STRAIGHT FROM THE HEART

by William Thomas

PART 1

Coronary Canaries

Evenings like this are why I choose to live on islands. As the slowly setting sun streams through cloud-smothered summits on Vancouver Island, I pull on my seaboots and stride briskly across my gravel driveway and the deserted two-lane leading down to the cove. Already I'm gasping for breath. But that will pass.

My heart attack on the first sunny day in December shocked everyone. Especially me. With my electric outrigger canoe carrying me back ashore instead of off the planet, it seemed fitting that after nearly five decades' service, this fallen activist-reporter would be levitated heavenward from a dirt strip not by angels but a jet-powered Sikorsky.

There's nothing like a collapsed artery to re-arrange priorities! On returning home, I instantly dropped all wheat, sugar, junk food and processed meals. I'd been meaning to do this for years. Now it was all so easy. Remembering that morning and the one that followed, all I had to ask myself was, “Is eating this worth my life?”

Also off the menu was sitting 10-14 hours a day running my website and digesting dire information. For the first six weeks of recovery, my body wanted *zero* to do with computers and online clamour.

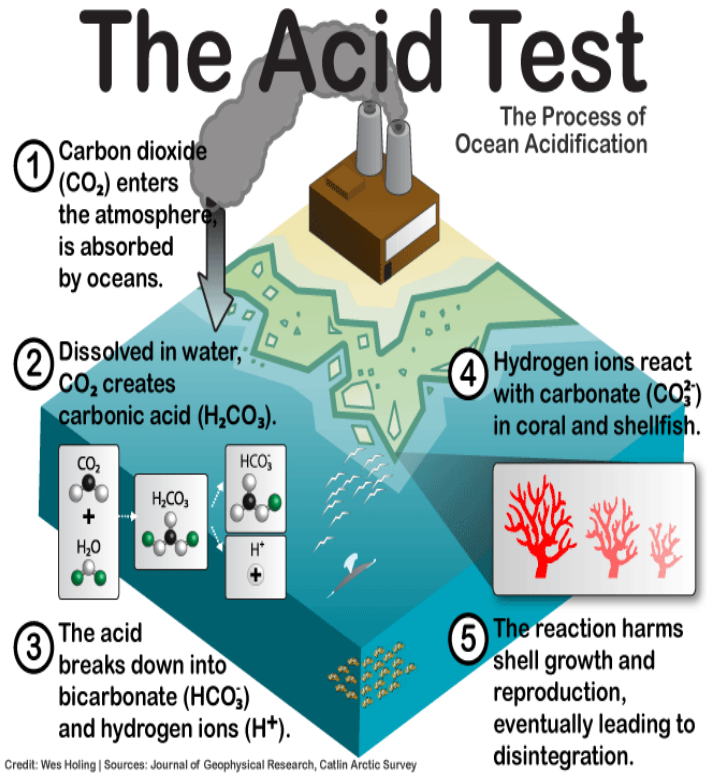
Instead, I started walking every day. Tentatively, at first, then longer and further as my stamina improved. For this newly minted "senior" and stent club member, a well-earned retirement felt compelling. But even in this rural sanctuary, the relentless corporate assault – condos, ferry fares, smart meters – requires resistance. And no sailor can ignore aerosol spraying over a dying ocean.

Cutting through the orchard, I gain the path to the ferry landing. As the silent dripping rainforest closes around me, a raven swoops past with an arrow-like *whoosh*. Moss-covered deadfalls glow like leprechaun logs, while on the slopes above big boulders deposited by the last retreating glacier continue their 12,000 year-old argument with gravity. Now overdue, those mile-thick ice sheets won't be back any time soon.

I pick up the pace as the trail tilts down along the Salish Sea. In the stillness that swallows the raven's startled cry, small wavelets propelled by the waning sou'easter keep cresting and collapsing ashore. It's a soothing cadence. But this seashore lullaby masks mayhem offshore.

ACID TRIP

Jump cut to the Wonderwerk Cave located just off the Danielskuil and Kimberly roads in South Africa. Ever since paleo people first barbecued meat here one million years ago, the ocean that covers most of this planet has absorbed half of all human carbon emissions. The resulting acidification is currently proceeding *10-times faster* than the last global warming wipeout 56 million years ago. [South Africa.com; Guardian Apr 2/12; News 24 Mar 25/14; Scientific American July 29/10]



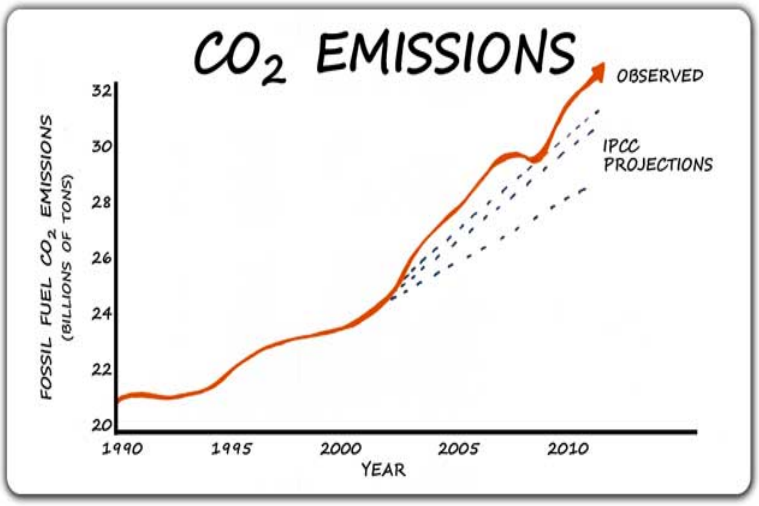
Now fizzing like a seltzer bottle, this vast carbonated heat sink is monkey-wrenching the pH of every creature that breathes through baleen or gills. It's also dissolving the shells of shellfish before they can become shellfish. Industrial-scale oyster production in the sheltered seas of the Pacific Northwest has dropped 80% since 2009.

