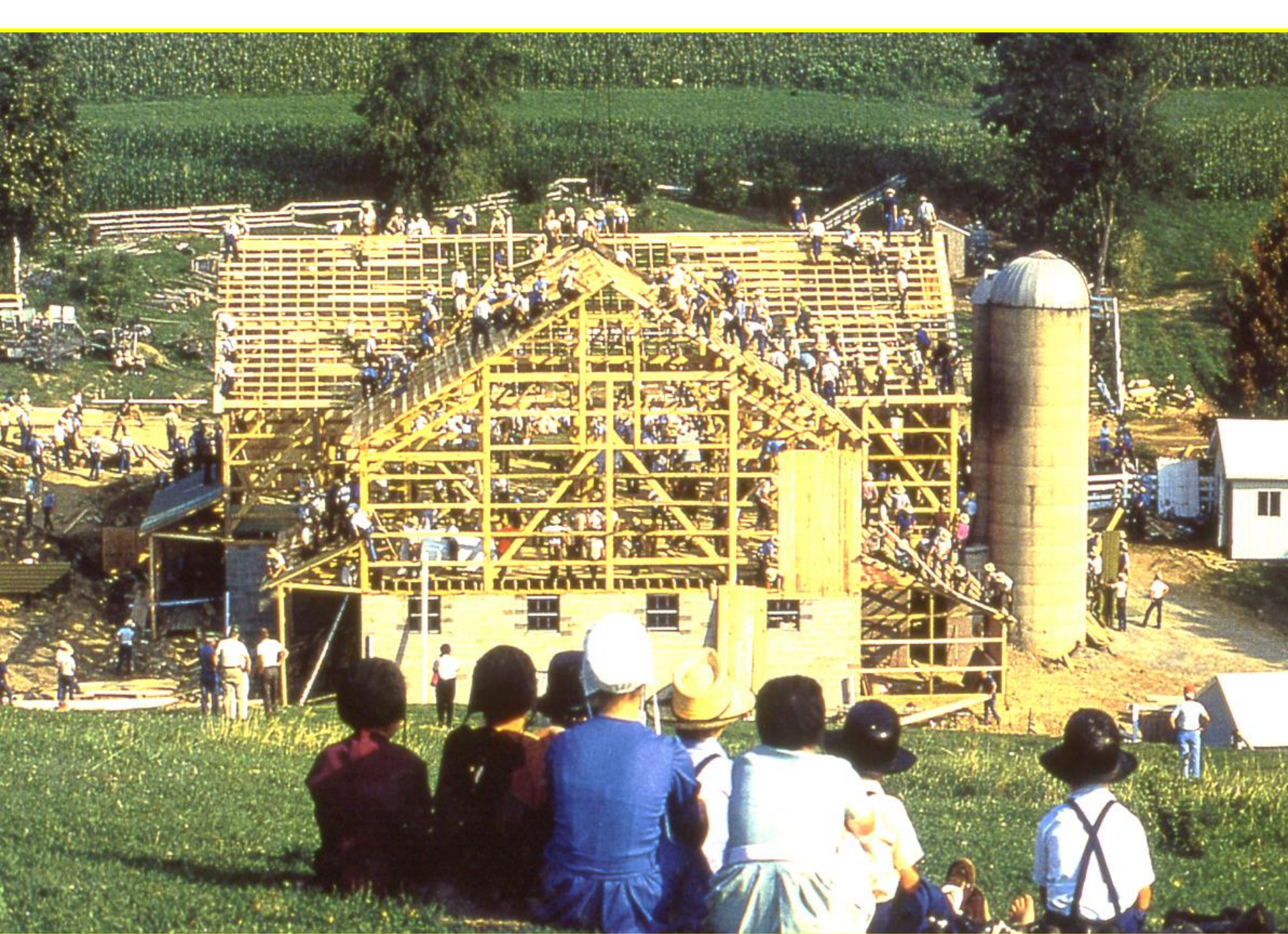
clean up your messes

share your cookies

don't take things that aren't yours

hold hands crossing the street

Robert Fulgham, All I Really Need to Know I learned in Kindergarten (1986)



We pray for these things with humility;

We pray because of the hope that is within us,
and because of a faith in the ultimate triumph of the human
spirit;

We pray because of our love for Creation, and because of
our trust in God.

We pray, above all, for peace throughout the world.

