

The HOPEFUL REALIST Newsletter: Looking at the World as if Facts Matter

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Here we explore the latest facts, actions, and perspectives on the New Great Transformation of the Earth System. We express the Hopeful Realism we all need to work through the greatest predicament in human history.

Latest News from the Hopeful Realist

As of yesterday, my new eBook is now available on Amazon.com. Links to download a free chapter are on TheHopefulRealist.com. It is called **HOPEFUL REALISM: A Climate Manifesto**. I wrote it to summarize the key obstacles and opportunities we have in facing the New Great Transformation of the Earth System that now confronts us, and to explain the consequent transformation of societies necessary for the survival and flourishing of humans on the planet. My more comprehensive book, **At the Edge of Illusion: Facing the New Great Transformation**, will be released by a traditional publisher hopefully later this year.

LOOK UP! A Bi-weekly Featured Commentary

The Supreme Court of the US struck down Roe v. Wade, which stood as the law of the land for over a half century, along with decades of Supreme Court decisions against challenges, establishing precedent for a woman's right to determine her own health decisions. The Court had been stacked with three extreme ideologues by the former Fake President. That is big news, so important and so damaging for so many women and families.

At nearly the same time, congress sent to President Biden a compromise gun safety law that, while it has some important provisions, does more to protect guns than people, by what it left out. The AR-15 assault rifle remains more sacred than the lives of schoolchildren among most Republican lawmakers.

Then we have the ongoing hearings on the January 6, 2021 insurrection that breached the nation's capital building resulting in deaths, injuries, and destruction. Lawmakers just barely avoided the wrath of the insurrectionists. The House Select Committee is steadily exposing more and more evidence of the direct involvement of the Fake President and his enablers in an attempted coup.

In the latest session, [Cassidy Hutchison](#), former aid to Trump's Chief of Staff Mark Meadows, exposed the inner-circle struggles with the Fake President's efforts to overthrow the election of Joe Biden by trying to force V.P. Mike Pence to illegally invalidate the electoral ballots by violently storming Congress in the Capital Building that fateful day. Political shock waves radiated across the nation as the brave 25-year old described the behavior of a narcissistic sociopath and his acolytes.

Meanwhile, carbon emissions continue to accelerate, driving CO₂ in the atmosphere to over 415 parts per million (unprecedented in over 400,000 years), acidifying the oceans, and causing increasingly severe weather events.

While the problems mentioned above are of great importance in a presumably democratic society, the path toward Earth System chaos does not bode well for the future of humanity everywhere.

Severe as they are, the multiple crises we face will be overridden by the power of environmental devastation brought on by the very industrial civilization that now cannot even hold on to its fragile grip on democracy, no less deal with a global emergency. If we can't get a grip on the climate/ecosystem emergency, nothing else will matter. (a more extensive version of this commentary can be found at <https://thehopefulrealist.com/the-hopeful-realist-blog/>)

Featured Image:



Carbon Dioxide in the Atmosphere, today and back 400,000 years

Books and other Sources on the New Great Transformation of the Earth System and Society.

Many books and thousands of articles describe and explain diverse elements of the extreme changes our planet is undergoing. Far fewer discuss the implications of these changes for human society, which is the primary source of the catastrophic changes we have begun to experience. Today, I will mention just one very important but under appreciated work on the nature of change itself.

Bardi, Ugo. 2017. *The Seneca effect: Why Growth is Slow but Collapse is Rapid*. A Report to the Club of Rome. Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing.

Ugo Bardi is an Italian scientist who noticed distinct patterns in the catastrophic collapse of complex systems in both the physical and social worlds. He observed that in a physical system a fracture could occur at one place in the system, then gradually spread until the damage rapidly accelerates and the entire system fails. Think of when a rock hits your windshield and causes a ding; usually after some time does one or more bigger and bigger cracks radiate out from the original damage. Bardi noted this pattern in several physical systems, and several cases of societal collapse as well, notably the fall of the Roman Empire. He was not the first to suggest the analogy to the situation of industrial civilization today. But his analysis is one of the most powerful and noteworthy.

Quotable Quote

When the winds of change blow, some people build walls and others build windmills.
~ Chinese proverb

What this means to me: Survivors recognize the new reality of an emergency and do everything they can to make the best of it, on its own terms. Victims tend to deny the new reality they would rather not deal with; they die far more often. With realism and hope we can be survivors.