Here on B.C.'s west coast, some of the most productive shellfish farms utilize Baynes Sound. That's it right over there, about a mile away as that raven flies. For more than two decades, Rob Saunders has grown his shellfish larvae in these pristine waters. Not now. "They die if we use the ocean water," he says. "Period."

That last trip to the store in a 2,000 pound carbon-burner to buy some genetically modified popcorn or chips could have tipped ocean pH to the point where squishy shellfish larvae can no longer grow shells. "It's pretty scary," says Roberta Stevenson, executive director of the B.C. Shellfish Growers Association. [Globe & Mail Sept 6/12]

She's right. The B.C. coast is in deepening crisis. The bull kelp “nurseries” that once snagged my trimaran's rudder have vanished like a conjuring trick. And salmon once as prolific as old-growth forests are quickly going the way of all those clearcut trees. We're talking starving bears and eagles. Denuded hillsides. And $35/kilo for fish once so abundant a Cowichan band member told me his grandparents forded streams by “walking across their backs.”

This is not a recipe for resilience in the face of climate chaos.

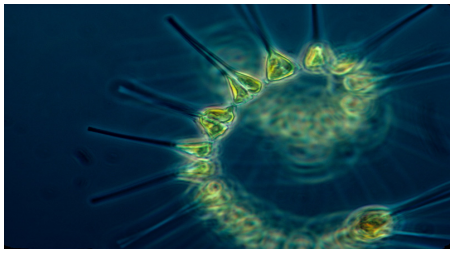


BOMBS AWAY

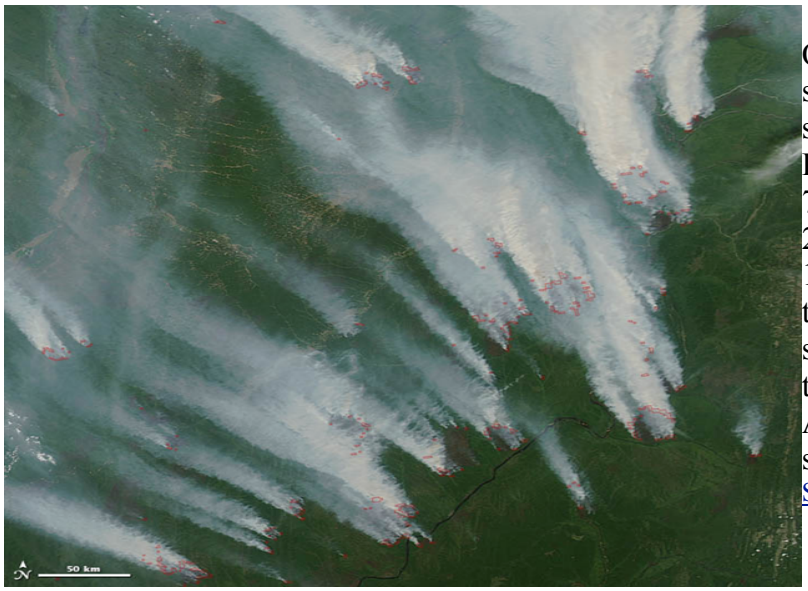
Our heedless carbon blow-out has become a collective death wish. Over the past 10 years, the rate of atmospheric and ocean heat buildup has been equivalent to detonating four 20 megaton atomic bombs *every second*. [Guardian Apr 24/13]

We've come too far from those first Palaeolithic campfires. In 1212, we managed to pour a record 31 billion tons of carbon dioxide into the sky. A year later, net human greenhouse gas emission were equivalent to more than *45 billion ton*s of CO2. Three-quarters of every pound of carbon belched from our smokestacks, jet exhausts and tailpipes will continue warming the atmosphere for the next 300 years. One-quarter of this accumulating tonnage will circulate warmly there “forever”. (At least in human reckonings of 10,000 years or more.) [Truthout Dec 26/13]

But we cannot accurately asses the full extent of our folly. After 16 years of sunlight-reflecting chemicals spread behind high-flying tankers, it's impossible to separate climate change from geoengineering. The IPCC says that human-produced aerosol pollution is masking 57% of the warming we ought to be experiencing. So if all this sunlight-scattering is stopped, we're stewed. Allow it to continue or increase, “Dead Zones” spread, the ocean dies and we're screwed. [Truthout Dec 26/13]



We really do not want to go there. But the convenient excuse of Teller's aerosol “sunscreen” is encouraging unrestrained carbon burning that turns the ocean into an acid bath. Even if you're a thousand miles inland, good luck trying to live without the phytoplankton that anchor the ocean food web and supply half the oxygen we breathe.

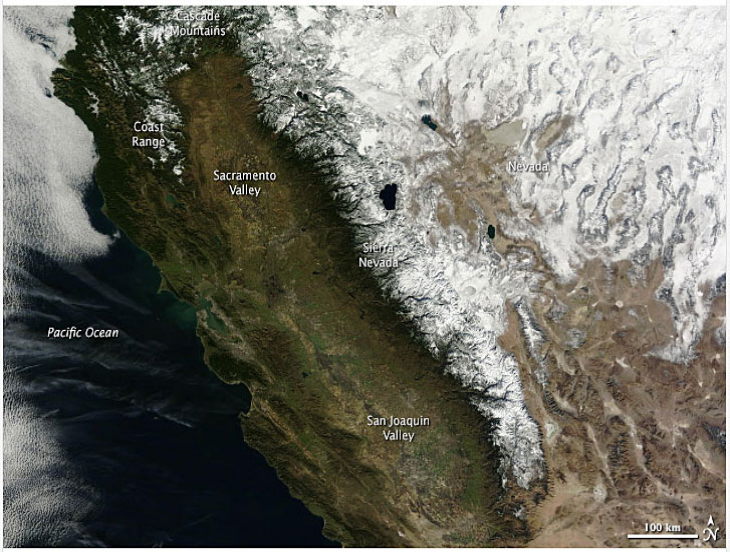


BAKED ALASKA

Our space colony is cracking up. And societies on petroleum-based life-support are especially vulnerable. The European Heat Wave of 2003 resulted in 70,000 to 80,000 “excess deaths”. The 2010 Moscow Heat Wave killed another 11,000. As Siberia flirts with with 90°F temperatures, black soot from a succession of huge tundra fires has turned large tracts of highly reflective Arctic snow into a blackened solar heat-sucking furnace. [Truthout Dec 26/13; Robert Scribbler Aug 6/13; June 21/13]