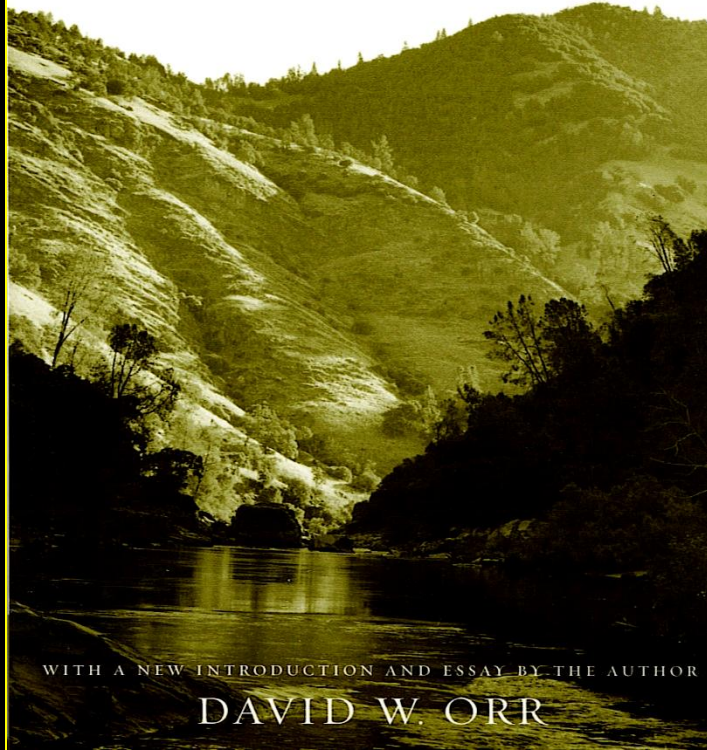
Jane Goodall



10TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

EARTH *in* MIND

On Education, Environment,
and the Human Prospect



Thank You!
david.orr@Oberlin.edu

OUR PROGRA

FIONA RITCHIE DOUG ORR

THE CAMP EX

SUPPORT THE C

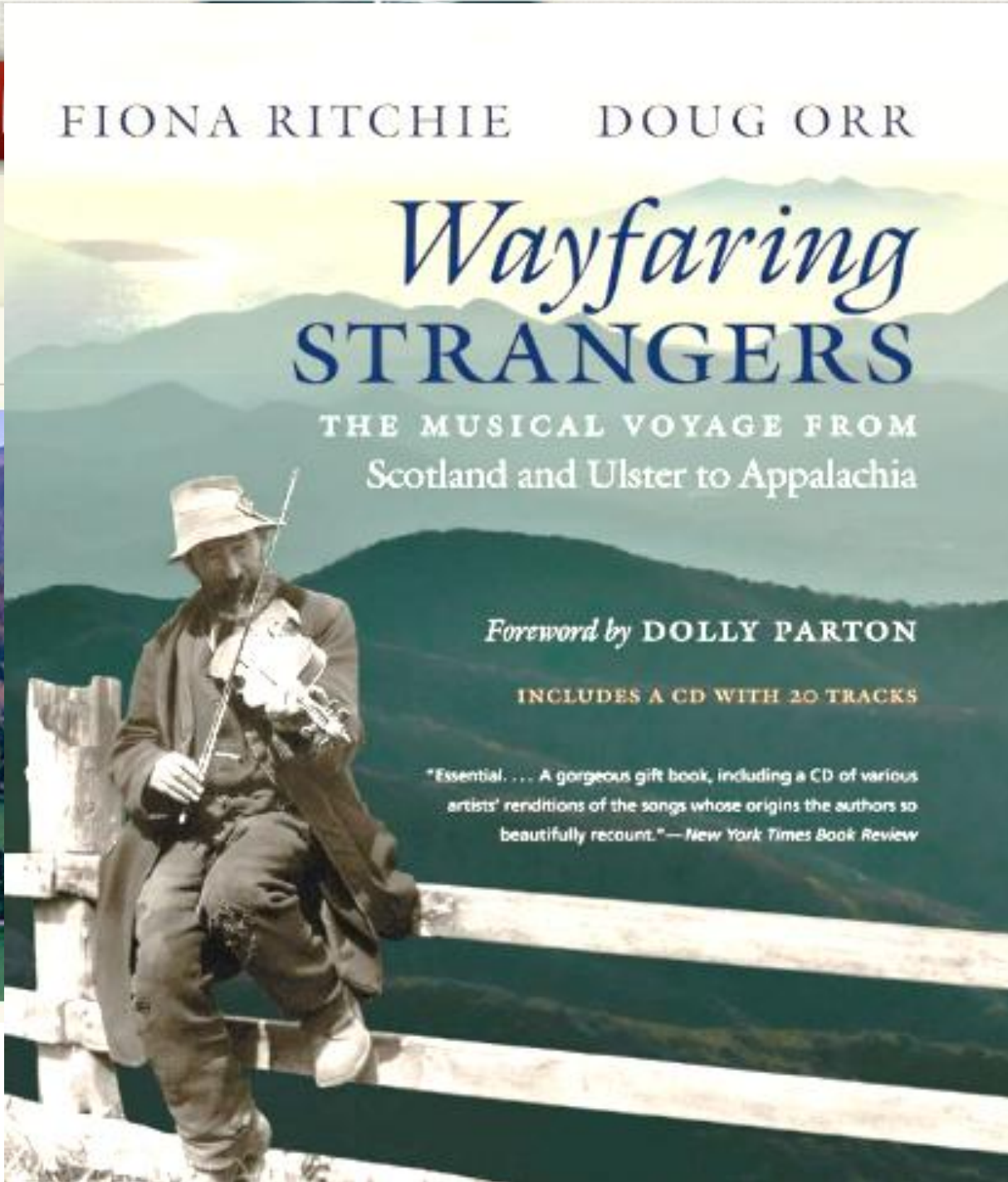
Wayfaring STRANGERS

THE MUSICAL VOYAGE FROM
Scotland and Ulster to Appalachia

Foreword by DOLLY PARTON

INCLUDES A CD WITH 20 TRACKS

"Essential. . . . A gorgeous gift book, including a CD of various
artists' renditions of the songs whose origins the authors so
beautifully recount."—*New York Times Book Review*