This year, as a wonky jetstream and geoengineered “weather wall” off the California coast ricocheted more warm air northward, Alaska experienced its hottest-ever winter. In January 2014, temperatures spiked 40°F above normal. It was 62°F in formerly freezing Port Alsworth. [Arctic News Feb 4/14]

Everything connected with warming is speading up. In 2007, climate modellers predicted that near ice- free conditions would not occur until the end of this century. The US Navy now forcasts an ice-free summer Arctic Ocean by 2016. When this starts happening, our space colony's air conditioner will fail. Earth will heat up quickly. And the demand for all-out geoengineering will become a shrill panicky cry. [Robert Scribbler Dec 12/13; Feb 5/14; Guardian Dec 9/13]



STORMY WEATHER

Right now, the loss of so much reflective sea ice and snow and resulting Arctic warming is flatlining the temperature differential between higher and lower latitudes that drives the jetstream that serves up the weather.

Displaced troughs bringing drought or deluge are staying parked.

More evaporated moisture in the air means more frequent and intense storms. And more ocean evaporation means more hot surface waters will sink.

Hot water is superfood for hurricanes. Instead of scooping up cold water and cooling their "jets", huge cyclonic storms are stuffing themselves with hot take-out and bulking into monsters. The current hurricane "season" is two-years-old. Last December alone featured 14 hurricane-strength "events" in the North Atlantic. [NOAA Dec/13; UK Met Office Mar 31/14]

The previous month, the strongest storm ever to come ashore did it to the Philippines. Snared by a stalled jetstream trough thrust unusually far south by the hot polar vortex, another typhoon quickly followed Super Typhoon Haiyan. Lingling remained moored over hot Pacific waters for two weeks, pumping and dumping another 52 inches of rain on more than one-million displaced Filipinos "lucky" enough not to have drowned. [NOAA Nov 7/13; Robert Scribbler Nov 7/13, Jan 24/14; Gulf News Jan 23/14]

The entire planet appears to be fibrillating. As major wildfires scorched California and Norway this winter, Brazil, Turkey, China and Argentina keep breaking their own drought records. A biblical three-year deluge has deposited much of the South Pacific onto South Australia, temporarily causing the sea level to fall.

Meanwhile, North Queensland remains scorchingly dry. Heat and water diversions have completely dried up China's 3,500 square-mile Lake Poyang. And a series of intense North Atlantic storms has pummelled Europe with the worst rain and snowfall ever recorded there. Britain has just experienced its windiest month ever as a succession of storms juggled 100-ton boulders and reconfigured cliffs. January 2014 was the wettest ever recorded there, flooding farmland and isolating entire towns. [SCPR News Jan 20/14; Robert Scribbler Jan 31/14; Guardian Aug 23/13, Feb 14/14; BBC Mar 7/14; UK Met Office Mar 31/14]

"Scotland is caught between the changing influences of disappearing Arctic ice, the shifting jet stream and a weakening Gulf Stream," worries Friends of the Earth director Dr. Richard Dixon. "The consequences for us are more extreme weather, including more flooding." [Guardian Jan 30/14]

The consequence for the west and southwest USA, Brazil, south Australia, Turkey, Texas, China, Argentina and the Middle East is deepening drought. Can you say, *"I'm hungry."* More than 870 million people already are. With the world's primary breadbaskets shrivelling, global food reserves now stand at 72 days. [Robert Scribbler Feb 6/14; Mar 7/14; Mar 24/14; SCPR News Jan 20/14; Sydney Morning herald Feb 3/14; Guardian Aug 23/13; Feb 14/14; world hunger]

EARTH OUT OF BALANCE

Far to the south, another vast and vulnerable ice sheet teeters on the brink of meltdown. Covering 350,000 square miles, the volume of the West Antarctic Ice Sheet is 100-times greater than all the water in the Great Lakes. Its complete melting is expected to shift Earth's rotation axis about a third of a mile.

This lurch will slosh water from the southern Atlantic and Pacific northward to North America and India's coasts. Freed from all that ice, the bedrock underneath will rebound, pushing still more water outwards. The resulting splash will swamp New York, Washington D.C., south Florida, LA, San Francisco, Seattle and the densely populated southern India coastline under 21 feet of seawater. Since eight in 10 people live within 62 miles of the seashore, a three-foot sea level rise is considered catastrophic. [Reuters Feb 5/09; Antarctic Glaciers; Independent May 15/09]

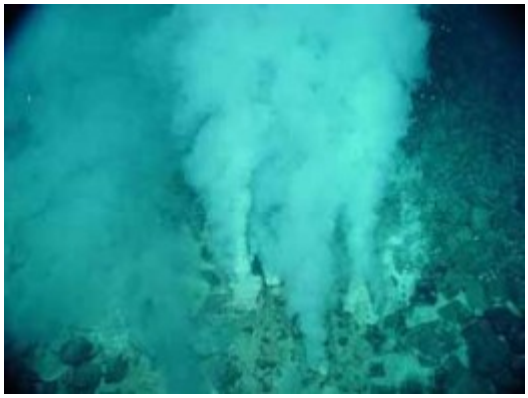
This "probably" won't happen in the lifetime of any infants currently teething on iPads. But who will act to protect generations of species yet unborn?

Closer to home, having spawned the iceberg that sank *Titanic,* the Jakobshavn glacier is about to scuttle everybody. Melting like a blow-torched snowcone under 80°F temperatures, Greenland's massive ice sheet has tripled the speed of its slide into the sea. Each half-mile-thick pulse of fresh, cold water calving into the North Atlantic causes more ocean and climate instabilities. Look for linked frontal systems the size of continents packing the punch of hurricanes soon. Just like Art Bell said. [Robert Scribbler Feb 5/14; Natl Geo Feb/14; Glacier Change June 28/09; *The Coming Global Superstorm*]

Who says we aren't toying with "titanic" forces? As Siberia's winter heat wave continues, much warmer than normal southerly winds are causing an early break-up of Arctic sea ice. Usually frozen solid this time of year, 200,000 square kilometers of the Arctic Ocean is free of ice. About 3/4th of the Bering Sea remains open water. All this in the far northern *winter.*

The lengthening ice-free season is allowing formerly ice-reflected sunlight to heat dark open waters all the way to the Arctic Shelf 164 feet down. Heated by temperatures up to 47°F, more than 2 *million square kilometres* of methane clathrates are melting at – yes – an unprecedented rate. [Robert Scribbler Feb 5/14; Washington Post Aug 1/13; Truthout Mar 31/14]

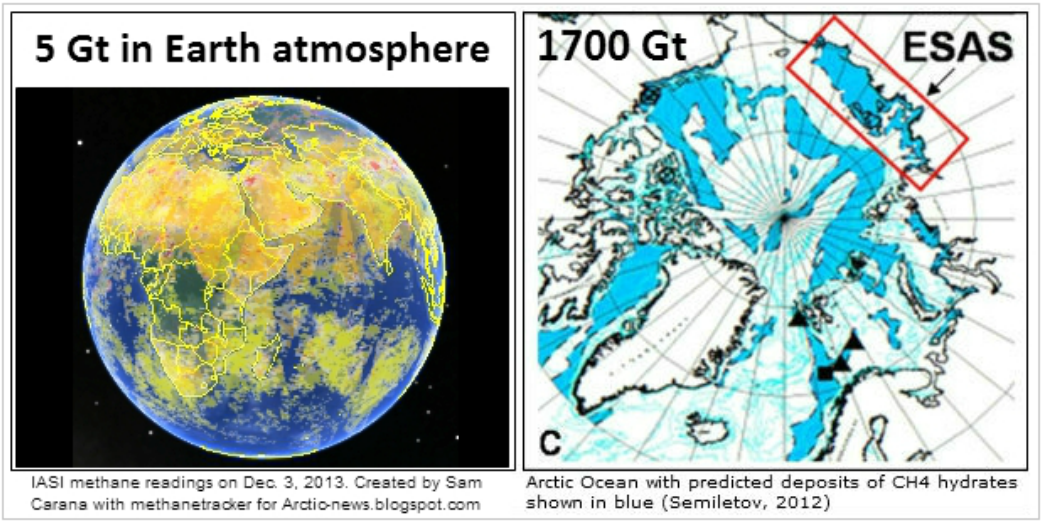
Can you say, *Oops!*



SHOW STOPPER
The Inuit of the Far North have a dozens of names to describe snow. But none for the mosquitoes and robins arriving in their backyards. For “methane” they use English.

In July 2013, atmospheric methane reached its highest concentrations in 400,000 years. So much methane is being released from Siberian lakes, the water appears to be boiling. And as the Arctic Ocean burbles and burps, NASA is recording hydrate plumes up to 150 kilometers across. “Is a Sleeping Climate Giant Stirring in the Arctic?” NASA wonders after one of its scientists on a research ship reported seawater bubbling like seltzer as far as the eye can see. [Geoengineering Watch Aug 16/13; Robert Scribbler July 15/13; News 24 Mar/14]

Mess with methane and it will mess with us. During the first 20 years of its release, the 5 billion tons of methane currently in Earth's atmosphere will heat-trap the equivalent of *500 billion tons* of CO2. Over the next century, mounting methane releases will continue to concentrate 20-times more heat than carbon dioxide. [Arctic News Oct 24/13]

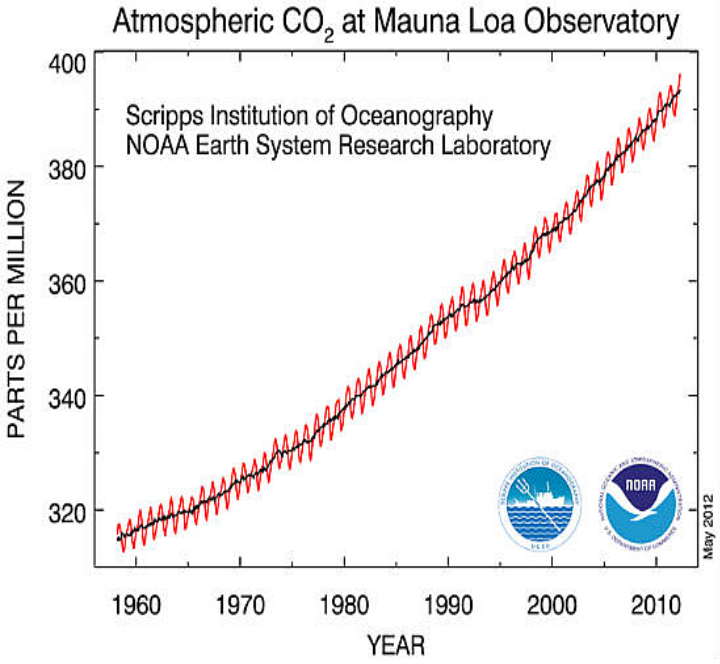


Over the past three years, methane rising from the fast-thawing Arctic has more than doubled. In just 12 months, methane vents one-foot across have grown to a kilometer wide. That 333,333% increase is a frightening foretaste “of the non-linear rapidity with which parts of the planet are responding to climate disruption,” Dahr Jamail warns. [Truthout Mar 31/14]