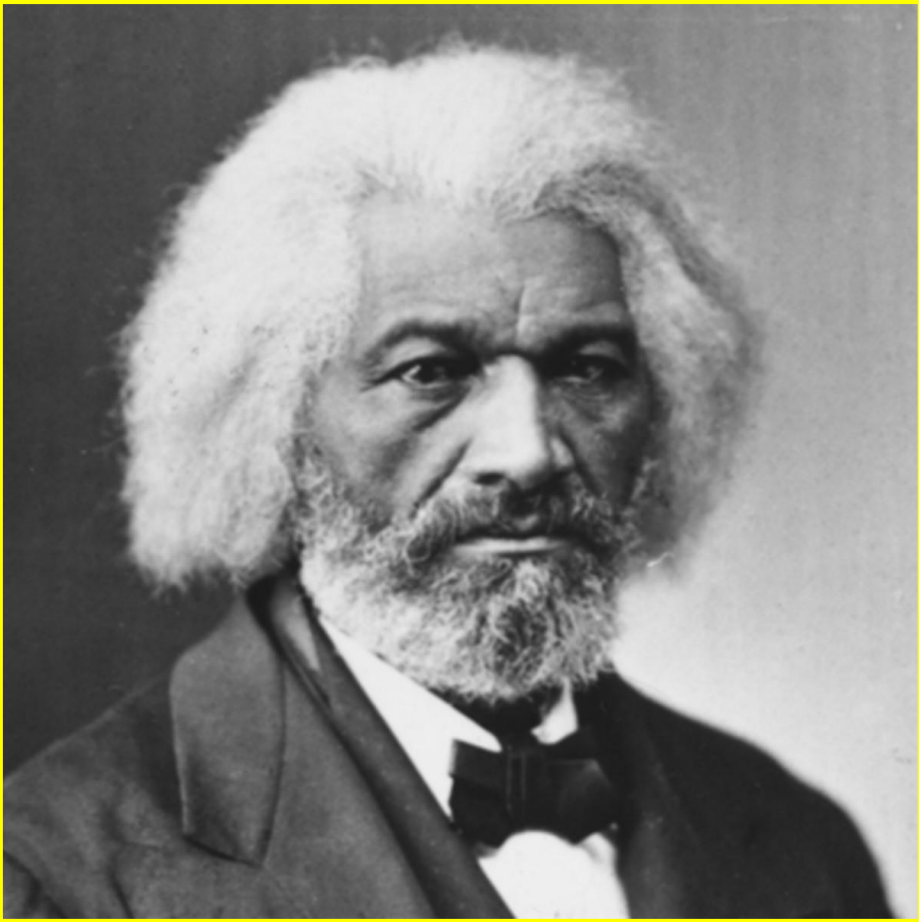


WARNER BOOKS 0-440-67693-6



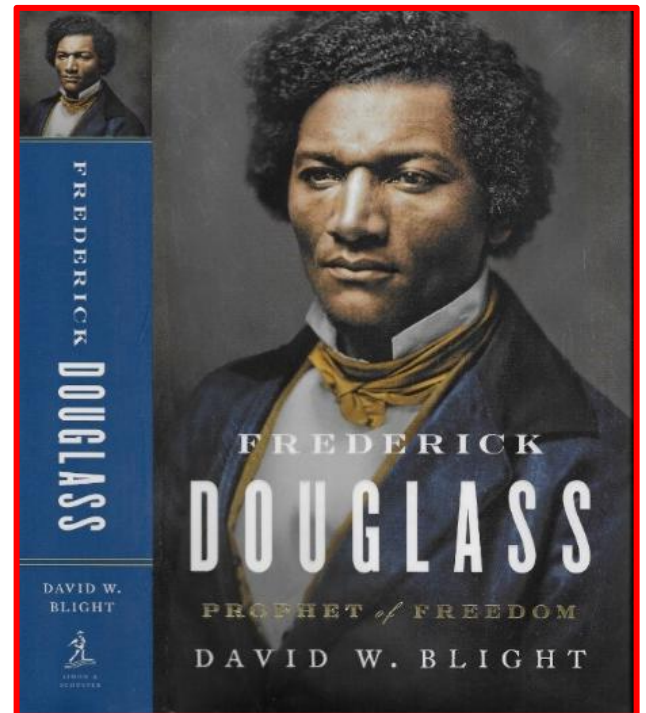
REASON FOR HOPE

A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

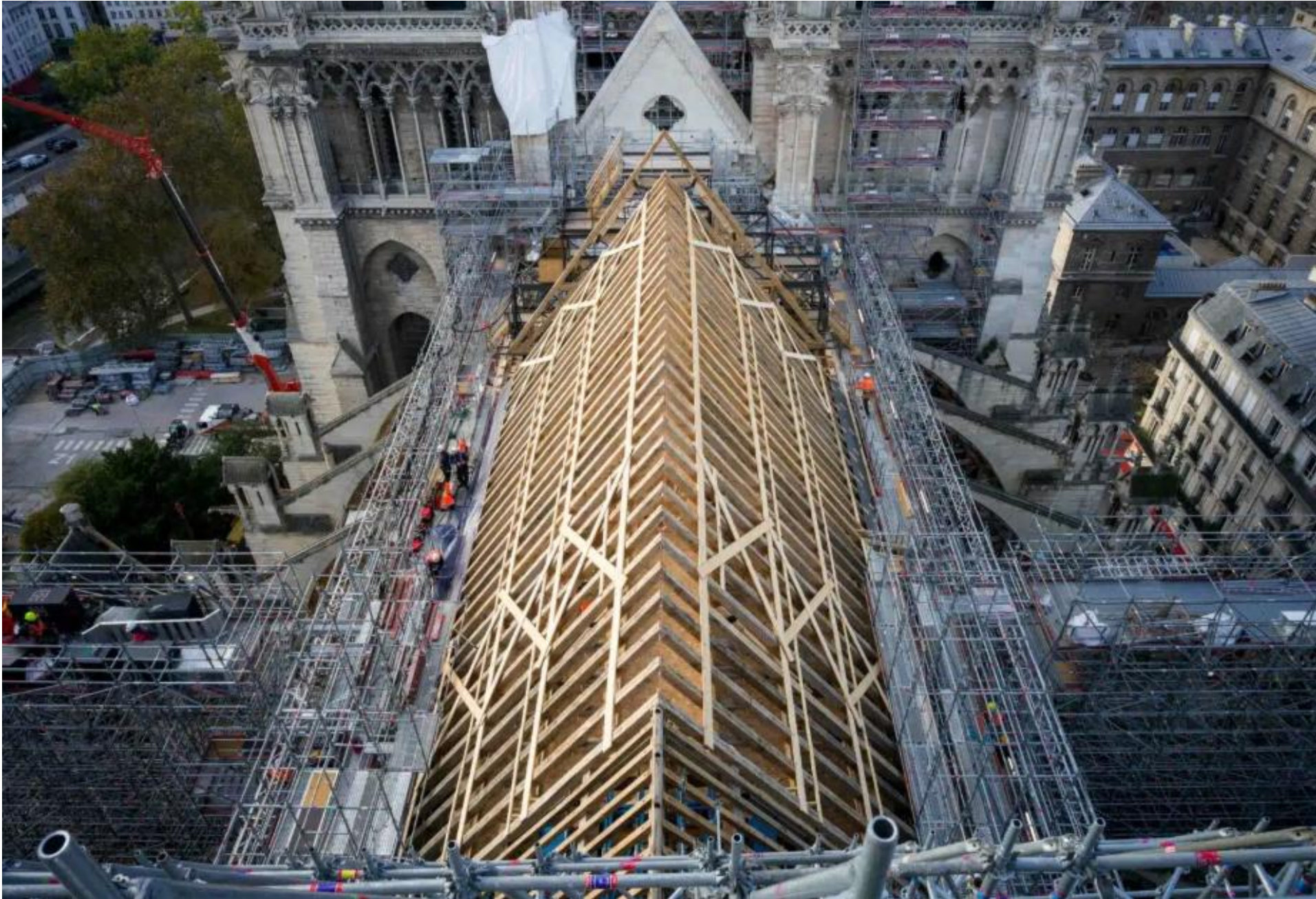


Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will.

Frederick Douglass









ecological disorder . . .

reflects a prior disorder of thought, perception, and values. The ecological crisis is a crisis of mind, therefore a challenge to those institutions purporting to improve minds.

It is a crisis of education, not in education.

all education

is environmental education. By what we include or exclude we teach our students that they are part of or apart from nature.

non-puny ideas:

Kin to all that ever lived, is living, or will live
justice-within and between generations