It's not going to be okay. Methane hydrates are held together by high pressure and low temperatures. When temperatures rise... when ice sheets melt and pressure falls... when fast-tracked deep ocean oil drilling and fracking punches through hydrate layers... when the thermal expansion of the warming ocean puts additional stress on areas prone to seismic activity... *we have a problem, Houston*. [2003 Study]

A single underwater landslide in the shallow Arctic Ocean could instantly double the methane currently in the atmos-fear. Arctic scientists like Natalia Shakhova consider the abrupt release of up to 50 billion tons of heat-hungry methane "highly possible" at "any time." [Runaway Global Warming Apr 15/11]

Faced by such extreme urgency to act, Canada, Australia and Japan are moving decisively to *reduce* their previously tepid commitments to emissions reductions. Instead of discouraging fossil-fuel use, the U.S. government is encouraging even more, handing tax breaks to the profits-swollen Oil Mafia worth almost $4 billion a year. [Climate Desk Nov/13; New Yorker Apr 14/14]



SPEED TRAP

Too busy texting and tweeting and posting pictures of ourselves on Facebook, we're roaring through the "NEVER EXCEED" redline of 360 parts per million CO2e with the accelerator flat on the floor. CO2-equivalent heat-trapping gases include nitrogen oxide from industrial farm runoff and military and civilian aircraft and vehicle exhausts. Plus all that methane. Put it all together and our petroleum-powered speedo is now nudging 480! [MIT]

Something's gotta blow.

Self-reinforcing feedback loops self-reinforce, reminds Guy McPherson. "It's warmer, the more the methane emerges. The more the methane emerges, it gets warmer. It gets warmer, the more methane comes out," explains this widely published Professor Emeritus of Natural Resources and the Environment at U. of Arizona. [Peak Moment TV]

PLACE SHOTGUN IN MOM'S MOUTH, PULL TRIGGER

"Carbon dioxide is increasing 14,000 times faster than anytime in the last 610,000 years. Climate is now changing faster than it has during any other time in 65 million years – 100 times faster than the Palaeocene/Eocene extinction event 56 million years ago," Bruce Melton mentions. [Truthout Mar 18/04]

Forget *looming* climate change. And Obama's blarney about "adapting" to the warming he seems so intent on amplifying would be a knee-slapper if no one cared about kids and critters.

Focus on: Abrupt Climate Change. Think *slowly squeezed trigger* followed by *BANG!* The last time this much methane let go, global temperatures jumped 5°C in 13 years. The resulting "Great Dying" killed 95 out of every 100 creatures afloat and ashore.

This time around, we're doing it to ourselves. The big news is *the gun's already gone off!* “Both coral reef and Arctic systems are already experiencing irreversible regime shifts,” the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change now reports. [New Yorker Apr 14/14]

The drop in the temperature gradient between the tropics and Arctic that's “destabilizing the jet stream and mid-latitude weather systems is leading to an increase in extreme weather events, tantamount to abrupt climate change,” proclaims Paul Beckwith, a climatology and meteorology professor at the University of Ottawa. [Truthout Mar 31/14]

Daddy is not going to make this better. No matter how much sunlight-reflecting material the geoengineers release or how fast we park our cars, future temperature spikes are locked in. With greenhouse gases rocketing through record levels, “our atmosphere and oceans will continue to warm for centuries to come,” observes UN weather agency chief Michel Jarraud. “The laws of physics are non-negotiable." [Reuters Mar 24/14]

They're also the joker in the pack. Because the four-decade lag between greenhouse gas emissions and subsequent temperature jumps means that the 0.85°C temperature rise linked to the crazy weather we're seeing now is the result of emissions in 1974. Like compounding debt, our much more extravagant emissions during the last 40 years *have yet to catch up with us*. When they do, we'll be financially and climatically bankrupt. Because over the past 29 years alone our greenhouse gas emissions have exceeded the previous 236 years combined. No matter what we do, all this kindling will be boiling the frog pot in another decade. Our moral choice now is how much more carbon we're willing to pour into this future furnace. [Truthout Dec 26/13]

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PART 2

Dealing With It

We are going down hard. And we're in a hurry. During the current Sixth Mass Extinction, as many as 200 species are checking out every 24 hours. Occurring *1,000-times faster* than the natural extinction rate, the accelerating pace of permanent deletion far exceeds the Permian pile-up. That "Great Dying" took out just about every living creature in this place.

"We are experiencing change 200 to 300 times faster than any of the previous major extinction events," frets David Wasdel, director of the Apollo-Gaia Project and an expert on multiple feedback dynamics. "What we are seeing today is a total disaster," adds Ahmed Djoghlaf, Secretary-General of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity. [Guardian Aug 16/10]

As we continue hastening our extinction on the hot inner edge of the habitable "Goldilocks Zone", *will our demise be in time to prevent Earth from becoming another hothouse Venus?* [Truthout Dec 17/13]

THREE DEGREES
Let's look at the latest climate forecasts. After crunching the numbers, the International Energy Agency says we're on track for a 2℃ increase by 2017.

That track is carrying a runaway train. Once upon a time 120,000 years ago, “when it was only a degree or two warmer than today, rising sea levels destabilized the steep volcanic slopes of the Hawaiian Islands, resulting in mega underwater landslides. Blocks of earth a mile wide moved intact 100 miles across the bottom of the Pacific Ocean,” Bruce Melton continues. This spectacular event caused a half-mile high “mega tsunami” that definitely was not surfable. [Truthout Dec 26/13]

But wait for the punchline. The IAE also predicts a 3.5°C increase by 2035.

This is no game changer. It's a *game ender.* Geological evidence from the Pliocene three million years ago provides a preview of a three-degree warmer world:

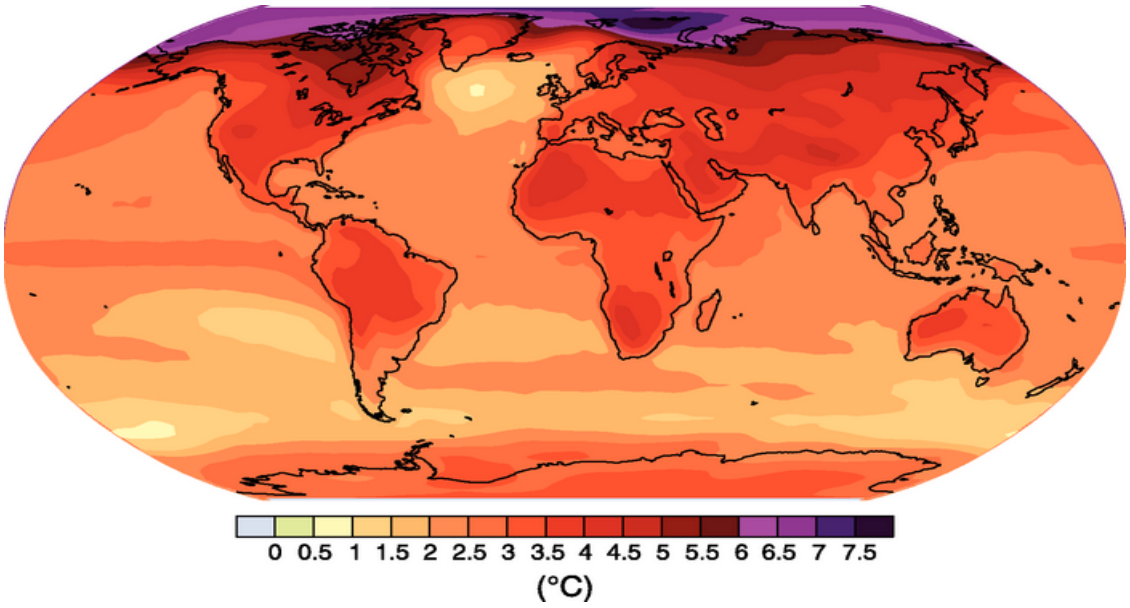
> “The northern hemisphere was free of glaciers and ice sheets, beech trees grew in the Transantarctic mountains, sea levels were 25 metres higher and atmospheric carbon dioxide levels were 360-400 ppm, very similar to today,” David Sprat summarizes. “There are also strong indications that during the Pliocene, permanent El Niño conditions prevailed.”

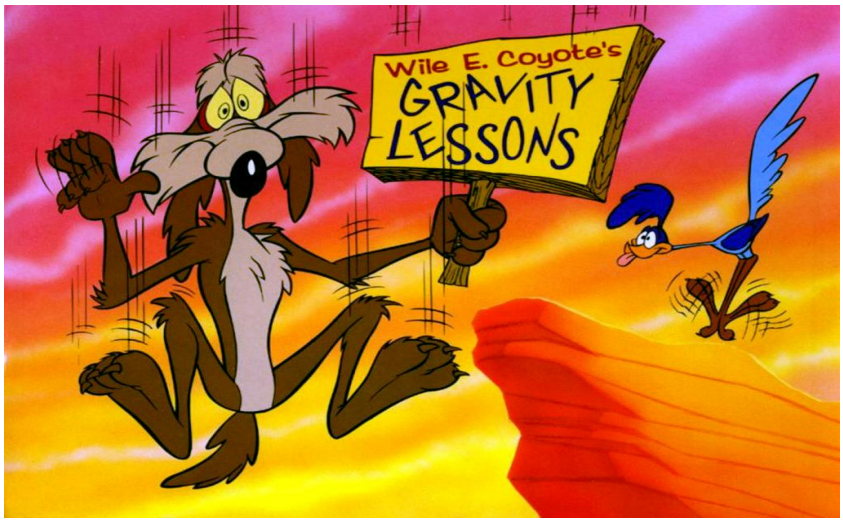
Stand by for this year's Super El Niño fed by all that deep warming water..

Another 3°C will likely see much of this planet rendered uninhabitable as half the annual rainfall in Mexico and central America goes away, South Africa reels under persistent drought, Australia's thousand-year drought intensity triples, and the snowcapped Rockies and Himalayas become bald. Say goodbye to the last summer trickles of the Colorado river. And when the four great rivers fed by the “Goddess Mother” mountain and her consorts run dry, more than one billion people will be out of luck. And water. [Climate Code Red Sept/10; Climate Dynamics, 26, 249-365; Proc. Nat. Acad. Sci., 103, 39, 14288-93; Nature, 435, 1218-21]

Mitz Hardy comments, “This is really sad if it happens (hope fully not).” [Climate Code Red Sept/10]

Earth to Mitz: Hope is another form of denial. It diffuses intention. It is not a plan.





END GAME

Remember what happened to the ever-hopeful Wile E. Coyote? An 0.85°C temperature rise has already "taken us over the cliff," Guy McPherson and many other scientists believe. This less than one-degree-above-baseline temperature rise has given us a jetstream-jimmying polar vortex, lethal weather that defies prediction, more desperate dumps of atmosphere-cooling aerosols, and temperatures high enough to kill this *winter's* vegetable crop in Mexico City.

Abrupt Climate Change is about to blow right through that projected 3°C rise. Atmospheric and marine scientist Ira Leifer is freaked by a recently leaked IPCC draft document. "When I look at what the models predicted for a 4C world, I see very little rain over vast swaths of populations," Leifer laments. [Truthout Dec 17/13]

On a planet 4°C hotter than our former steam-driven baseline, all we can prepare for is human extinction suggests a major British newspaper. We're really in trouble when the Brits are giving up. [Guardian Aug 11/08]

"3.5 C to 4 C is almost certainly a death sentence for all human beings on the planet," McPherson told a presumably suicidal audience in Boulder, Colorado. Because that's hot enough to eliminate all habitat for penguins and human beings. "Ultimately we're human animals like other animals, we need habitat to survive." [Presentation by Guy McPherson Oct 16/13]

And what's the timing on that?