real patriotism

conservatism and liberalism

politics as a vocation

we the people

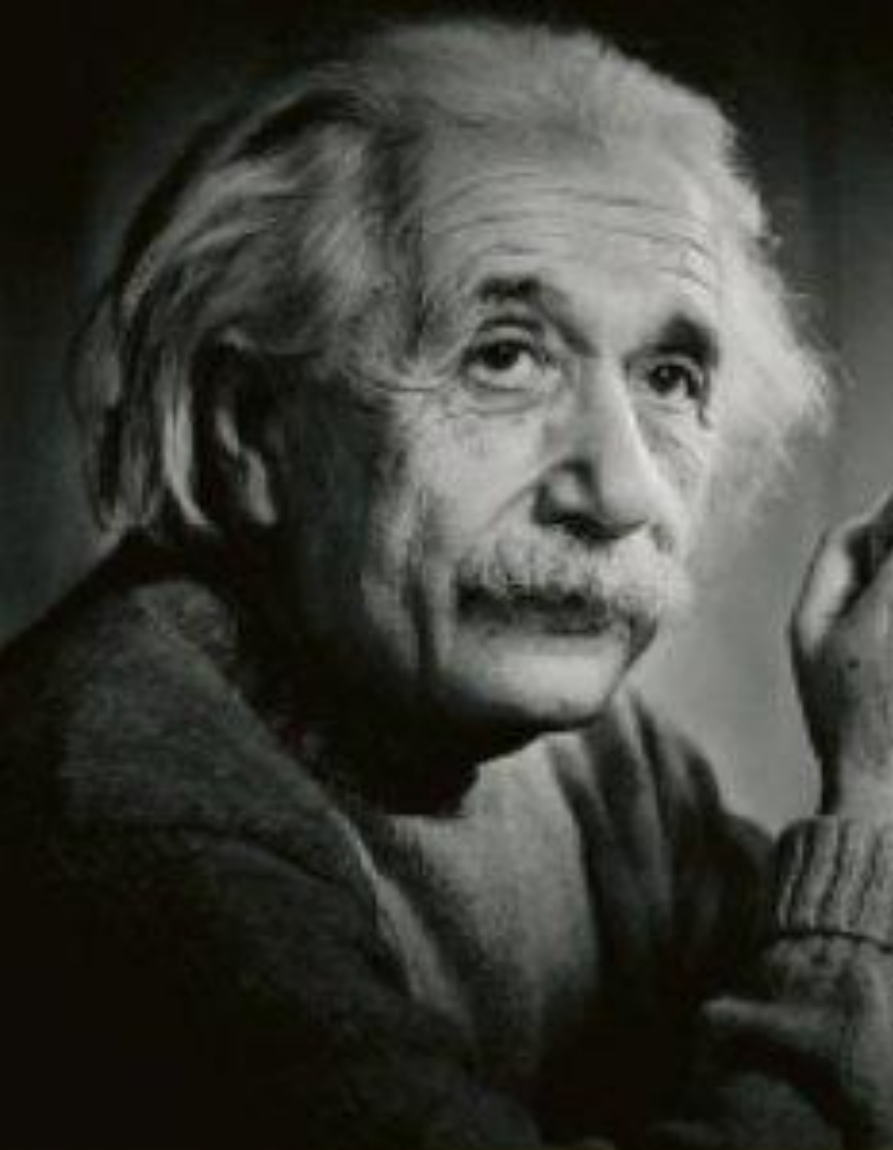
public service

rights and responsibilities

taxes . . . the price for civilization

1984

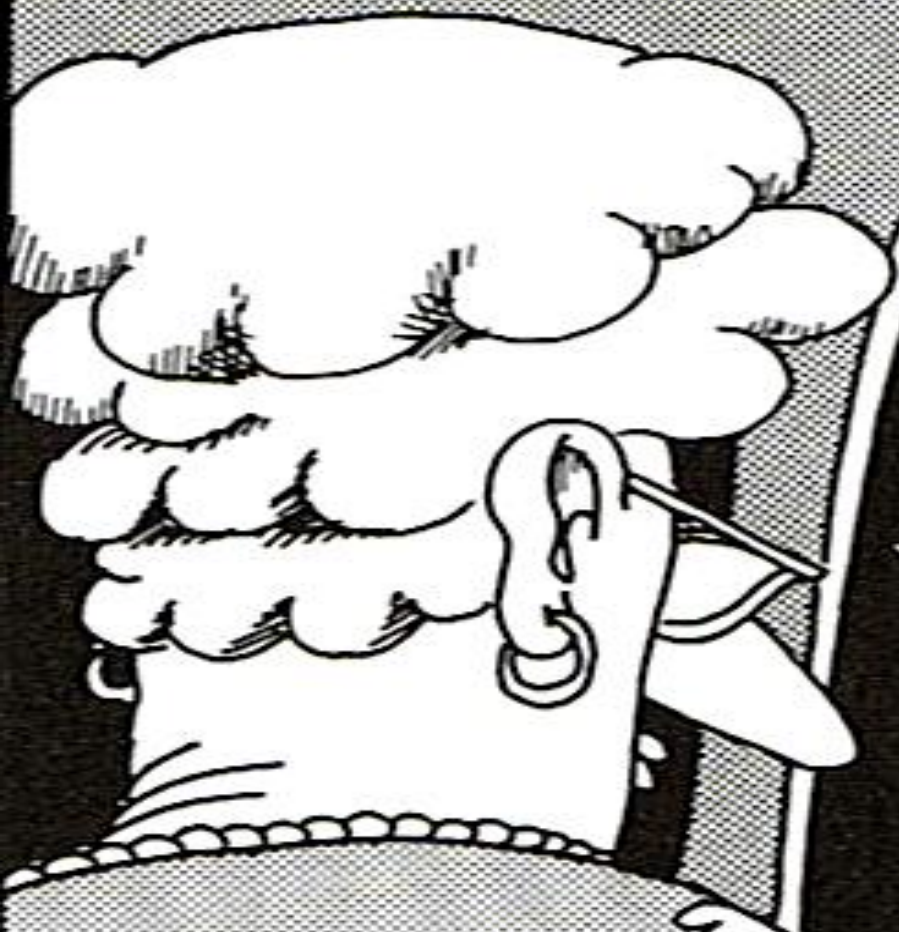
GEORGE ORWELL



**"I fear the day that technology
will surpass our human
interaction. The world will
have a generation
of idiots."**

Albert Einstein





OBJECTS IN MIRROR ARE
CLOSER THAN THEY APPEAR

THE GREAT ACCELERATION

SOCIO-ECONOMIC TRENDS



EARTH SYSTEM TRENDS



REFERENCE: Steffen, W., W. Broadgate, L. Deutsch, O. Gaffney and C. Ludwig. The Trajectory of the Anthropocene: the Great Acceleration, *The Anthropocene Review*, 16 January 2015.

MAP & DESIGN: Félix Pharand-Deschênes / Globaia

The formal political structures of our time are incapable of confronting this crisis on their own. The reason for this is simple: the basic building block of these structures is the nation-state, inherent to the nature of which is the pursuit of the interests of a particular group of people. So powerful is this imperative that even transnational groupings of nation-states like the U.N. seem unable to overcome it. . . . It may be that climate change represents, in its very nature an unsolvable problem for modern nations in terms of their biopolitical mission and the practices of governance that are associated with it.

Amitav Ghosh, *The Great Derangement*

The Earth belongs in usufruct to the living: the dead have neither rights nor powers over it.

Thomas Jefferson, 1789

Society is a partnership not only between those who are living, but those who are living, those who are dead, and those who are to be born.

Edmund Burke, 1790

BRING OUT
YOUR DEAD
RIGHT-WING
DOGMA!

Invisible
Hand

Adam Smith

HAYEK
The Road
to Serfdom

LEVIN
Liberty
Lynx

Government
is the
Problem!

Friedman

RUSH
LIMBAUGH

REGAN

Bad News
**MASSIVE GOV.
BAILOUT, AGAIN**

M. WUERKER

POLITICO Andrews McKee

There is such a thing as being too late. Procrastination is the thief of time. Life often leaves us standing bare, naked, and dejected with a lost opportunity. The tide in the affairs of man does not remain at the flood; it ebbs. We may cry out desperately for time to pause in her passage, but time is deaf to every plea and rushes on. Over the bleached bones and jumbled residue of numerous civilizations are written the pathetic words: "Too Late."

Martin Luther King , 1967

“places to intervene” . . . (Donella Meadows)

-
- The diagram lists 12 levels of intervention, numbered 1 to 12 from bottom to top. Red curly braces on the right side group these levels into three categories:
- slow damage** (levels 10, 11, 12):
 - 12) subsidies, codes, standards, taxes
 - 11) sinks, buffers
 - 10) infrastructure, stocks and flows
 - Δ structure** (levels 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9):
 - 9) information relative to system change
 - 8) negative feedback loops ie. disincentives
 - 7) positive feed back loops ie. Incentives
 - 6) access to information
 - 5) rules of the system ie. punishments, constraints
 - 4) power of self to evolve
 - Δ consciousness, but how?** (levels 1, 2, 3):
 - 3) goals of system
 - 2) mindset & worldviews
 - 1) transcend paradigms/beliefs

What is a system?

anything that is not chaos . . . any structure that exhibits order and pattern Kenneth Boulding

an interconnected set of elements that is coherently organized in a way that achieves something . . . It consists of elements, interconnections, and a purpose or function. D. Meadows

(a) A set of units or elements interconnected so that changes in some elements or their relations produce changes in other parts of the system, and (b) the entire system exhibits properties and behaviors that are different from those of the parts. Robert Jervis