"We're looking at a 4°C rise above the beginning of the industrial revolution by 2030," this PhD posits. That's from just *one* feedback: escaping methane from the Arctic Ocean.

There are 29 others, all interacting, with more being added as they make themselves felt. Multiply these powerful synergies together "and it looks like we might indeed not have long as a species on this planet," McPherson figures. [Planet3 Mar 13/14]

His numbers may be optimistic. A briefing provided to corporate hostages at the UN Climate Change conference in Copenhagen back in 2009 warned that "the long-term sea level that corresponds to current CO2 concentration is about 23 meters above today's levels, and the temperatures will be 6°C or more higher. These estimates are based on real long-term climate records, not on models." [Tom Dispatch Dec 17/13]

As all that methane starts to let go, McPherson is betting on a 10°C rise by 2040. He could be wrong. An increasing number of scientists agree that while a 4 to 6 C warming *is* terribly terminal, we won't be be going extinct until at least 2060. [Climate Change Psychology Dec/12]

Canadian Wildlife Service biologist Neil Dawe says he wouldn't be surprised if the next generation witnesses the extinction of humanity. In the estuary near his office on Vancouver Island, Dawe is watching the rapid unraveling of "the web of life."

He isn't hopeful deranged tool-wielding apes burdened by a neocortex will act in time. "Everything is worse and we're still doing the same things. Because ecosystems are so resilient, they don't exact immediate punishment on the stupid," he says. [Truthout Dec 17/13]

But not to worry, there is always a reckoning. Everything balances in the end. "If we don't reduce our numbers," Dawe declaims, "nature will do it for us."

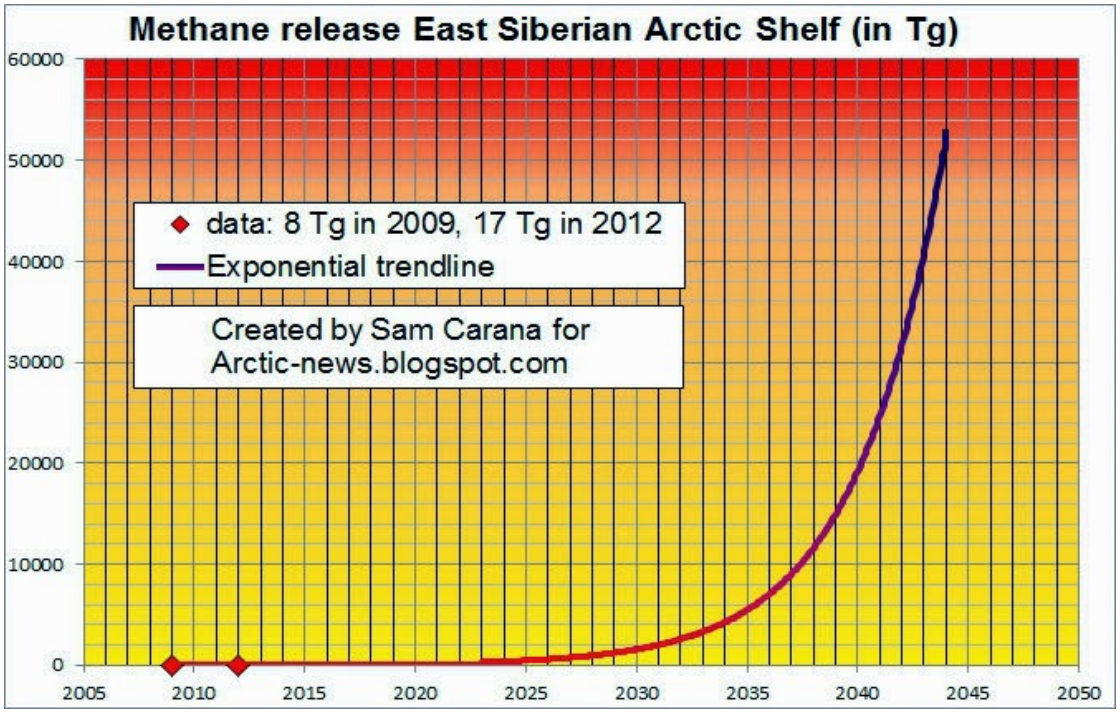
After examining an avalanche of data at *Arctic News*, John Davies concurs: "The world is probably at the start of a runaway Greenhouse Event which will end most human life on Earth before 2040." [Arctic News Sept 20/13]

Stay tuned.

THE SKY IS NOT A PIÑATA

Blindly and repeatedly whacking something as big and unstable as the atmosphere with flying tanker loads of aerosols invites calamities the size of failed monsoons and an arid California. Increasingly frantic efforts by a handful of unelected geoengineers and oath-bound aircrews make it imperative that the rest of us get our ship together and end to this madness. A major study examining "Sensitivity of Ocean Acidification to Geoengineered Climate Stabilization" concludes that deep and rapid cuts in CO2 by more than 50% are "the most effective strategy" to postpone planetwreck. [Geophysical Research Letters May 28/09]

Solar panels are magic. (Look at Germany and the USA.) And wind turbines work. (See Spain.) But good luck convincing any corporate-government to pull the plug on all that profitable petroleum powering their Model T societies. Faced by such extreme urgency to act, Canada, Australia and Japan are moving decisively to *reduce* their previous commitments to token emissions reductions. [Truthout Nov 25/13; Climate Desk Nov/13]



NOW WHAT, TONTO?

Nobody wants to hear how we've trashed our space colony so thoroughly it's about to become humanity's sarcophagus, spinning through space devoid of complex life. But the only way to let go of such dire data is to fully face it.