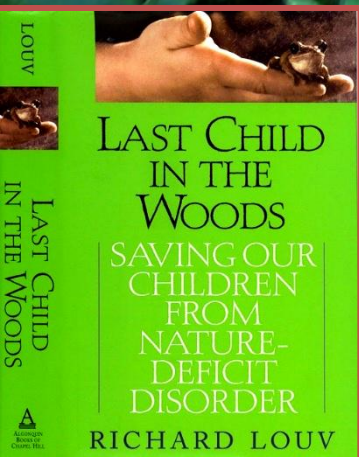
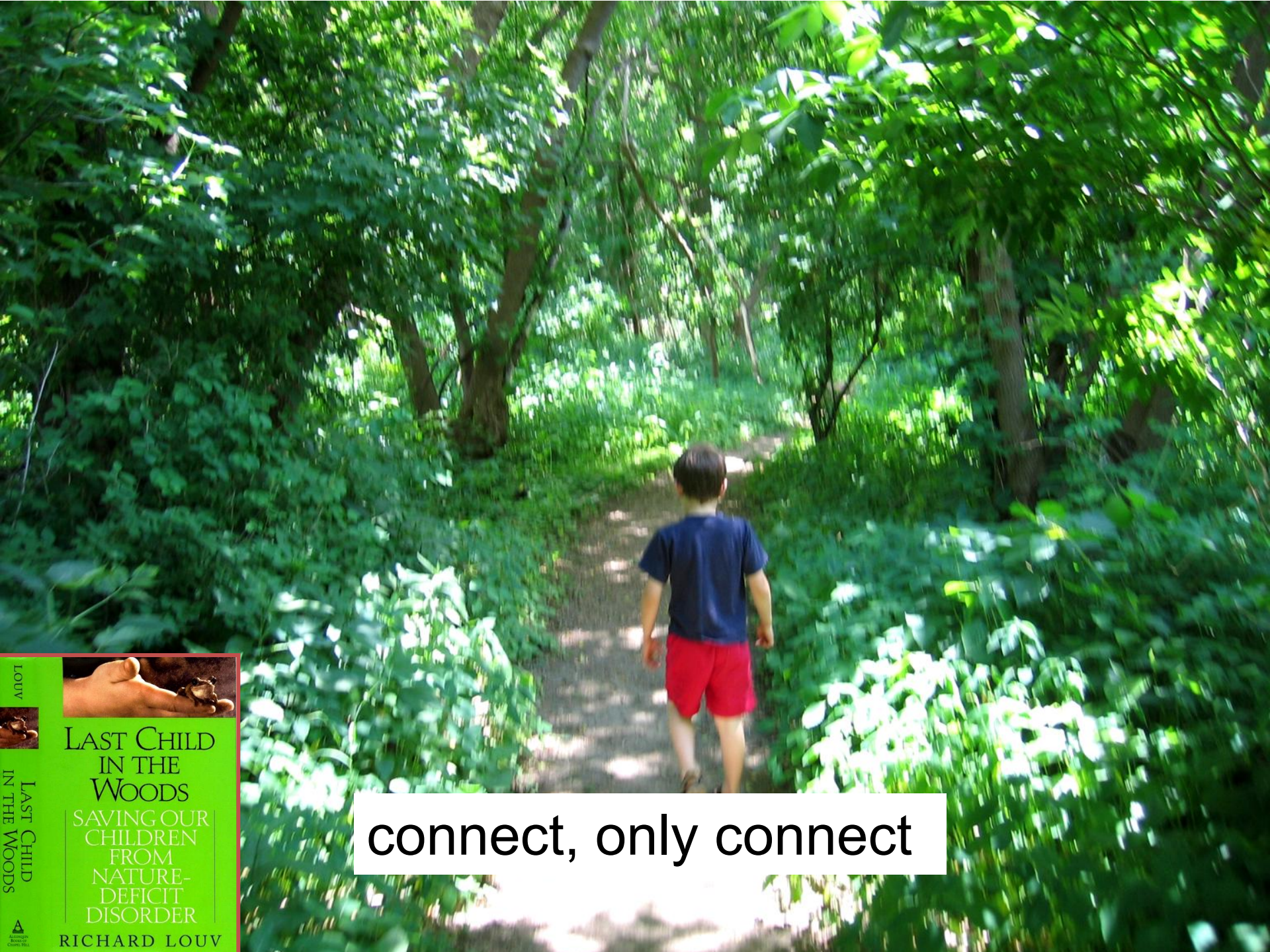
One of the most important ideas in modern science and it is almost impossible to define. Garrett Hardin

Laurence Tribe in Uncertain Justice:

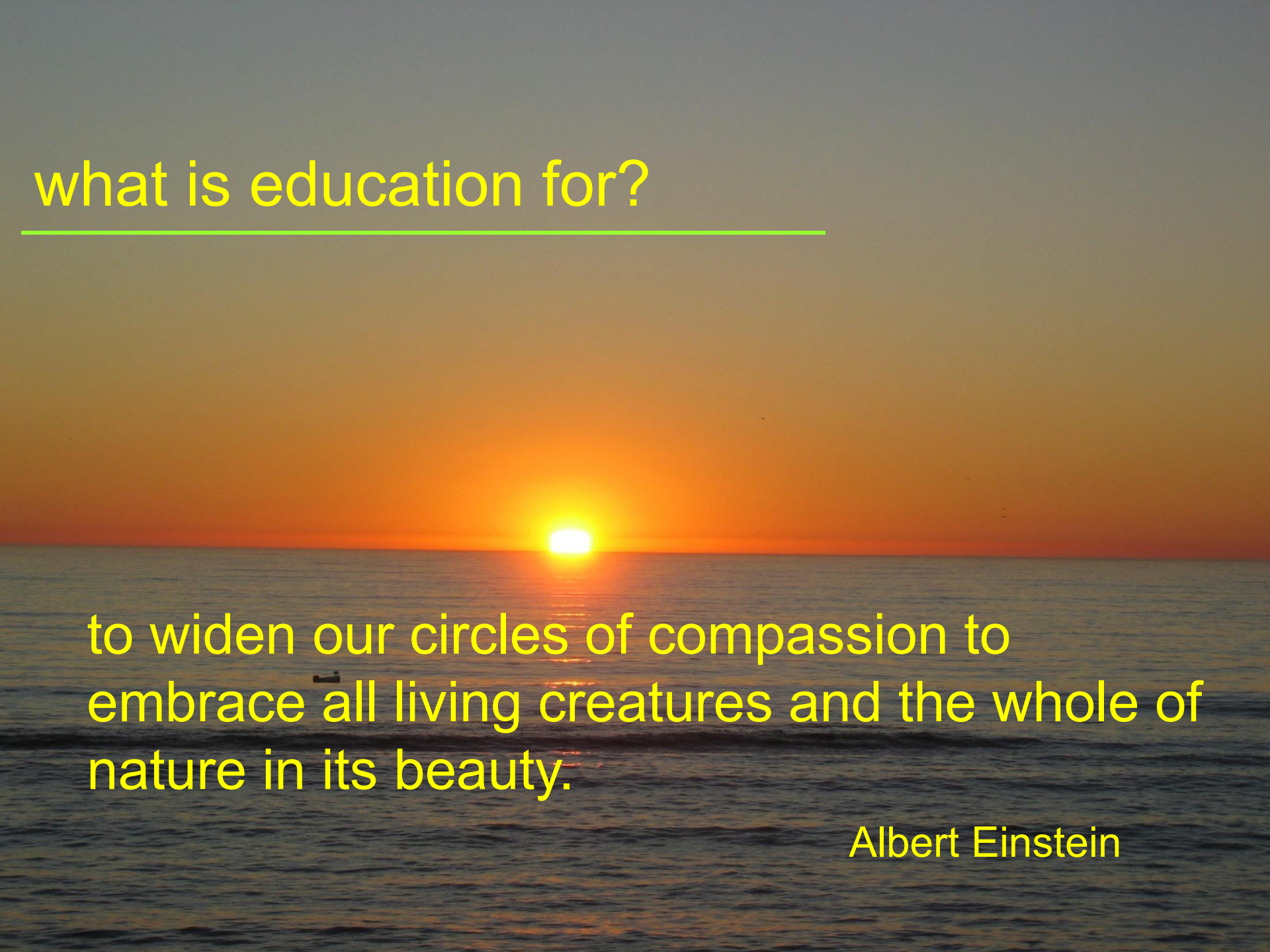
No major case is truly over when it's over . . . The reverberations continue generating new controversies that will return to a Court that has itself been changed by the altered legal and cultural landscape.

Wm Faulkner, Absolom, Absolom:

Maybe nothing ever happens once and is finished. Maybe happen is never once but like ripples maybe on water after the pebble sinks, the ripples moving on spreading, the pool attached by a narrow umbilical water-cord to the next pool which the first pool feeds.



connect, only connect



what is education for?

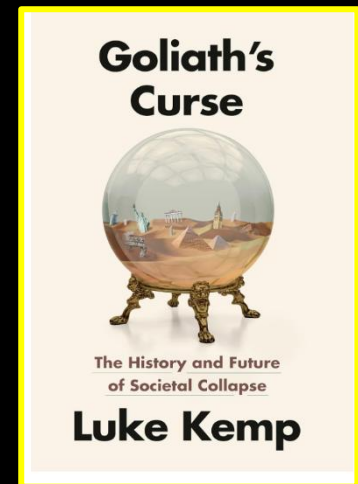
to widen our circles of compassion to
embrace all living creatures and the whole of
nature in its beauty.

Albert Einstein

it is the most subversive concept in Western culture . . .

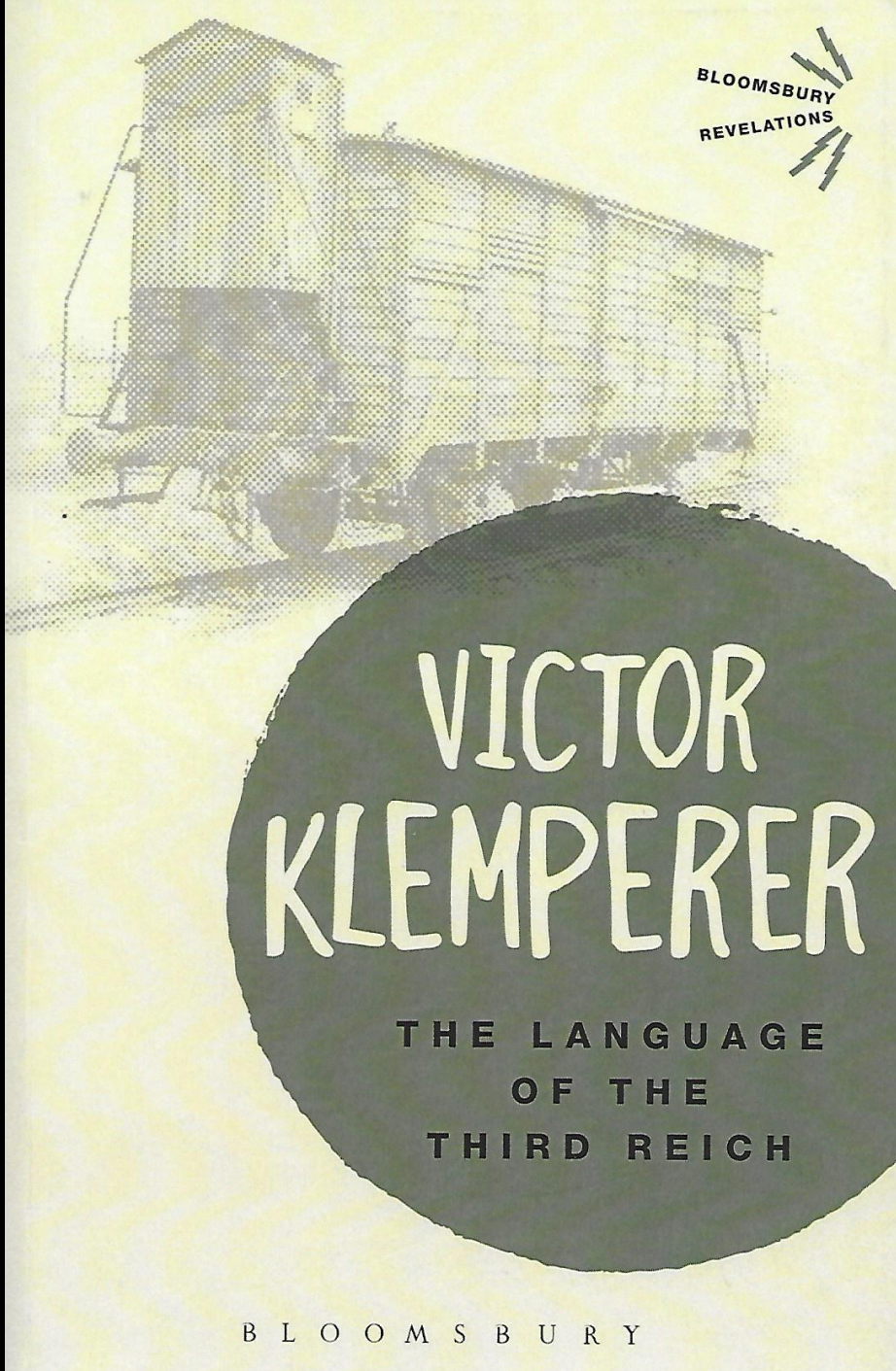
no one, or anything, anywhere is an island cut off from the main. We are inextricably tied to everything that ever was, is, or will be . . .