Better tough love than tough luck.

"It's inconceivable. It's unthinkable," exclaimed host Janaia Donaldson to her scary guest. She then asked Guy McPherson, "How does one respond?"

I can start to answer that.

Whether personal or planetary, the first heart attack symptom is denial. When it happened to me, I took two aspirin and went to bed. Since then, I've fully embraced the don't-be-stupid health program. But governments facing a *planetary coronary* are insisting that we take more aerosols and go back to sleep.

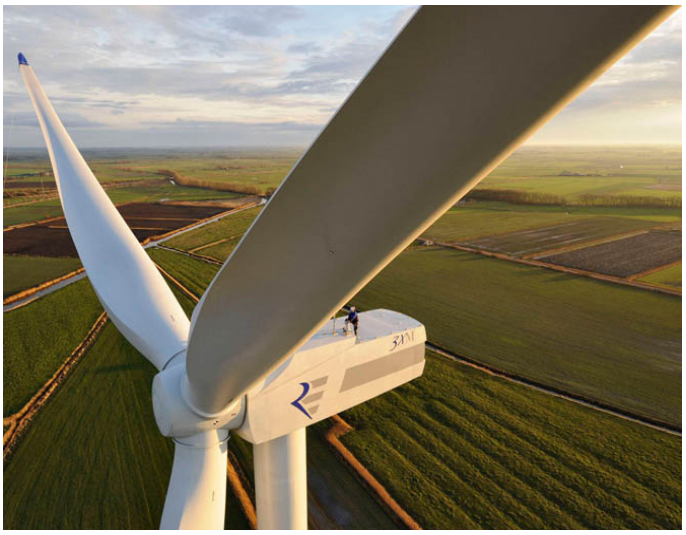
It's not working. And when puffed-up denial gets flattened by reality, it can sink into black depression. “All of us who have the courage to look the science of global warming full-on wrestle with despair,” says Seth Klein. The anger and obsession that often follow can sicken activists and wreck relationships. [Policy Note]

The key to not cracking up is *not becoming attached to outcomes*. Engaged, yes. Daily. Fully. Passionately. But insisting on “winning” anything except further opportunities for understanding, connection and service is folly.

When he fully realized what's going down, Guy McPherson became “angry, confused, lashing out, frustrated.” Late last year, he finally achieved acceptance. “Let go or be dragged,” this wise guy says. When you finally let go, “you become a much more centred human being.”

Ira Leifer believes we have a moral obligation never to give up. He's right. Even if we are all doomed (and nobody gets out of here alive), someone has to start making choices that begin to redress so much karmic kaka. Someone must speak for the voiceless ones. Someone has to stand on the side of life.

Someone like you.



DANCING ON DEATH ROW
“Photographing the last of everything,” *National Geographic* wildlife photographer Joel Sartore struggles with personal outrage and despair. And a family that doesn't always want to hear the latest ecological atrocities. Don't forget to lighten up, he urges. And whatever you do, make it it “sing and sweet.” [At Close Range]

Right action is the antidote to despair. When you *really* get it, you will drop non-essential energy use with the alacrity of a heart patient jettisoning junk food. Walk or get a bicycle. (Mine's electric.) Get off the grid. Kiss your lover like you mean it. Paddle a canoe. Plant a garden. Plant your bare feet on the

ground, hug a tree and *listen to what you're told*.

Or just smile at the next person you see.

You can make a powerful personal statement with every thought you give energy to and every choice not to consume. *You cannot "save" anyplace or anyone.* Nature is batting last with bases loaded with methane at the top of the ninth. And most people can't let themselves "care about something they can't fix," *Shock Doctrine* author Naomi Klein has found. "Because it's just too terrifying. And it would derail your whole life." [Naomi Klein Dec 12/12]

Just like your own death, neh?

But you don't cower in bed waiting to croak. You get up and embrace each moment. My heart attack was an excellent reminder that this is the only life I've got. Really knowing that every passing minute is another subtraction from my remaining time here makes every breathe precious.

And every act deliberate.

SHIFT HAPPENS
With the cliff fast-receding and thin air between our toes, it's time for all wily coyotes to fall. Or fly. Control inputs depend on how you decide to think and act. Raising or lowering your attitude raises or lowers your altitude.

So why not "express love" and "do what you love?" McPherson suggests. Live a life of simplicity and excellence. Continue insisting on justice. And give thanks often to our two- and four-legged, furry, finned and feathered friends. All nature is our own nature, after all.

Without economic justice for all, there will be climate justice for none. If we don't move quickly to cancel the charters of the 90 corporations that have caused two-thirds of the carbon emissions generated since the onset of industrialism, being good and being nice are not going to cut them.

“The climate crisis is the ultimate indictment of capitalism, certainly the model of capitalism that we have, Klein continues as her clear-eyed newborn looks on. “This economic model is failing us spectacularly, on multiple levels. But we're still acting as if our goal is to save it.” [Truthout April 3/14; Naomi Klein Dec 12/12]

Better to transform it, interjects interviewer Wen Stephenson, “into something that won't destroy us.”

Think this is impossible? Google Iceland.

“What’s the use of having developed a science well enough to make predictions if, in the end, all we’re willing to do is stand around and wait for them to come true?” asked chemist F. Sherwood Rowland Rowland, successfully pressing for a ban of CFCs. [New Yorker Apr 14/14]

If this is *really it,* we are freed to fully live. To act with the courage, compassion and cooperation that has long helped humans surmount adversity. Start locally with an alternative economy of sharing, recycling, farmer's markets, co-ops and barter.

Since everything we've ever lived and fought for is on the line, it's time to come together and engage in the climate-geoengineering fight. “Really engage,” Wen Stephenson urges, “as if your life and your life's work, even life itself, depended on it. Because they do.” [Naomi Klein Dec 12/12]

Besides, kimosabe. *What else are you going to do in the meantime?*