“The most likely fate of the Global Goliath is self-termination Bigger, more interconnected populations mean worse disease outbreaks; stronger militaries mean more damaging arms races and barbarism is the economic backbone of the systems that produce carbon, weapons, and dangerous technology.”





Extreme sea level



BLOOMSBURY
REVELATIONS

VICTOR KLEMPERER

THE LANGUAGE
OF THE
THIRD REICH

B L O O M S B U R Y

Berlin, 1945-a former Nazi:

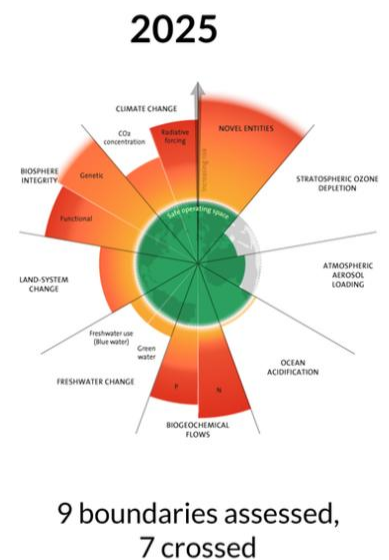
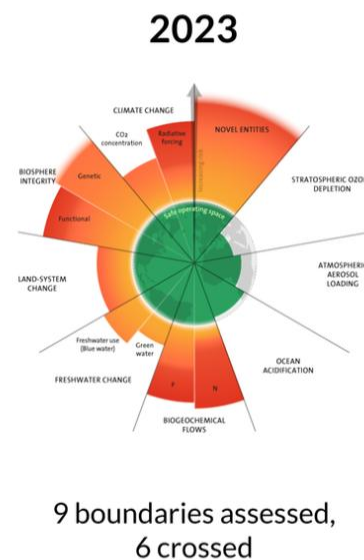
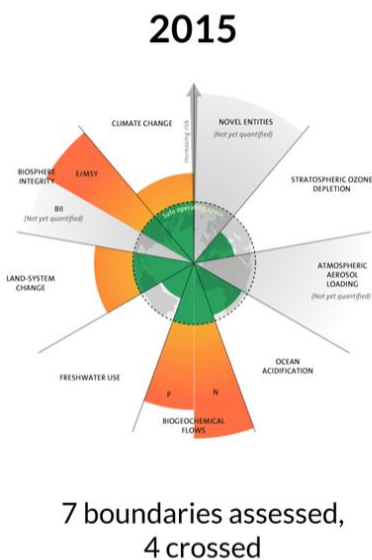
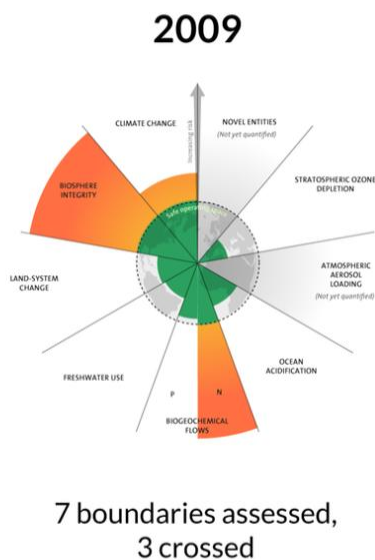
“I believed in him [Hitler] . . .
But I still believe in HIM, I
really do.

“Nazism was accepted by
millions as Gospel because it
Appropriated the language of
The Gospels.”

The vast and wonderful knowledge of this marvelous universe is locked in the bosoms of its individual's souls.

To tap this mighty reservoir of experience, knowledge, beauty, love, and deed we must appeal not to the few, not to some, but to all. The narrower the appeal, the poorer the culture; the wider the appeal the more magnificent are the possibilities.

W.E.B. Du Bois, 1920



The evolution of the planetary boundaries framework. Licenced under CC BY-NC-ND 3.0 (Credit: Azote for Stockholm Resilience Centre, Stockholm University. Based on Sakschewski and Caesar et al. 2025, Richardson et al. 2023, Steffen et al. 2015, and Rockström et al. 2009).

We are kin to all that ever lived, is living, or, by
our foresight, will live.